

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP  
HABITAT WORK GROUP  
Lewis Conservation District Office  
1554 Bishop Road  
Chehalis, WA  
April 13, 2007  
9:30 AM**

**Meeting Summary**

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**PEOPLE PRESENT**

Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Thurston County Citizen  
Bob Amrine, Lewis County Conservation District  
Andy Olson, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation  
Chad Stussy, Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)  
Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County  
Jason Lundgren, IAC  
Eric Delvin, The Nature Conservancy  
April Johnson, The Nature Conservancy  
Mike Kuttel Jr., Thurston Conservation District

Randy Lehr, Grays Harbor College  
Jim Hill, Lewis County Citizen  
Brett DeMond, LWC Consulting  
Rod Lakey, Lewis County Citizen  
Craig Swanson, Lewis County Citizen  
Jessica Tate, Puget Sound Meeting Services  
Jerry Louthain, HDR, City of Hoquiam

**Announcements and Introductions**

Chair Bob Amrine called the Habitat Work Group (HWG) meeting to order at 9:40 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

**Chad and Co. Update – Strategy Ranking for Options**

Mr. Lehr reported a tier of watershed attributes was created for the subbasins. This resulted in a final ranking of attributes, which are the priorities of actions as projects are performed within the subbasins. A question was raised about whether Gaddis Creek and the main stem of the Chehalis might need to be reconfigured.

Ms. Napier said the effort is on a tight timeline to turn in for project sponsors to utilize for their project proposals. The goal is to turn them in prior to the next HWG meeting for incorporation in the proposals. The basins are broken down into 11 major subbasins. Future steps are developing detailed actions for the attributes.

**Letters of Intent Discussion**

All proposals for this round have been submitted. The goal of the discussion is to provide initial feedback to the project sponsors.

Ms. Napier distributed and reviewed a handout of the Chehalis Basin LE Schedule for the 2007 Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grant. She provided a brief overview of the SRFB process.

Chair Amrine asked whether the list of reviewers is confirmed. Ms. Napier indicated Kathy Jacobson, Mark Swartout, Mike Kuttel Jr., Jim Hill, Chad Stussy or Gary Bell, Andy Olson have agreed to be reviewers. Bob Amrine, Randy Lehr, Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Eric Delvin, and Lonnie Crumley volunteered to be reviewers if needed. At this point, sufficient reviewers are assigned, so project sponsors will not be asked to be reviewers.

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Ms. Napier distributed letters of intent and project proposals handout.

**North Fork Little Hoquiam River Dam Removal:** Mr. Louthain presented the proposal.

*Background:* The dam is the oldest of the three dams located in the Hoquiam watershed. The dam is not totally abandoned, but has not operated since the late 1980s.

The project is the removal of a diversion dam owned by the City of Hoquiam that currently blocks fish passage on the north fork of the Little Hoquiam River. The purpose of the project is to remove the dam to allow fish passage to high quality habitat in the upper watershed. The project is located approximately two miles above the confluence with the Little Hoquiam River in Grays Harbor County and northwest of the City of Hoquiam at Township 18N, Range 10W, Section 28, Quarter Section SW ¼. The project site is accessed via a road from Highway 101.

Mr. Louthain reviewed photographs of the dam, which were included in the handout.

The diversion dam blocks fish passage for approximately four miles of riverine habitat in the north fork of the Little Hoquiam River. The dam is not currently used, and the City of Hoquiam would like to remove the dam to allow fish passage. Coho and Winter Steelhead have been observed during fish surveys of the north fork of the Little Hoquiam River in the reach immediately below the dam. Hoquiam Winter Steelhead is considered depressed according to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) 2002 Salmonid Stock Inventory (SaSI) while Hoquiam Coho is considered healthy according to the 2002 SaSI. A depressed stock is one whose production is below expected levels, based on available habitat and natural variation in survival rates, but above where permanent damage is likely.

The presence of the dam reduces available spawning and rearing habitat.

Fish passage barriers are a limiting factor to recovery of salmonids in the tributaries of the Lower Chehalis River. The Chehalis Basin Salmon Habitat Restoration and Preservation Work Plan for WRIAs 22 and 23 (Work Plan) indicate that restoration of fish passage for the Hoquiam River is a high priority for salmonid recovery and habitat restoration. The project will result in removal of the dam, restoration of the channel in the vicinity of the dam, and unblocking fish passage into approximately four miles of riverine habitat.

*Proposed Action:* Remove a diversion dam that currently blocks fish passage on the north fork of the Little Hoquiam River. The dam blocks fish passage to approximately four miles of riverine habitat. Removal of the dam will achieve the goal of allowing passage for these species to upper portions of the watershed. Insufficient habitat is a major limiting factor in the basin. Approximately four miles of habitat will be opened as a result of the project.

Ms. DeMond asked about the dimensions of the dam. Mr. Louthain indicated the dam is approximately 40 feet wide and approximately 10 to 15 feet in height. Water does not currently flow over the spillway and it appears not to have done so for some period of time.

Ms. DeMond asked if there is sediment buildup. Mr. Louthain stated there is no sediment buildup at the face of the dam, but he is unsure of upstream sediment depths. Ms. DeMond asked about the difference in stream elevation. Mr. Louthain replied that there is a difference in stream elevation. The City's interest is maintaining existing water rights on the dam. Mr. Louthain reported he is meeting with the

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Department of Ecology (DOE) to discuss the potential for the City to allow the state to take over the right and convert the right to a trust or converting a portion of the water right to a groundwater right.

Mr. Amrine asked whether sediment will be removed. Mr. Louthain affirmed sediment will be removed and habitat features will be restored. It's likely not possible to remove all sediment and allow natural regrading to occur.

Ms. Napier reported the project is located in the Hoquiam/Wishkah watershed. She suggested Mr. Louthain also discuss the lack of large woody debris (LWD) throughout the system as it relates to the Work Plan/Strategy and whether the project will include LWD placement. LWD is referred to as a known limiting factor. The group strategy describes symptoms, causes, and actions. It's important to ensure all limiting factors and specifics are incorporated and addressed.

Ms. Napier encouraged all project sponsors to include as much information and detail in the proposals as possible.

**Frase Creek Barrier Removal Project:** Mr. Lakey presented the proposal.

*Current Habitat Conditions:* The condition of Frase Creek improves after passing through the lower pastureland section. Instream cover and canopy coverage are good in the middle and upper reaches. The middle and upper reaches are within classified timberland.

Few limiting factors were found in the stream habitat survey upstream of the target barrier culvert. With implementation of recent State Forest Practices and buffer protections, the riparian zone will improve and provide long-term protection to the channel.

*Current and historic factors important to understanding this project:* Frase Creek is a tributary stream to the south fork of the Newaukum River. The basin is mainly rain-fed, and headwaters are steep hills and narrow valleys. Gravel and rubble are predominant features of the streambed. Land use upstream of the barrier culvert is mainly within designated forestland. There are large tracts of commercial and private timberlands in the upper reaches of the drainage basin. Long-term protection is anticipated for the existing riparian canopy as long as State Forest Practices and buffer protections remain at the current minimum standards.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Pigeon Springs Road MP 0.579</u>
<b>Slope/Outfall Drop</b>	2.5%/3-feet
<b>Span/Length/Material</b>	7-feet/34-feet/Corrugated Metal
<b>Age/Condition</b>	Age unknown/Needs Repair
<b>Identified as a Barrier as per Lewis County's Culvert Assessment (March 2002) using WDFW SSHEAR protocol</b>	Excessive slope, 3-foot outfall drop, 30% streambed constriction, and no streambed material in pipe
<b>Estimated time culvert poses a</b>	67% Adult/100% Juvenile

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**Barrier to migrating fish  
Adult/Juvenile Barrier**

**Habitat above the barrier** 2,103 square meters Spawning/2,081 square meters Rearing  
**Spawning/Rearing**

**Stream description above the** Middle and upper reaches have good spawning and rearing  
**Barrier culvert** habitat and good riparian buffers

*Project Objectives:*

- Provide unimpeded fish passage and restore access to 2.74 stream miles by removing a fish passage barrier culvert
- Install a new bridge at the road crossing sized to mimic existing stream conditions (culvert sized using WDFW Stream Stimulation Option)
- Stream Simulation: Install roughened channel, streambed gravel, and LWD
- Plant trees and shrubs in disturbed areas
- Conduct monitoring for fish passage success

The project will address the velocity, scouring, outfall drop, and absent streambed material associated with the existing culvert. The new bridge and channel will be designed to meet design criteria for a 100-year storm event. Once completed, access will be restored to 2.74 miles of spawning and rearing habitat.

Mr. Stussy asked how spring Chinook depressed status was determined. Mr. Lakey indicated the information was provided by WDFW and by his own observation. Mr. Stussy stated it might be beneficial to discuss the issue with the co-managers because it is not listed in the 2002 assessment. Ms. Napier suggested also including the information in the proposal.

Ms. DeMond asked about the size proposed of the bridge. Mr. Lakey replied that the bridge is proposed at a maximum of 80 feet in length and approximately 26 feet wide.

Chair Amrine recommended clarifying Figure 1 in the proposal as the south fork. Mr. Lakey acknowledged the request.

**Lucas Creek Tributaries Barrier Removal Project:** Mr. Swanson presented the proposal.

Juvenile salmonids have been identified in the main stem immediately above and below the target culverts during the Stream Habitat Survey work, and Lewis County field investigations (April 2004 and May 2005). U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) and WDFW biologists identified juvenile anadromous fish up and downstream of the barrier culverts during project site visits in summer 2002. Additionally, Quinault Fisheries identified cutthroat trout in the Lucas Creek system.

*Current Habitat Conditions:* The condition of Lucas Creek and its tributaries is very good. High instream cover and canopy coverage were observed. Riparian vegetation consists of mixed coniferous and deciduous trees with a dense shrub understory. The entire drainage is within classified timberland.

Few limiting factors were found in the stream habitat survey for the two tributaries upstream of the target barrier culverts. There are no other culverts upstream of the target barriers. Gravel embedded with sediment within the channel may limit spawning habitat, but the implementation of recent State Forest

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Practices and buffer protections, at the current minimum levels, will provide long-term protection for channel and riparian areas. The riparian zone of both tributaries is undisturbed and intact. Project restoration will restore access to a fully developed riparian zone for immediate benefit to all freshwater anadromous fish life stages.

<b><u>Description:</u></b>	<b><u>Culvert #1 (Lucas Creek MP 4.2)</u></b>	<b><u>Culvert #2 (Lucas Creek MP 4.3)</u></b>
<b>Slope/Outfall Drop</b>	1.2% with interior break / 0	2.4% / 2-feet
<b>Span/Length/Material Identified as a Barrier as per Lewis County's Culvert Assessment (March 2002) using WDFW SSHEAR protocol</b>	4-feet / 36-feet / Corrugated Metal Slope > 1%, interior slope break, 60% streambed constriction, and no streambed material in pipe	6-feet / 70-feet / Corrugated Metal Excessive slope, 2-foot outfall drop, 30% streambed constriction, and no streambed material in pipe
<b>Estimated time culvert poses a barrier to migrating fish Adult/Juvenile Barrier</b>	33% Adult / 67% Juvenile	67% Adult / 100% Juvenile
<b>Habitat above the Barrier Spawning/Rearing</b>	2,588 square meters Spawning / 1,299 square meters Rearing	2,103 square meters Spawning / 2,081 square meters Rearing
<b>Stream description above the Barrier culvert</b>	Lower reaches ideal for spawning, abundant woody debris, and good riparian buffer	Deeper pools in active beaver areas, abundant woody debris, good riparian buffer of willows, shrubs, and alder

*Project Objectives:*

- Provide unimpeded fish access for two Lucas Creek tributaries
- Restore access to 1.5 stream miles by removing two fish passage barrier culverts
- Install two new culverts at the road crossings sized to mimic existing stream conditions (culverts sized using OHW to eliminate constriction)
- Install streambed gravel and large woody debris (Site #2)
- Plant trees and shrubs in disturbed areas
- Conduct monitoring for fish passage success

The project will address the velocity, scouring, outfall drop (Site #2), and absent streambed material associated with the existing culverts. The culverts and channel will be designed to meet design criteria for a 100-year storm event. Once completed, access will be restored to 1.5 miles of spawning and rearing habitat. This project complements past habitat restoration work in the subbasin.

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The adjacent habitat is canopy and predominantly Weyerhaeuser property. It is anticipated the area will remain forested into at least the near future. Coho and freshwater steelhead smolt have been documented using the system. The area is predominantly used as rearing ground.

Ms. DeMond asked about the access road. Mr. Swanson indicated the access road is a primitive county road.

Ms. Napier requested identifying Lewis Conservation District assessment findings and the county barrier assessment work in the proposal. Mr. Swanson acknowledged the request.

Chair Amrine requested also including the quality of the system in the proposal. Mr. Swanson acknowledged the request.

**Mill's Property Acquisition:** Ms. Holbrook-Shaw presented the proposal.

The Mill's property is approximately 30 acres of intact, biodiverse, and functioning aquatic ecosystem. The site is specific to Chum, Coho and Cutthroat adults and juveniles because of its critical location to Scatter Creek. The site is approximately one mile from the mouth of Scatter Creek. The stream system has bountiful cobbles, pools, riffles, and glides used for spawning, and several side channels that braid back and forth throughout the main stem. The riparian corridors on both the east and west banks are entirely composed of mature White Oak and Oregon Ash stands, providing ample shade and cover for the complete reach of the property.

Historically as well as currently, this reach of Scatter Creek has always had sustainable Coho, Chum, and Cutthroat salmonid runs.

The project addresses priorities of from the local strategy with a primary focus of protecting high quality priority areas and threatened juvenile and adult salmonid ecosystems.

Some of the limiting factors in the Scatter Creek watershed are temperature and lack of juvenile rearing habitat. The direct impact specific to the site is the imperative threat of development. If the site is developed, the impacts would be devastating with removal of the mature canopy, which provides critical shade, impervious surface, water withdrawal, sediment delivery, and potential non-point source pollutants. To have the ability to acquire the parcel and protect it in perpetuity from any type of development would greatly improve water quality directly and within the Scatter Creek and Chehalis River.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw reported discussions with the landowner indicated payment over time would be acceptable or a co-owner agreement. The main focus is for an allowance to step in to begin protecting the area by way of local education and advertisement and keeping development pressures off the landowner.

Ms. Napier suggested rewriting the proposal to identify specific target details. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw acknowledged the request.

Mr. Lundgren asked if a conservation easement option was considered. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw said the option was considered. However, the landowner prefers selling the property for protection. Mr. Lundgren asked if there is a possibility for subdividing the land. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw indicated Highway 12 divides the property. The main area of concern is the southern portion where white oaks are located. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw commented that the landowner has been working with her over six years, even

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though he receives weekly calls from developers wishing to purchase the property. The land was appraised several years ago. The landowner recently inquired about having the land appraised again. The property has been in the landowner's family for many years.

Mr. Stussy asked about the possibility of development mitigation or donation of the foundation purchase by a developer. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw indicated there has been interest but no formal inquiries have been made.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw stated she will continue to work with the landowner and explore other options.

**Sampson Acquisition:** Ms. Holbrook-Shaw presented the proposal.

The Sampson property totals 79 acres of wetland (approximately 55 acres) and upland forest (approximately 24 acres) habitat, which has been used for agricultural purposes as a small beef cattle operation. There are several headwater tributaries to Scatter Creek that cross the property and then drain into the confluence of Northcraft Creek at the west edge of the property. All of the tributaries are currently and historically used for both adult and juvenile Coho and Cutthroat salmonids. Northcraft Creek, which runs adjacent to the property, is primarily spawning habitat for Coho and Cutthroat salmonids.

The property is extremely valuable in a conservation sense, because of its location and potential restoration possibilities. Currently, Heernett Environmental Foundation owns approximately 800 acres of protected lands surrounding the property. Upstream of the property is a successful, ongoing, stream restoration project, which has been underway for the last three years. Adding the Sampson property to the Heernett preserve would be a tremendous asset to the water quality enhancement of Scatter Creek.

Some of the limiting factors in the Scatter Creek watershed are temperature and lack of juvenile rearing habitat, such as, availability of usable wetlands. To have the ability to acquire the parcel, protect it, and with a five-year plan, enhance the property to include creating sinuosity, water retainment areas, encouraging proper wetland function, and establishing a 50-foot riparian zone would greatly improve water quality directly in the headwaters and within the entire Scatter Creek watershed.

Mr. Stussy asked about the boundary line adjustment. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw explained the property is a total of 85 acres. The proposal is to purchase 79 acres, as the owner would like to remain in the home. The land was appraised two years ago.

Ms. Napier requested that the temperature issue be clarified in the proposal regarding how it impacts the overall scale of the issue. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw acknowledged the request.

**Controlling Salmon Impeding Noxious Weeds in the Chehalis Basin:** Mr. Delvin presented the proposal.

The overarching goal of the project is to improve riparian habitat function in priority subbasins by controlling knotweed and other salmon impeding noxious weeds and implementing landowner outreach efforts. The proposal includes four main elements:

1. Knotweed control and riparian restoration in the Satsop subbasin by The Nature Conservancy and other project partners including Veteran's Conservation Corps.

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2. A comprehensive survey of all Chehalis Basin rivers and tributaries to identify locations of knotweed and Brazilian Elodea infestations, conducted in partnership with WDFW and salmon biologist for the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation.
3. Treatment of Brazilian Elodea in the main stem Chehalis River completed in partnership with Thurston County Noxious Weed Control Board and Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation.
4. Education and outreach regarding the threat of aquatic noxious weeds within Grays Harbor County, specifically in subbasins with depressed salmon stocks, in cooperation with Grays Harbor Noxious Weed Control Board.

Ms. Napier inquired about the role of the Veteran's Conservation Corps. Mr. Delvin indicated the group will provide surveys and outreach.

Mr. Lundgren reported a well-attended and constructive working group meeting was held regarding the viability of the SRFB proposal. An adequate connection with the tribe was not made prior to the meeting. Mr. Lundgren indicated he will contact Mr. Olson regarding the issue.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw commented that action involving invasive weeds will be very beneficial.

Ms. Napier suggested adding key elements to the proposal, such as depressed stock priority and benefits to water quality and riparian conditions.

Mr. Stussy recommended connecting with Mr. Olson regarding the status of spring Chinook. He also suggested mentioning past and present phases and results.

Ms. Napier suggested the proposal include descriptions of phasing, monitoring, and depressed stocks.

Mr. Stussy suggested the group work with co-managers throughout the process.

Ms. Napier reviewed the following proposals (project sponsors were not in attendance):

**Beaver Creek Fish Passage:** Sponsored by WDFW

Beaver Creek is a tributary of lower Johns River. The creek enters the Johns River estuary through two 3.5-foot diameter culverts that historically had tide gates on them. The tide gates have either fallen off or were removed. The culverts are on an access road in the Johns River wildlife area and are owned by WDFW. The creek will support juvenile rearing for Chinook, Chum, Coho, Steelhead, Cutthroat, and resident trout, as well as supporting limited adult spawning of Chum, Coho, and trout. An intensive habitat survey indicates there is extensive rearing habitat (14,892 square meters), but only 111 square meters of spawning habitat upstream from the culverts. Existing habitat conditions can be categorized as high quality and include both estuary and freshwater.

The project addresses a fish passage barrier, which is noted as a limiting factor in the Chehalis Basin. Several species of fish will benefit from improved access to extensive estuarine and freshwater rearing and spawning areas. The primary cause of the problem is the pair of undersized culverts. The proposal removes the culverts and replaces them with a bridge, which will be placed in the original channel meander that existed before road fill was placed.

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Ms. DeMond noted there is no proposed bridge size.

Mr. Lehr clarified that the area is tidal.

Mr. Olson indicated the tide gates are no longer attached. He suggested reviewing the tide gates.

Ms. Napier commented that a local partner is required for the project.

**Budd Creek Fish Barrier Culvert Correction:** Sponsored by Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force

The upstream fish barrier, which is under the current road, is a steel culvert three feet in diameter. It will be corrected with a 17-foot wide by 6-foot/10-inch rise Super Core box culvert. The Super Core box culvert option is required to accommodate the low profile of the road over the stream.

Ms. DeMond indicated there is also a second abandonment that realigns back to the original channel. Upstream of the culverts are at least 2.5 stream miles available for rearing and spawning. The project will remove two fish barrier culverts. One is on an existing county road and the second is located on an abandoned portion of the old county road.

**Decker Creek Habitat Conservation – Phase 2:** Sponsored by Capitol Land Trust

The acquisition site consists of a large, intact forested and open-water riparian/wetland/bog complex that provides critical spawning, rearing, and migration habitat for summer and fall Chinook, Coho, Chum, Cutthroat and winter steelhead. The site is located along Decker Creek and contains approximately 80 acres of side-channel and off-channel habitat. Decker Creek is a major salmon-producing tributary. Two depressed stocks are present on site.

Ms. Napier suggesting clarifying within the proposal why HCP and Green Diamond regulations are not adequate for the proposed project.

Mr. Stussy suggested including the anticipated phases in the proposal.

**Eaton Creek Fish Barrier Culvert Correction:** Sponsored by Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force

The project will remove the only fish barrier culvert on north fork Eaton Creek. Eaton Creek is 3.6 miles long and flows into the Chehalis River at RM 28.7. The barrier culvert is under a county road at stream mile 0.7 from the river, just upstream of a large, privately owned parcel used for pasture and two residences.

Ms. DeMond reported the barrier is approximately 33% passable.

Mr. Stussy suggested the proposal should clarify the amount of habitat.

Discussion followed regarding preparation for projected inflation costs. Ms. Napier reminded sponsors to use 2008 or 2009 inflation costs depending on the proposal.

**Sam's Canal Rehab:** Sponsored by City of McCleary

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A small stream flowing through the town of McCleary has been altered in a manner that blocks fish passage and impairs fish habitat. Its banks have been armored, the stream straightened to accommodate City development, and diverted through two long culverts. There is a fish barrier debris rack installed, removal of riparian vegetation, stream complexity limited by lack of LWD, and sediment impacted from upstream land use. Even with these shortfalls, salmon are observed at the debris rack attempting to migrate upstream. The proposal will correct fish passage by installing a fish passage device.

Discussion followed regarding fish passage devices, which are mechanisms that catch debris, while allowing fish to move through.

Chair Amrine stated the proposal should also clarify that the project site is a beneficial migration area.

Ms. Napier suggested the proposal describe the long-term intent of the City in terms of the issue, including salmon priority and goals.

**Next Meeting Agenda**

Ms. Napier reported the next meeting is scheduled for May 11, 2007. The meeting will be held at the Lewis Conservation District Office from 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Ranking criteria and a strategy update will be presented. Ms. Napier requested members present any follow-up questions for project sponsors at the next meeting.

Members agreed to set June 1, 2007 as the first draft application (SRFB) deadline and follow the schedule drafted by Ms. Napier, which was distributed earlier in the meeting. Ms. Napier said she would like the information for reviewers when visiting the project sites.

Ms. Napier commended everyone for their work and participation during the SRFB application process.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, Chair Amrine adjourned the meeting at 12:21 p.m.

Prepared by Jessica Tate, Recording Secretary  
Puget Sound Meeting Services