

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP  
HABITAT WORK GROUP  
Lewis Conservation District Office  
1544 Bishop Road  
Chehalis, WA  
December 12, 2008, 2008  
9:30 a.m.**

**Meeting Summary**

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**PRESENT:**

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County  
Lonnie Crumley, Streamworks Consulting  
Eric Delvin, The Nature Conservancy  
Bob Amrine, Lewis Conservation District  
Brett DeMond, Streamworks Consulting  
Joel Green, Quinault Indian Nation  
Jim Hill, Citizen, Lewis County  
Debbie Holden, Creative Community Solutions

Valerie Gow, Puget Sound Meeting Services  
Janet Strong, Chehalis Basin Land Trust  
Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College  
Jamie Glasgow, Wild Fish Conservancy  
Cat Moore, Capitol Land Trust  
Rich Carlson, US Fish & Wildlife Service  
John Kleim, Creative Community Services  
Bob Burkle, Washington Department of Fish and  
Wildlife (WDFW)

**Welcome, Introductions, and Adjustments to the Agenda**

Chair Bob Amrine called the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Habitat Work Group (HWG) meeting to order at 9:34 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Ms. Napier reviewed the meeting agenda.

*Jim Hill arrived at the meeting.*

**Recap of Salmon Recovery Funding Board Meeting**

Ms. Napier reported on the results of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) meeting held on December 11, 2008. For the Grays Harbor County Lead Entity, three projects were submitted for funding as well as alternate projects. In September, the review panel indicated that there were some issues with two of the Quinault Indian Nation's projects. Subsequently, partial funding was received for one Grays Harbor County's alternate project - Preacher's Slough.

Mr. Kleim questioned the number of Lead Entities within the region. Ms. Napier said there are four Lead Entities within the region. Mr. Kleim asked why the SRFB selected the Preacher Slough project over other projects within the region. Ms. Napier said of the four Lead Entities, Grays Harbor County was the only one that submitted alternate projects. Ms. Napier explained that the way the region operates, the region prioritizes projects by Lead Entity. Each Lead Entity has a prioritized list and each entity has an allocation of funds.

Lonnie Crumley described the Preacher's Slough project. The project involves removing fill and building a 120-foot bridge where Preacher's Slough Road crosses the slough in the Chehalis River Surge Plain Natural Area Preserve. The road blocks fish migration. The bridge will preserve important public access for fishing, walking, small boat launching, and tribal treaty fishing access. The project sponsor is also applying for US Fish & Wildlife Service funds. The total project cost is approximately \$300,000. The project sponsor, Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force, is seeking funding from the Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program and the National Fish Passage Program.

*Jamie Glasgow arrived at the meeting.*

The SRFB is gearing up for the next funding round.

Rich Carlson said he is substituting for Brian Peck until Mr. Peck's replacement is hired. The announcement for the position has closed. Three federal government employees and three non-federal government individuals applied for the position.

Full applications are due at the close of business later in the day for the Chehalis Basin Fisheries Restoration Program funds. Volunteers are needed to assist in reviewing the applications. The funding level will be approximately the same as last year of between \$180,000 and \$200,000.

Projects that might qualify for Western Native Trout Initiative (WNTI) or the National Fish Passage Program were forwarded on to the regional office. Mr. Peck administered the three programs, which has since been allocated between Mr. Carlson and another employee.

Mr. Carlson shared information on the status of the funding programs and anticipated funding levels. He noted funds cannot be released until the funds are appropriated from congress. Often, it's difficult to implement a project the same year the project is selected to receive funding.

Joel Green, Lee Napier, Brett DeMond, and Bob Amrine volunteered to assist in reviewing projects submitted for the Chehalis Basin Fisheries Restoration Program.

Bob Burkle reported on his attendance to the Flood Authority meeting involving the US Army Corps of Engineers, DOE, WDFW, and others and discussions about initiating the dike building project within the Chehalis basin. The most significant information shared is the reopening of the mitigation agreement and beginning over because of new calculations required based on 2007 flood data. There was a significant change that will require a new design of the project. Reopening the mitigation agreement will entail looking for new mitigation sites. Mr. Burkle noted he shared information on the existing Chehalis Basin Watershed Plan and a Detailed Implementation Plan as well as the Lead Entity Salmon Recovery Plan. There are many aspects to consider. Mitigation interests pertaining to DOE will involve impacts to wetlands and replacement of wetlands. However, there will be some wide-reaching changes in hydrology involving the elevation of Skookumchuck Dam to provide more storage and more dikes within the greater Centralia floodplain. It is likely some of the former proposed dikes will be raised based on new flood elevations and new construction that has occurred in the interim.

Ms. Napier described the makeup of the Flood Authority, which includes representatives from Grays Harbor, Thurston, and Lewis Counties, the cities of Aberdeen, Montesano, Centralia, Chehalis, and Oakville, towns of Bucoda and Pe Ell, and the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation. The Twin Cities Flood Damage Reduction Project is the name of the Corps project. There is also a state team involved with representatives from the Governor's Office, Office of Financial Management (OFM), DOE, WDFW, Washington State Department of Transportation, and the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development.

Ms. Napier said the Flood Authority was reinstated last spring/early summer. The City of Oakville requested membership as well as the Quinault Indian Nation. The Authority closed membership only to those jurisdictions with land located within the Chehalis River floodplain.

Mr. Burkle reported Laura Orr is the contact for the Corps.

Discussion ensued on WDFW's involvement in the process. The flood model will need to be updated with new flood information. Mr. Burkle commented that it will be many years before the project is completed. There are pros and cons concerning dikes, especially if they fail. Preventive measures are limited in any engineered flood control projects. There will be many subcommittees involved in the project studying all aspects of any solution. Mr. Green commented that at the very minimum, there should be some intensive analysis of what the potential affects of any project is before it's implemented. He questioned the involvement of the Chehalis Basin Partnership. Ms. Napier said the Partnership was asked to become involved before the Flood Authority was formed. However, due to the funding appropriation through the legislation, Lewis County is the lead agency. Some members of the Partnership attend the meetings. The Partnership is serving as an informational forum, but there isn't a strong relationship between the two entities.

Eric Delvin asked about the funding opportunity through the Marine Resource Committee. Ms. Napier advised that Grays Harbor County is taking the lead on exploring the development of a Marine Resource Committee for Grays Harbor. There is a larger effort involving the outer coast Marine Resource Committee being led by the WDFW.

Cat Moore provided an update on the Decker Creek project located in Mason County. The project is providing permanent protection for a 500-acre riparian/wetland complex near Matlock. A new survey was completed of the area. The area is Green Diamond property involving several parcels requiring a new survey. A biological inventory of the property was completed. The goal is to close on the property next year based on Green Diamond's desired timeline. Mason County will own the land. The area includes wetlands with a timber island in the middle of the property. The property was planned for logging. The creek is very productive for Coho salmon.

Ms. Napier commented on the honorable mention of a "Wow" project by the SRFB of Chehalis River Basin Land Trust's Hoquiam Surge Plain Habitat Acquisition project, which was funded at \$383,100. The project was highlighted during the SRFB meeting.

### **SRFB Project Website**

John Kleim and Debbie Holden, Creative Community Solutions, reported on the proposal for a website to assist project sponsors applying for SRFB funding. Since the last meeting, members provided feedback. The presentation is a preliminary review of the website and whether more information is desired. Ms. Holden displayed the website and reviewed different pages within the website.

Committee feedback included:

- Include ability to convert website information to OCR.
- Include a tabbed column on the left-hand side for each subbasin.
- Include a usable stream catalog for accessing different streams.

John Kleim said the website includes links to other sites for documents that are important and included on the county server. It is envisioned the website will reside on Grays Harbor County's website. The goal is not just linking to other documents on other sites, but ensuring that the library includes important documents are resident within the county server to ensure ease of accessibility by the user. The goal is to provide as much information as possible to the user during the research and development of a project application.

Ms. Holden reviewed the page on the ranking guide and ranking criteria to assist users completing an application. The goal is enabling submission of better applications with all points covered clearly.

Ms. Napier commented that within the ranking criteria, there may be some difficulty in quantifying some of the responses. For instance, within a barrier project, it's difficult to quantify the amount of habitat opened or improvement to the quality of the habitat. Mr. Kleim said a technical committee could work on providing a better definition. Some of it might be subjective as 10 projects may meet the classic definitions but in another year, some projects may not. Mr. Kleim suggested that in defining the quality of habitat for instance, the applicant could access the riparian assessment and include information on the riparian assessment in terms of what it speaks to in terms of quality of habitat. There are a number of resources within the library the applicant can access and cite as references for the quality of the habitat. Ms. Napier suggested that approach needs to be further defined for the user. Mr. Kleim said he could also include a "words of advice" page on how to write a grant application, which would assist the applicant in using the form and utilizing the available resources.

Mr. Kleim said the website will be available in January for access by the committee to provide additional feedback and suggestions.

Discussion followed on the ability of entering and segregating project data for various reviews until approved for submission. Mr. Kleim said it's possible under the Adobe system to collect different forms for integration into a spreadsheet that can be transferred to a database using Access or Excel. Members discussed the option of having the ability of submitting data and saving documents to a file to avoid duplication. Mr. Kleim commented on the importance of maintaining up-to-date readers. Ms. Holden confirmed it's possible to save documents for accessing later.

Ms. Holden asked members to provide input on the information and accuracy of the data.

Mr. Kleim said the goal is to ensure the website is available at the beginning of the year with the committee providing feedback on the criteria page. Ms. Napier said that for the next SRFB funding round, letters of intent are due in March. Mr. Kleim said the goal is have the website available by March. He asked members to consider contributions to the library, such as important resource documents the committee believes are important. He reviewed several resource documents currently included in the library.

Mr. Carlson provided link information for US Fish and Wildlife programs, such as a county-by-county species list.

Mr. Delvin provided a CD of ecoregional assessments, which provide a regional scale, biodiversity-based context for implementing conservation efforts. They identify ecologically significant areas for conservation action with a goal of protecting representative biodiversity.

Members discussed PRISM and the Habitat Work Schedule. Projects submitted to the SRFB are submitted through PRISM, and they are supposed to be included on the Habitat Work Schedule.

Mr. Burkle recommended not including specific contact names on the website but list the program office information because of ongoing staff changes.

Members agreed to include Ms. Napier as the Lead Entity contact person.

A suggestion was offered of adding a calendar of major events occurring within the basin. Mr. Kleim said he and Ms. Napier discussed working on another website focused on the Chehalis basin. However, it is dependent upon funding, and the website would need to be updated and maintained.

Ms. Napier suggested including funded projects as a link to demonstrate what is being accomplished as well as the application to demonstrate components of a successful application.

Mr. Carlson suggested including other potential sources of funding.

Several members indicated they are contemplating submitting project applications for the next SRFB funding round.

Mr. Carlson commented on the availability of a funding source that hasn't been utilized in the basin involving the National Coastal Wetlands Grant under US Fish & Wildlife Services. Funds are used for acquiring and restoring estuaries and coastal wetland habitat and prairies. Funding is available for up to \$1 million for each applicant.

### **Other Business**

Janet Strong reported on the recent completion of several restoration plantings in coordination with several schools and the Chehalis Basin Land Trust involving over 150 youths at Little Riverside Park in Centralia along the Skookumchuck River and also on land owned off the Black River near Littlerock. Plantings included wetland tolerant species, such as willows, big leaf maples, alders, and dogwood.

Ms. Spaulding reported on the need for volunteers to begin planning for next year's Watershed Festival. Ms. Napier said there are also opportunities for vendor displays.

Ms. Strong commented on the positive feedback she received about the festival this year within the community.

### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for January 9, 2009. An update on the website will be included on the agenda.

Mr. Carlson requested a review after the meeting on the ranking and review of applications for the Chehalis Basin Fisheries Restoration Program.

Mr. Glasgow asked for time on the February meeting agenda to discuss the on-the-ground survey effort.

### **Adjournment**

With there being no further business, Chair Amrine adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

