

**CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP
HABITAT WORK GROUP
Lewis County Conservation District Office
1554 Bishop Road
Chehalis, WA
January 14, 2011
9:30 AM**

Meeting Summary

PRESENT:

Lee Napier, Grays Harbor County
Bob Burkle, WA Department of Fish Wildlife (WDFW)
Chris Conklin, Quinault Indian Tribe
Bob Amrine, Lewis County Conservation District
Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Citizen, Thurston County
Bruce Treichler, NW Steelhead & Salmon Conservation Society
Craig Swanson, Lewis County
Jamie Glasgow, Wild Fish Conservancy
Janet Strong, Chehalis River Basin Land Trust

Kathy Jacobson, Chehalis Basin Education Consortium
Tom Gow, Puget Sound Meeting Services
Miranda Plumb, US Fish & Wildlife Service
Miles Batchelder, WA Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership (WCSSP)
Frank Staller, Wild Fish Conservancy
Bob Thomas, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Amber Carlson, Chehalis Basin Education Consortium
Lonnie Crumley, StreamWorks Consulting

Welcome & Introductions

Lee Napier convened the meeting at 9:38 a.m. of the Chehalis Basin Partnership (CBP) Habitat Work Group (HWG). Attendees provided self-introductions.

Ms. Napier reviewed the agenda.

Update on Habitat Work Schedule

Ms. Napier reported on her participation in training for Lead Entities on the Habitat Work Schedule. She is participating in one-hour web training sessions. She described some of the training components as well as the importance of the interface between PRISM and the Habitat Work Schedule.

Bob Thomas arrived at the meeting.

John Kleim and Debbie Holden with Community Solutions continue working on updating the website. Ms. Holden designed a new feature for the lead entity website that includes a link to the Habitat Work Schedule. Conceptual project forms will be posted on the website within the week. The website includes a template for conceptual projects. The *Drops of Water* publication includes an article on the Habitat Work Schedule in the next edition.

Ms. Napier asked for feedback on the subbasin action steps document pertaining to some gaps mentioned previously by Mr. Amrine and Mr. Crumley.

Mr. Kleim and Ms. Holden will be scheduling some meetings to review conceptual projects. The committee needs to discuss how to interface the Habitat Work Schedule with this year's Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) funding cycle. It was envisioned that there would be more progress on the Habitat Work Schedule to help drive SRFB projects. However, work needs to begin on the 2011 project submissions.

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SRFB 2011 Grant Cycle Updates and Discussion

Changes to Manual 18

Ms. Napier distributed a section on Manual 18 Administrative Updates. The final changes will be released to the manual early next week. She reviewed changes to Manual 18 since the last funding round.

Applications are due in PRISM by August 26 (final date). The committee will review projects in July. For applicants, final drafts are due at the end of June. An optional date of August 12 is provided by SRFB for early submittal. Ms. Napier recommended using the early submittal date because it allows a two-week cushion to add missing information. She proposed establishing the committee's deadline as August 12 for that reason.

Ms. Napier recommended project sponsors should attend the informational workshops. Members generally agreed but cautioned that it's dependent upon an individual's workload. Miles Batchelder noted that missing elements from a project application create a great deal of stress for Ms. Napier. Attendance at the workshops can help reduce the number of errors on project applications.

All design projects must address a particular problem at a particular location.

Chanele Holbrook-Shaw arrived at the meeting.

Ms. Napier advised that when the update to Manual 18 is released she will forward pertinent sections to project sponsors and the review team. She reviewed Lead Entity project submission requirements. As the committee completes its review process, a project list is produced listing the projects, project costs, and the ranking, which is submitted by the Lead Entity. Manual 18 includes information about the Habitat Work Schedule and updates on the direction for the interface with PRISM. Currently, information is still being entered into PRISM. Depending on how progress proceeds on the Habitat Work Schedule, it is likely conceptual projects will need to be entered by the project sponsors. Ms. Napier said the committee should consider how to interface projects entered into PRISM this year to the Habitat Work Schedule.

Bob Burkle mentioned that some Lead Entities are adding projects to a 3-10 year work list without a sponsor. He asked if that situation also applies for the basin. Ms. Napier advised it's an issue of discussion as the conceptual projects are populated. Projects could be entered into the Habitat Work Schedule that do not have a sponsor. However, it's important to consider the property, as there is some level of sensitivity. For example, if a sponsor has identified some property to acquire but is not ready to publicly release that information, it likely wouldn't be submitted. There may be a reason to enter information, but at another level so that the Lead Entity is aware of a pending project. Mr. Burkle said potential projects could be at the reach level and not necessarily be a project associated with a property. Reach level properties may include many landowners who may not want to participate, but if the information is not too specific, it could be entered. Ms. Napier agreed, as it's difficult to prioritize projects when it's unknown what opportunities exist.

Miles Batchelder asked about entering projects at the tier level as many Lead Entities enter projects by tiers. There are three tiers in the Habitat Work Schedule. A number of entities use tier 1 as the larger basin geographical scale and each layer contains individual projects. That could be a way to identify at the reach level, where projects might be located. Ms. Napier said she's not sure that method has been determined and prefers the committee putting some ideas into practice to gauge outcome. The group needs to be willing to enter some information, see how it works, and determine if it can be put into practice. It needs to be something that people can use and understand.

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Ms. Napier referred to the checklist to help sponsors understand the requirements of the grant agreement. It's important for project sponsors to understand grant requirements to avoid surprises at the end of the project. The checklist is a good addition to the manual to eliminate those surprises.

Local Schedule

Ms. Napier outlined this year's process. A notice will be sent to the email distribution list announcing the 2011 grant cycle. There are requirements to compete and the committee should consider that although some conceptual projects will be entered into the Habitat Work Schedule, this year's process will follow the protocol of last year of an early application process. Members agreed to utilize last year's process.

Early applications (Letter of Intent) are mandatory and due April 1. Last year, several project sponsors did not meet the early deadline, which was reviewed with the HWG and the review team who agreed it was important to honor the deadline. Subsequently, those applications were not accepted. She advised sponsors to sign up for PRISM, become familiar with the process, and avoid entering PRISM on March 31. Sponsors should afford some lead time. SRFB and HWG deadlines are different. Sponsors should adhere to the HWG deadlines. HWG meetings on April 8, May 13, and June 10 are available to work with project sponsors and provide feedback on project proposals. An email will be sent detailing the submission requirements for the early application submittal.

Mr. Burkle advised that June 10 is a state furlough day. Additionally, spring break for the Elma School District is scheduled April 1 through April 8.

Site visits were conducted in May last year. Ms. Napier asked for input on possible dates for this year's field trip. Members suggested scheduling May 12-13. Members agreed to establish June 24 as the due date for final applications. Ranking will occur at the committee's July 8 meeting. The ranking will be presented to the Grays Harbor County Board of Commissioners on July 25. She advised project sponsors to enter the application into PRISM but not submit the application until after the final review is completed to enable any adjustments.

Ms. Napier reviewed last year's review team members and invited members to participate on the review team. Bob Thomas said he'll follow up on the possibility of participating. Lonnie Crumley offered the possibility of a member from the Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force. Ms. Napier asked for possible names for different areas of expertise. Suggestions included an engineer from WSDOT, Michele Cramer from SRFB, Rob Schanz (WSDOT), and Paul Bakke (US Fish & Wildlife Service).

Ms. Napier reported she is not planning to schedule a presentation to the Partnership, which has typically served as the citizen review. She recommended recruiting members from the CBP to participate in the process. Citizens to contact included Julie Balmelli-Powe, Jim Hill, J Roach, and Lisa Dilley.

The committee discussed other ways to disseminate information on conceptual projects in addition to the *Drops of Water* publication.

Jamie Glasgow asked about the funding level for this funding round. Mr. Batchelder indicated that the federal budget calls for the same level of funding as in 2010. The Governor has recommended the dissolution of the SRFB, but not the program. There is some uncertainty with the state as well as with the federal budget. Going forward, the assumption is that the funding level will be the same.

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Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership Update

Plan Overview – Discuss Vision, Goals, and Draft Strategies/Lead Entity Input

Mr. Batchelder reported the WCSSP is a federation of four Lead Entities, to include the Grays Harbor Entity. WCSSP is the state-recognized regional organization covering all watersheds draining directly to the Pacific. The plan provides broad-scale overview to the Lead Entities to help them develop priorities supporting the greater effort of salmon restoration as well as positioning the organization for more funding from the state. The plan will be completed for presentation to the state to request more funding this year.

The regional salmon planning process began in January 2001 in Forks by a group of individuals who discussed how to develop a plan for the Coast Region. The meeting was facilitated by Creative Community Solutions.

The plan is a multi-species plan that is based on salmonid species in the coast. The Coast region is the only region that is not driven by ESA listings. It is not a recovery plan, but a conservation plan. Key elements include an adaptive management component, ecosystem-based, developed at landscape level, utilization of tools and models already available, and building on the Lead Entity foundation.

The group directed WCSSP to develop a scope of work, develop a vision statement, identify goals, and define measurable objectives that relate to each goal.

Mr. Batchelder described the framework model for the planning process articulated by the Wild Fish Conservancy and many other organizations. The first step included defining the project, project scope, and focal targets. Mr. Batchelder identified members of the planning process. The Nature Conservancy contributed by devoting a staff member to the planning process.

The scope of the plan encompasses the five WRIAs of the Coast Region. A workshop in December 2009 focused on developing focal targets. The recommendations from the January 2009 meeting were used for determining a series of targets that essentially described the entire ecosystem of salmon divided into eight separate habitats. They include headwaters uplands, wetlands and off channel, tributaries, lakes, main stems, estuaries, nearshore marine, and ocean. Because there are interfaces between each habitat, the group defined the differences between them. Mr. Batchelder reviewed the definitions. There was some controversy of using habitat as the targets because of the question of fish. That resulted in developing a process of integrating salmonid life stages and species into the particular habitats. The result addressed the concern that salmon life history was not being considered in the selection of focal targets.

Next steps included developing strategies and measures, which included examining the condition of the targets. That included an analysis of the current condition, threats, what causes those threats, and how to develop objectives that can intervene in those processes to identify specific actions that can be taken to restore habitat, bring salmon back, and determine what measures to use to track progress.

For each of the habitat targets and life stages, a question was asked of what is critical for salmon viability or health. A set of key ecological attributes of those habitat targets for those life stages was developed for each habitat target. The specific measures of ecological attributes of the particular targets were applied to each habitat that included water quality measures, riparian conditions, presence of large woody debris, conductivity and floodplains, sediment for spawning and gravel, abundance of forage for salmon, escapement rates, and water quantity.

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The next step was determining the current rating of the ecological attributes for each habitat and the desired status. An elaborate, complex, and time-consuming process was developed based on ratings of fair, poor, good, or very good. The group researched documentation on efforts already completed rather than re-creating the information. Existing parameters from various sources were used for each habitat and attributes to develop ratings. The ratings were used to develop a list of threats for each habitat. Each threat was rated in terms of scope, severity, and irreversibility, etc. A chart was developed of the ranking of the threats across the region. The threats were reviewed at the strategies workshop and some were refined for uniformity to develop a comprehensive picture or a situation analysis. Factors contributing to the threats were identified and some to-do solutions were identified as well as key intervention points for focusing attention to contribute to a significant change in the overall situation.

A two-day workshop followed on development of a whole series for each threat identifying the drivers of the threats, contributing factors, and which ones were the most important to develop draft strategies. Over 75 strategies were identified by the group. Another process entailed selection of the strategies to concentrate on. Mr. Batchelder displayed a chart of the selected strategies. The strategies were categorized so that similar strategies could be a joint effort by different individuals. The strategies were categorized in five groups resulting in 26 specific strategies consolidated into five strategies:

- Educate community
- Protect, restore, and maintain ecosystem values
- Restore and protect habitat function
- Support hatchery and harvest practices that are supportable of wild salmon sustainability
- Use economic tools to protect, restore, and maintain ecosystem values
- Improving regulatory effectiveness to achieve salmon sustainability by identifying conflicts, impediments and gaps in current regulations

Next steps include focus strategy workgroups with each groups working each strategy theme to develop more detailed and defined strategies, developing specific action steps, evaluate existing capacity and existing resources, and linking the strategies to outcomes and results. The current planning team will transition to an implementation team taking the results from the five workgroups to consider phasing of different projects, consider funding sources, monitor the effectiveness of the strategies, and using adaptive management. Another element is the broad outreach to partners to become engaged in the plan. The plan will serve as the framework for partnering.

Mr. Batchelder reviewed upcoming workgroup meeting dates.

Mr. Batchelder reported the goal is present the WCSSP Board of Directors with a draft plan at its March meeting that will be released to the public followed by series of public meetings on the plan.

Discussion followed on efforts to ensure Lead Entity strategies are aligned with the plan. A suggestion was offered of inviting Earth Economics to participate.

Participant Reports

Jamie Glasgow provided an update on two projects in the basin. Progress on the Fish Use Assessment includes near completion of the literature review and synthesis and the site selection for sampling in Grays Harbor. Next week will include some visits to some sites.

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The Water Type Assessment project in Wild Cat Creek is progressing with data entry and developing the GIS for integration and interface of data accessible to everyone. The project is to improve the accuracy of regulatory maps so that forest practices and local governments that rely on the maps have better opportunities to protect fish habitat.

Mr. Glasgow asked members to consider assisting in identifying the next subbasin for water type assessments. Approximately one week of funding is left for work in Wild Cat Creek and another two weeks of field work that can be used for another watershed. The grant stipulates that the HWG will provide input on the location of the surveys that will provide the most benefits. A decision is needed soon because landowners must be contacted.

Mr. Burkle suggested focusing efforts on Milepost 108.7 above the main stem of the Chehalis River. Mr. Glasgow offered some guidelines in selecting an area that is representative of others in the same area to demonstrate existing conditions. Mr. Burkle shared information on why he is concerned with the area near the main stem of the river. Mr. Glasgow said the objective is to correct the maps and identify restoration opportunities. There is some flexibility in the data collected because fish collected are identified and photographed.

Chris Conklin suggested the Black River above Littlerock into the outskirts of Tumwater because there is coho habitat. Mr. Glasgow added that Thurston County has contracted with Wild Fish Conservancy to complete some additional survey work. Mr. Conklin said because of the limited time available he suggests the Black River area above Littlerock, as there are many more implications as well as off-channel habitat that hasn't been adequately delineated. Ms. Napier asked whether there is any opportunity for a project. Mr. Conklin said it's likely a better relationship could be attained with those landowners. Mr. Conklin suggested the Newaukum River is another area in the north fork to consider because many of the tributaries have not been identified.

Mr. Glasgow pointed out that members should consider the project as a prioritization as it could be argued that there is a need everywhere. The information is submitted to the Department of Natural Resources. A final decision is necessary by the next meeting. He suggested selecting a small and discreet subbasin that will take approximately two weeks to cover. If funding aligns, the surveys will be expanded. Mr. Amrine suggested including the area near McCleary to tie into previous work. Powers Creek was mentioned as a possibility. Mr. Glasgow reviewed the suggestions:

- Black River above Littlerock
- Bush Creek
- Powers Creek
- North Fork of the Newaukum

Mr. Glasgow reported maps will be provided of the areas at the February 11 meeting.

Mr. Conklin mentioned Beaver Creek drainage into Black River as a potential site to add to the list.

Other Business

Amber Carlson reported on a tree planting by students last fall in Onalaska at Carlisle Lake.

Ms. Holbrook-Shaw commented on student volunteerism at the Onalaska hatchery. She commented on the amount of student involvement in the area. Mr. Crumley said the program has doubled in

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participation in the last several years with many youth participating and many continuing their education in fisheries. Ms. Jacobson said Carlisle Lake is adjacent to the school. It was the first event with that level of participation by youths as well as the community.

Jacobson reported on the 10th annual Chehalis Basin Student Congress on March 18 at Grays Harbor College. She invited members to participate as a workshop presenter or a facilitator working with students to help understand water quality data and to assist in making some recommendations for on-the-ground projects to protect and restore.

Next Meeting Agenda

Ms. Napier reviewed the February agenda:

- Jamie Glasgow update
- Galvin Glore Barrier Assessment
- Updates on SRFB

Mr. Kleim is requesting 60 minutes on the March agenda to obtain approval of prioritization scheme and two hours in April for the HWG to apply the prioritization scheme to the projects. However, the group would like the Habitat Work Schedule workgroup to apply the HWG approved prioritization scheme to the projects and share the results with the HWG in April. She suggested scheduling a longer meeting in March until 2:00 p.m. She asked about working on the prioritization scheme at a subcommittee level or whether the full committee wants to complete the work. The prioritization scheme that's developed would be applied to Habitat Work Schedule projects that are entered into PRISM. The intent is developing conceptual projects for the Habitat Work Schedule because the SRFB will be a separate process. There may be some overlap, but the plan is to have two processes. Mr. Amrine said the Habitat Work Schedule workgroup should develop the prioritization scheme, run a prioritization process, and present it to the HWG for feedback.

Mr. Burkle advised that he is on vacation April 8.

Ms. Plumb advised that by the end of January she should know what the Department of Fish and Wildlife Service will fund for the Chehalis Restoration Program.

Adjournment

With there being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

Prepared by Valerie Gow, Recording Secretary/President
Puget Sound Meeting Services