

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
HABITAT WORK GROUP**
Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
600 Capitol Way
Olympia, WA
October 8, 2010
9:30 AM

Meeting Summary

PRESENT

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County
Bob Amrine, Lewis County Conservation District
Mark Swartout, Thurston County
April Boe, Nature Conservancy
Bob Burkle, WDFW
Chris Conklin, Quinault Indian Tribe
Janel Spaulding, Chehalis Basin Partnership

Miranda Plumb, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Roberta Davenport, DNR
Bob Thomas, US Army Corp of Engineers
John Kliem, Creative Community Solutions
Debbie Holden, Creative Community Solutions
Cheri Lindgren, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Andy Olson, Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis
Reservation

Welcome & Introductions

Chair Bob Amrine called the October 8, 2010 meeting of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Habitat Work Group (HWG) to order at 9:39 a.m. Everyone present provided self-introductions.

Facilitated Discussion – Habitat Work Plan for the Chehalis Lead Entity Area

John Kliem, Creative Community Solutions (CCS), reported on Lee Napier's recent appointment as the Interim Planning Director for Grays Harbor County.

Janel Spaulding reported that Ms. Napier developed a work plan for the HWG that also describes her role with the committee.

Miranda Plumb arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Kliem reported Ms. Napier has asked CCS to consider becoming more involved with the HWG and its day-to-day operations. Ms. Napier will remain the Lead Entity Coordinator for the Chehalis basin.

Members were asked to provide input on the committee's role and expectations.

Debbie Holden asked members to consider and provide feedback on: *What would you like to see the HWG do over the next year?*

Ms. Spaulding asked whether another Grays Harbor County staff member will act as the lead staff for the HWG. Mr. Kliem said staff did not discuss that option. In the interim, Ms. Napier is looking to CCS to help provide support services to the HWG.

Mark Swartout asked about representation of the region at the Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership (WCSSP). Mr. Kliem said he's currently facilitating the sustainability plan discussions. One option includes assisting in the drafting of the plan, which hasn't been determined. Mr. Swartout asked

whether Ms. Napier will continue her role as fiscal agent for the WCSSP. Mr. Kliem said he believes that role will continue.

Roberta Davenport arrived at the meeting.

Mr. Amrine commented that Grays Harbor County is the lead coordinator for the Chehalis basin watershed. Mr. Kliem affirmed that relationship wouldn't change. CCS is only providing support services at this point.

Mr. Swartout outlined the governance structure for the WCSSP, which provides for four directors for the Chehalis basin. Ms. Napier's role on the WCSSP is as the fiscal agent rather than representing the Chehalis basin. He recommended members should contact Andy Olson, Terry Baltzell, or him as alternates on issues involving the WCSSP.

Chris Conklin asked whether the HWG could appoint a lead coordinator if Grays Harbor County cannot provide that support. Mr. Swartout affirmed that it's possible. The fiscal agent must be a legal entity that can enter into contracts. Mr. Kliem said Ms. Napier's intent is to maintain the quality of leadership and meeting the needs of the HWG. The intent is for Grays Harbor County to continue its role as fiscal agent. CCS will assist with the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) process and developing the Habitat Work Schedule.

Members discussed responsibility for coordination and presentation of projects to the SRFB, which is currently performed by Ms. Napier. April Boe offered that someone from the local area could also attend the meetings. Mr. Amrine agreed the Lead Entity Coordinator should attend because of familiarity with the Chehalis basin area.

Members discussed the regional technical group representation. Mr. Amrine explained that grant proposals will continue to be received by the HWG for ranking and then forwarded to the region for consideration. Mr. Swartout added that WCSSP is establishing a technical committee to develop a sub-allocation process by February 1, 2011. If a sub-allocation process is not designed by that time, the parties agreed to utilize SRFB's technical committee for the sub-allocation process. The technical committee will need to appoint a chair to facilitate the meetings. It's possible a consultant could fill that role.

Lee Napier arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Napier advised that it's likely not feasible for the SRFB's technical committee to provide the sub-allocation process support. Mr. Kliem said it's important that the process benefits all parties.

Mr. Conklin suggested the process should be science based.

Ms. Plumb advised that she was asked to serve on the technical committee to represent the region. Mr. Amrine agreed it's critical that US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) is represented on the technical committee.

Ms. Napier confirmed that Grays Harbor County will retain the role of Lead Entity Coordinator and Fiscal Agent.

Mr. Kliem commented that Mr. Olson and Mr. Swartout can also represent the interests of Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIA) 22 and 23 and the HWG at WCSSP.

Ms. Napier described how she envisions CCS interfacing with the HWG and providing staff support. The HWG will work with CCS to develop a three-year work plan. The issue is whether to focus on the contract deliverable to produce an annual list for the SRFB or develop a list for the SRFB, grant programs, or Community Salmon Fund. Mr. Amrine and Ms. Plumb agreed it makes the most sense to develop a three-year work plan for all three interests. Ms. Napier said the work plan will inform the Habitat Work Schedule.

Mr. Swartout provided additional information on the three-year work plan for SRFB projects, which is an inventory of potential projects updated on an annual basis. He referred to the Devil's Head project that was identified in the three-year work plan for WRIA 12. All lead entities in the South Sound contributed funds of approximately \$11 million to the Nisqually Estuary, a project of regional significance. That project serves as an example of regional coordination among lead entities. The next piece was the acquisition of Devil's Head, which was also a project of regional significance. Several entities contributed funds for the acquisition. The project would not have advanced if it had not been identified on the work plan's list of projects.

Discussion followed on who will represent the Chehalis basin at the SRFB, and the role of CCS. Mr. Amrine said it's important that a Lead Entity Coordinator or someone representing that position along with project sponsors attend SRFB meetings. Ms. Napier agreed and indicated at this time, she will continue to serve that role. Specific to the role of the CCS, Mr. Swartout reported he has worked with CCS. Mr. Kliem authored the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan. An issue is sensitivity of the relationships of the lead entities.

Mr. Kliem referred to a WCSSP workshop on November 3 and 4. CCS could assist in writing tasks, which would not result in any type of conflict.

Mr. Swartout said Ms. Holden has offered to help with the Habitat Work Schedule. Ms. Napier advised that she may have a person from the county who could evaluate tasks and assist with data entry so that it tells the story. Entities have typically utilized chapters from respective strategy plans to serve as a framework to organize projects. The Habitat Work Schedule involves different tiers of actions and projects.

Bob Burkle arrived at the meeting.

Members provided feedback on the question: *What would you like to see the HWG do over the next year?*

- Develop the three-work work plan.
- Review and update the Chehalis Basin Habitat Restoration and Conservation Strategy for WRIs 22 and 23. The strategy is the primary plan to recover and restore habitat and fish that informs the three-year work plan. The three-year work plan is typically an addendum to the strategy.
- Align the strategy with regional strategy.
- Habitat Work Schedule.

Mr. Burkle commented that the Habitat Work Schedule will eventually replace PRIZM. Ms. Napier advised that some lead entities are requiring project sponsors to enter information in both PRIZM and the

Habitat Work Schedule. Ms. Holden added that the Habitat Work Schedule also maps projects. The WCSSP covers WRIAs 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24.

Mr. Swartout said three-year work plans can also be entered into the Habitat Work Schedule.

Ms. Plumb reported the Habitat Work Schedule can be accessed at www.ekosystem.us.

Mr. Kliem suggested HWG members should familiarize themselves with the Habitat Work Schedule and the website as well as exploring a stronger relationship with the Marine Resources Committee (MRC) because the estuary is a key part of WRIAs 22 and 23. The MRC is working on marine spatial planning. Ms. Napier advised members to exercise caution when referring to the relationship between the Lead Entity and the MRC. The MRC is seeking a separate distinction and focus from the Lead Entity and the CBP.

Mr. Kliem referred to the advantage of the HWG collaborating with the MRC as it relates to funding and other opportunities.

Mr. Burkle reported that currently, there is no dedicated funding for coastal MRCs. One priority is securing sustained funding enabling the MRC to participate in developing the marine spatial plan for the coast. Regarding the focus question, he suggested developing a strategy utilizing the CBP to outreach and gain more citizen input on the project selection process and socio-economic portion of the ranking procedure. Ms. Napier suggested the HWG should develop a recommendation on how to improve the review process over the winter and provide a report to the Lead Entity. An option is conducting a combined CBP and citizen review. Mr. Amrine said one advantage is that HWG technical experts can help answer citizen questions.

Ms. Plumb suggested that the three-year work plan include prioritizing sub-basins in WRIAs 22 and 23 and identifying best projects for salmon. Ms. Napier acknowledged the comment. She recommended linking prioritizing of sub-basins with the three-year work plan. Ms. Boe suggested a parallel path of updating the strategy.

Mr. Conklin said it could be difficult to agree on the limiting factors to compare across the basin and how to quantify the factors equally.

Discussion ensued on the Flood Authority and a fish study underway that will populate the Shiraz model. Mr. Swartout said the data could be helpful to prioritize sub-basins and inform the three-year work plan. Additional information can be found on WCSSP's website.

Ms. Napier said she's reluctant to indicate that the HWG will review and update the strategy. She suggested deferring the task until the three-year work plan is completed. The three-year work plan could provide guidance to update the strategy and the Habitat Work Schedule.

Conversation followed on acquisition of water rights, instream flows, and challenges associated with applying the strategy to some project types.

Ms. Napier advised that the US Geological Survey (USGS) will provide a report on the agency's summer activities at the November Partnership meeting.

Mr. Conklin stated it appears barrier projects are more successful. Other limiting factors should be addressed that relate to water quality and barrier function. Ms. Napier advised that there is a wealth of information available on barriers. The limiting factor is finding project sponsors.

Mr. Kliem said the discussion folds in well with the three-year plan. The immense size of the Chehalis basin is also a consideration. A clear strategy identifying restoration and protection areas should be developed for each sub-basin

Mr. Olson said barrier projects rise to the top because they are the easiest to defend and there is a clear reference point in the strategy.

Ms. Napier reported the SRFB is interested in an outcome from the Grays Harbor juvenile project that leads to projects, which is another way to inform the work plan. The Thurston Conservation District has completed a riparian assessment to inform the process. It might be time for the HWG to review those documents.

Mr. Amrine said low flows from last year are documented with some fish problems. A project that protects water in the system could be presented to the SRFB.

Mr. Swartout commented that the Partnership is looking at how to improve low stream flows.

Ms. Napier said the work plan is also a tool to inform the General Investigation (GI) Study and mitigation.

Bob Thomas invited feedback from the HWG about the Corps' role with the organization. Mr. Burkle said he would like to see a direct interface with the GI Study. Mr. Swartout provided some historical background on the Ecosystem Restoration GI. The GI also includes flood risk management. Developing a Project Management Plan (PMP) is also required. Discussions are underway with the Governor's Office about the state's role as a nonfederal sponsor rather than Grays Harbor County serving as the sponsor.

Mr. Kliem referred to the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program process underway at Grays Harbor and Lewis Counties. Those federal grant funds can be used to restore ecosystems that prevent flooding and address other hazards within a community. General project ideas must be included in a Hazard Mitigation Plan for eligibility to receive federal funding. A draft plan for Grays Harbor County will be completed in the near future.

Mr. Thomas reported the Corp is in the business of restoration. Mr. Burkle added the Corps conducted a river reach analysis of the lower Satsop River. A river reach analysis of a multitude of basins could provide valuable information. Some information will result from the modeling work that is part of the Twin Cities project. Knowing how the river reaches behave will be essential in managing flooding and for restoration.

Mr. Kliem advised that the role of Corps will evolve based on the agency's experience and participation in the HWG. Mr. Thomas commented on his experience with mitigation and restoration, and specifically his personal and professional interest in restoration. He said he's intrigued about the opportunities to take scientifically based information and analyses to structure a plan resulting in the benefit and connecting the

plan with other resources and funding options. Using terms that match an organization's needs helps to sell a project and tell the story.

Members discussed Ms. Napier's role as Lead Entity Coordinator, her ongoing support to the HWG, and CBP and WCSSP participation. The ultimate goal is staffing for the HWG. Ms. Napier outlined Ms. Spaulding's role to the Partnership and the HWG. Mr. Kliem added that the responsibility for reporting will likely shift to HWG members.

Ms. Boe suggested having members dedicate time on monthly meeting agendas for entities to report on what's new, what's happening, and brainstorm how those activities contribute to the deliverables.

Discussion followed on data entry required for the Habitat Work Schedule and the time to organize and populate the information. Mr. Olson said it should be the project sponsor's responsibility to input data. Ms. Napier agreed but noted not all projects have a project sponsor.

Mr. Kliem commented that another important function of the position is editing to improve project proposals. Training on the Habitat Work Schedule is available on a monthly basis. Ms. Napier suggested the HWG consider hosting a basic training session.

The following summarizes the work schedule envisioned by members for the next year:

- Develop the three-year work plan.
- Implement the Habitat Work Schedule (which will eventually replace PRISM).
- Prioritize sub-basins in WRIAs 22 and 23.
- Develop a strategy to improve the SRFB review and recommendation process to include more citizen participation.
- Review and update the Chehalis Basin Habitat Restoration and Conservation Strategy for WRIAs 22 and 23. The strategy is the primary plan to recover and restore habitat and fish that informs the three-year work plan. The three-year work plan is typically an addendum to the strategy.
- Align the strategy with regional strategy.
- Set aside specific meeting time to report and discuss ideas.
- Incorporate Hazard Management Plan projects into regional plans.
- Host a workshop on implementation strategies (such as best management practices and how to get projects on the ground).

Members suggested the tasks associated with setting aside meeting time to report and discuss ideas, developing a strategy to improve the review and recommendation process, developing the three-year work plan, and the ecosystem GI could all be on parallel paths.

Discussion ensued on flood and hazard mitigation plans, which are required to be updated at least every five years for eligibility of projects to receive federal funding. Mr. Kliem commented that it's important to update Hazard Mitigation Plans annually and recommended members consider brainstorming ideas on ways for interconnection between entities for developing Hazard Mitigation Plans.

Members agreed aligning local strategy with regional strategy, prioritizing sub-basins, and reviewing and updating the strategy could also follow parallel tracks.

Ms. Napier advised that she doesn't have a role with projects after the contracts are signed. There is interest in learning more about successful projects. The SRFB offers successful applicant workshops. Another option is developing a mentoring workshop or network.

Ms. Davenport said she's interested in having the HWG host workshops teaching project sponsors how to be successful.

Ms. Plumb provided additional information on a USFWS program involving a series of contractor workshops in partnership with the State of Alaska teaching sponsors how to get projects on the ground.

Ms. Napier reported the Resource Conservation Office (RCO) is sponsoring a conference in April 2011 that would also provide a good venue to ask questions and take advantage of networking opportunities. A worksession topic could include how to get projects on the ground, permitting, and contract management. She indicated she will follow up with the RCO.

Bob Amrine left the meeting.

Mr. Kliem provided an overview of the three tracks of work the HWG envisions for next year's work program. He will follow up with Ms. Napier on the possibility of CCS providing support to develop the three-year work plan. Grays Harbor County will oversee the decision on the role of CCS and the HWG. He encouraged members to contact Ms. Napier and individually share information on their respective comfort level concerning future changes in how the HWG will move forward as Ms. Napier transitions more of her time to her new county position.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:31 a.m.

Prepared by Cheri Lindgren, Recording Secretary
Puget Sound Meeting Services