

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
HABITAT WORK GROUP
Lewis Conservation District Office
1554 Bishop Road
Chehalis, WA
May 8, 2009
9:30 AM**

Meeting Summary

PRESENT:

Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Thurston County Citizen	Janel Spaulding, Grays Harbor College
Brett DeMond, Streamworks LLC	Cheri Lindgren, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County	Lonnie Crumley, Stream Works LLC
April Boe, The Nature Conservancy	Jim Hill, Citizen, Lewis County
Bob Burkle Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW)	Chris Conklin, Quinault Indian Nation (QIN)
Mark Swartout, Thurston County	Miles Batchelder, Washington Coast Sustainable
Jason Lundgren, Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)	Salmon Partnership (WCSSP)
Miranda Plumb, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	Kathryn Moore, Capitol Land Trust
Birdie Davenport, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	Craig Swanson, Lewis County Public Works
Glen Connelly, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation	Mike Kuttel Jr., Thurston Conservation District

Welcome & Introductions

Lee Napier called the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Habitat Work Group (HWG) meeting to order at 9:38 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) Grant Cycle
Continue Review of Early Applications

Sampson Stream and Bridge Restoration Project

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw reported the Sampson Stream and Bridge Restoration Project sponsored by the Heernett Environmental Foundation is an 80-acre parcel located at the west end of Cozy Valley. The stream on the project site is the primary stream for the upper headwaters area. The entire network of headwater tributaries provide critical habitat for juvenile rearing and refuge. The headwater systems have historically and currently been used by juvenile salmonid, with spawning in the adjacent system of NorthCraft Creek. The first phase of the project focuses on instream construction along 1,400 linear feet. The goal is replacing hydraulic complexity in the channels by strategically adding large woody debris (LWD), river rock, and incorporating snags along the stream system to enhance crucial juvenile rearing habitat. The slopes are fairly limited and there is no velocity issue. A long-term target is creating a friendly area for beaver inhabiting the area.

One major issue is access. The existing bridge is old, unsafe, and needs repair to provide temporary access to both sides of the stream system. The goal is replacing the bridge with a permanent structure.

In response to questions from Ms. Napier regarding a temporary bridge, Ms. Holbrook-Shaw described the difference between a temporary and permanent bridge. Ms. Napier commented that a permanent bridge makes more sense because ongoing maintenance will be required. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw said she

would like a permanent bridge crossing, which would increase project costs. After placement of LWD, river rock, and snags, the next phase includes riparian planting along the new wet edge.

Members discussed the width of the channel and utilizing a flat railroad car to provide access to the site.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw referred to a map and pointed to a five-acre section that will remain with the landowner. She noted the location of the existing bridge crossing and provided additional information about on-the-ground characteristics. She referred to a permanent concrete bridge constructed at Crawford Creek last summer, which cost approximately the same as a temporary structure.

Education and outreach (E&O) is a significant component of the Heernett Foundation's mission. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw said she'd like to develop a permanent water quality monitoring station on the site for educational purposes.

Discussion ensued on accessing other parts of the project site. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw advised that the agency will use an existing crossing and culvert.

Mr. Burkle said it appears there is a road leading to a development off the property. He asked whether culverts are passable. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw indicated there is a single home adjacent to the project site. The culverts are passable. Heernett Foundation previously tried to purchase the home site, which was another SRFB project. She displayed a map outlining Heernett Foundation's ownership in the vicinity of Scatter Creek and State Route 507.

Members commented on the meandering system and whether velocities are sufficient to form channels. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw said another goal is creating water storage capabilities. The objective is replacing hydraulic complexity in the channels for juveniles and creating effective habitat. After water boundaries are established, another next step is working on the shade component.

Mr. Crumley suggested focusing on the access component. A concrete bridge could be delivered for approximately \$29,000.

Mr. Lundgren asked about installation costs in light of hydric soils. Mr. Crumley described a new engineering process for installing bridges that appears to work well. Footings are placed using filter fabric, layers of gabion rock, and fill in 12-inch lifts.

Discussion ensued on whether a hardened crossing would be more practical than a bridge.

Mr. Swartout asked whether there have been any changes in hydrology, specifically more water during the summer months through other restoration projects in the valley. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw replied that water remains in the area because the site is within the lower end of the valley adjacent to the confluence of NorthCraft Creek. She referred to a map and identified existing wetland vegetation and a high water table, which will help with the long-term effectiveness of the project.

Ms. Plumb asked whether any historical photos of the reach and network of headwater tributaries are available. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw said photographs from the 1940s reveal ditches. The property has historically been maintained as a farm with ditch systems.

Additional discussion followed concerning placement of LWD for habitat purposes, canary grass, and a flood fence concept using cottonwood logs. Cottonwood logs are placed in the ground with an auger well below the water table. Eventually, cottonwood dominates the entire riparian area.

Mr. Burkle asked about connectivity or fish passage issues downstream to Scatter Creek. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw referred to a map and identified where juvenile Coho Salmon and Cutthroat Trout have been found. Box culverts are located under SR 507. She said she's not aware of connectivity or fish passage issues downstream to Scatter Creek.

Mr. Lundgren suggested a contractor could likely repair the bridge for a fraction of what it will cost to construct a permanent bridge structure.

Ms. Napier noted a discrepancy in the total cost on the application and the cost estimate summary. Additionally, the local match of \$12,000 on the application differs from the \$10,000 match shown on the cost estimate summary.

Mr. Crumley asked whether there is any consideration for a bridge to access upper wetlands to increase Coho habitat. Mr. Lundgren said he's not sure what type of heavy machinery would be required for a planting project. It's unlikely the SRFB would pay for a bridge.

Ms. Napier suggested the project application should also include a description on how the project will benefit salmon habitat, as well as the benefits of the bridge.

Mr. Crumley offered a suggestion of falling some of the trees on the property and placing a log stringer bridge across the water. Mr. Lundgren said it's possible a bridge using the existing abutments could be funded if it's a small element of the overall project cost.

Members discussed adjusting the project budget. Ms. Napier asked whether additional discussion or conducting a site visit would best serve the project. Ms. Holbrook-Shaw said she supports either option.

Preachers Slough Fish Passage #2 Project

Ms. Napier noted that the Preachers Slough Fish Passage Project was partially funded through the SRFB last year.

Birdie Davenport presented the Preachers Slough Fish Passage #2 Project. Funding and advancement of the project is dependent on economic stimulus funds. Approximately \$68,000 of the \$225,000 project cost is committed at this point. DNR should know by May 21 whether economic stimulus funding is available. The current request is for 2010. The agency will continue to pursue funding opportunities. If economic stimulus funding becomes available, DNR will withdraw the SRFB funding request. Permits are in place for two design options based on the funding package.

Ms. Davenport described the status of a comprehensive hydraulics analysis requested by WDFW and estimated to cost \$30,000.

Mr. Burkle said he visited the site after the 2008 flood. At that time, there was a 4-foot head differential between the upstream and downstream side. A 4-foot head differential is significant to any developments downstream such as trails, boardwalks, and homes. Reestablishing the side channel is good for fish; however, unintended consequences could occur destroying the railroad grade of the trail or developed areas just downstream of boardwalks.

Ms. Davenport said that currently there is one home in close proximity to Preacher's Slough.

Mr. Crumley commented that gaining seven miles of surge plain for juvenile rearing is a major benefit for all fish species.

Discussion ensued on road grades and an elevated approach to the site.

Ms. Napier suggested modifying the application to reflect the match and funding committed for the project.

Mr. Lundgren said it's not necessary for the department to show SRFB's contribution in this year's budget. He and Ms. Davenport have discussed making last year's project a design-only project. In that case, the match doesn't need to be reflected. The application should reflect design as funded.

Ms. Davenport confirmed the total project cost is \$225,000. DNR has the required match.

Discussion followed on potential cost increases if the project is not constructed until 2010. Ms. Napier proposed revisiting the cost prior to September 1, 2009, so that changes could be made to the application if necessary. Mr. Crumley suggested adding a 15% contingency.

In response to a comment from Ms. Plumb regarding an 80-foot and 120-foot bridge, Ms. Davenport said the stimulus project is for the 120-foot bridge. She'll revise the application to reflect the 80-foot bridge contingency project.

Wickett Flood Plain Connection/Barrier Removal Project

Glen Connelly presented the Wickett Flood Plain Connection/Barrier Removal Project proposed by the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation. The Chehalis Tribe purchased the property just downstream and across the river from Oakville. The former owner was a farmer. Following the floods in 1996, the owner built a dike across the river to protect agricultural property during flood events. He shared several pictures of the project site. The project involves three property owners - the Chehalis Tribe, WDFW, and Eldon Longborg. The proposal is removal of a dike built by the farmer and opening lowlands to floodplains allowing natural flow of the river system.

Two small barriers on Davis Creek will be removed. One barrier is located on property owned by WDFW. The barrier is a small dike crossing Davis Creek near the confluence of the Chehalis River. The dike is completely impassable to fish making migration up Davis Creek impossible. The other barrier is located downstream on private property owned by Eldon Longborg. A 50-foot farm road with an undersized culvert was built to provide a crossing over Davis Creek. Unfortunately, the culvert is failing and completely obstructs the creek and blocks fish passage. Removing both dikes will open up approximately 14 miles of off-channel habitat along Davis Creek.

Members discussed access and the WDFW dike. Mr. Burkle clarified that the dike was built prior to WDFW acquiring the property.

Mr. Connelly reported the Chehalis Tribe purchased the property specifically for habitat restoration. After removal of the dike, the Tribe will plant trees within the riparian zone to establish a 150-foot forest buffer. The Tribe previously adopted an ordinance prohibiting development in the floodplain.

Mr. Swartout asked whether dike removal is included in the Chehalis Tribe's Flood Hazard Management Plan, which is identified on the Flood Authority's project list. Mr. Connelly indicated that he's unsure and will follow up on the information.

Discussion followed on the Sickman Ford Bridge and the amount of fill on the Oakville side, a possibility that dikes are causing channel migration pressure towards Oakville, and whether the total project cost is \$150,000 or \$140,500. In response to the latter, Mr. Connelly indicated he'll follow up.

Ms. Davenport suggested correcting "food" within the first line of the second paragraph under the evaluation proposal to reflect "flood."

Ms. Napier indicated the project application should include signed documents from WDFW and Mr. Longborg demonstrating landowner willingness, which should also be entered into PRISM prior to application review.

Mr. Burkle asked whether any plans meeting WDFW fish passage guidelines are available for the culverts. Mr. Connelly advised that he'll follow up.

Ms. Napier said the plans could be entered into PRISM for the review team's review and feedback.

Ms. DeMond commented that the \$22,000 allocated to replace the three culverts appears to be low. Mr. Crumley agreed and said the culverts will likely cost approximately \$28,000 each.

Mr. Burkle indicated that WDFW's preference is one large culvert rather than three barrel culverts.

Ms. Napier advised the proponent to provide additional details on restoration activities, design, and costs.

Mr. Lundgren said the cost for debris removal also appears too low.

Ms. Davenport said the project description doesn't discuss culvert replacement but speaks to removing "these" barriers.

Mr. Swartout suggested the narrative should match the budget.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw asked about the disposal location for fill from the dike removal. Mr. Crumley said he'll work with Andy Olson on the project application.

Lucas Creek Tributary, MP 4.2, and Lucas Creek MP 4.3, Barrier Removal Projects

Craig Swanson, Lewis County Public Works, presented the Lucas Creek Tributary, MP 4.2 and Lucas Creek MP 4.3, Barrier Removal Projects. Both proposals are located on tributary streams of Lucas Creek. Both culverts are degraded with internal slope breaks and are partial barriers to fish passage. Salmonid species include Coho, Steelhead, Chinook, and Cutthroat Trout.

The existing riparian habitat at MP 4.2 is undisturbed and the understory is intact. The proposed project is replacing an existing 4-foot span by 36-foot culvert with a 12.5-foot span by 70-foot culvert countersunk 20% using WDFW's 2003 Design of Roadway Culverts for Fish Passage – No Slope Option. In addition to replacing the culverts, streambed materials will be installed throughout the culvert providing year-round access to .6 linear miles of spawning and rearing habitat. On the upstream side, the intent is to provide a better downstream channel alignment to the culvert. Currently, there is a 90-degree

bend at that culvert. Additional project objectives include installation of LWD upstream and downstream, planting of trees and shrubs in disturbed areas, and monitoring of fish passage to document success.

Ms. Plumb asked whether MP 4.2 is located just below MP 4.3. Mr. Swanson advised that is it. Lucas Creek Road has had several fish passage barrier removal projects to date. Photographs reveal juvenile Coho and Steelhead Smelt are present within the system.

Mr. Swanson noted the roads are primitive. There is one resident residing above the culverts. The road is primarily used to access timberland owned by Weyerhaeuser; however, the road needs to remain open for the resident.

Mr. Swanson reviewed the MP 4.3 proposal to restore access to 1.73 miles of spawning and rearing habitat. The culvert replacement design will follow WDFW's 2003 Design of Roadway Culverts for Fish Passage – No Slope Option. Project objectives include replacing an existing 6-foot diameter by 70-foot diameter culvert with a 12-foot diameter by 90-foot culvert countersunk 20%. Other project objectives include placement of streambed gravel and LWD, planting trees and shrubs in disturbed areas, and monitoring to assess fish passage success.

Discussion followed on retaining the 70-foot culvert rather than replacing it with a 90-foot culvert. Mr. Swanson advised that he'll follow up on the suggestion.

Ms. Napier asked whether the 2006 escapement surveys conducted by WDFW could be documented in PRISM. Mr. Swanson said he could attach pertinent survey data to the project application.

Discussion ensued on the Frazee Creek project application. Ms. Napier said she found the project description in PRISM. Mr. Swanson advised that the project description has not changed. Realignment of the channel is recommended to open up approximately three miles of spawning and rearing habitat. The project creates 600 yards of channel, installation of weirs to step down, and reestablishing riparian habitat. There is a 3-foot outfall drop at the culvert to the south fork of the Newaukum River. The price tag is significant. He provided additional details concerning the project and its history.

Ms. Boe asked whether the project will be submitted to the SRFP for funding. Mr. Swanson said he'd like to submit the previous design because the cost to reroute the channel will be more than \$1 million. The application was modified based on the review panel's feedback. He'll update the information in PRISM to reflect the initial proposal.

Project review criteria

A project scoring sheet and a ranking criteria document were distributed for review. Ms. DeMond reported the review committee evaluated three projects using the proposed scoring sheet and ranking criteria, which worked well. The information is also useful to help applicants understand how projects will be evaluated. Appendix E – Benefits and Certainty Evaluation Definitions, Technical Review and Project Evaluation, SRFB Manual 18, May 28, 2008, Pages 86-91, will be used for high, medium, and low ranking purposes.

Ms. Boe asked whether a greater than minimum match can be reflected in the proposal, but not in the final contract. Ms. Napier affirmed that it can.

Ms. Napier advised project sponsors to ensure landowner willingness forms are entered in PRISM. Some funds in previous funding cycles were returned because project sponsors were unsuccessful in securing a

local match. Projects that rank high with secured matching funds should have a higher priority over those that don't have the match. The issue could be addressed in the criteria, or reviewers can consider that piece when making decisions.

Discussion ensued on match certainty and project sponsors with a secured match.

Mr. Lundgren advised that alternate projects could be submitted as backups to help ensure grant funding is not lost.

Ms. Boe suggested it's not as important to include a greater than minimum match in the criteria as long as everyone agrees the ranking committee will review the match on a case-by-case basis and project applicants secure the match by the deadline.

Ms. DeMond suggested striking "Final" within the last sentence of the introductory paragraph.

Mr. Swartout suggested the range should be "0-3" rather than "3" for criteria under Partnerships/Outreach and that the title should be changed from "Max. Pts." to "Range."

Discussion followed on scoring for minimum match criteria and scoring accordingly for projects with large volunteer labor forces. Mr. Burkle commented that the criteria for category 4, Partnerships/Outreach, are not necessarily called out in Appendix E.

In response to a question from Ms. Holbrook-Shaw on projects with more than a minimum match, Ms. Napier said proponents should describe that component but not include it as a budget item.

Ms. Davenport added that project applicants could provide a dollar value for the additional match in the description.

Ms. Napier suggested describing the additional match in a separate memorandum to the ranking committee. The memorandum would then be attached to the project application.

Discussion followed on the relative rating for criteria.

Ms. Napier asked about the project review team meeting prior to the August 14, 2009 meeting to review projects. Mr. Burkle favored meeting beforehand to test ranking criteria.

Future Meetings

Ms. Napier reviewed the HWG calendar, which includes reviewing additional projects on June 12 and a needs assessment workshop on July 10. WCSSP is moving forward with a regional plan. It's important for members to attend the July 10 workshop because the HWG will conduct a gap analysis for our area and inclusion in the proposed regional plan.

Discussion ensued on the project ranking committee tentatively meeting on August 7 to review the projects. Ms. Napier said project applications are due by July 31 and will be ranked on August 14.

Ms. Napier reported the HWG will have an opportunity to begin discussing interregional funding criteria for 2010 with the WCSSP at a meeting scheduled on June 23 from 1:00pm to 4:00pm at Montesano City Hall. She encouraged members to attend the meeting.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, Ms. Napier adjourned the meeting at 11:59 a.m.

Cheri Lindgren, Recording Secretary
Puget Sound Meeting Services