

Habitat Work Group

Chehalis Basin Collaborative for Salmon Habitat

Zoom ONLY

MINUTES

January 6, 2025

Alex James - <i>Capitol Land Trust</i> Alex Gustafson - <i>Trout Unlimited</i> Alice Rubin - <i>RCO</i> Amilia Schwartz - <i>Thurston Co Planner</i> Ben Amidon - <i>Chehalis Tribe</i> Bob Russell - <i>Lewis County Citizen</i> Brandon Carman - <i>WDFW</i> Brett DeMond - <i>CBFTF Streamworks</i> Breana Downs - <i>Grays Harbor Stream Team</i> Caprice Fasano - <i>Quinault Indian Nation</i> Daron Williams - <i>WDFW</i> Donna Albert - <i>Chehalis River Basin LT</i> Drew Mealor - <i>ASRP Implementation Mgr</i> Farley Youckton - <i>Chehalis Tribe</i> Jacob Baker - <i>Coastal Interpretive Center</i>	Jennifer Lewis - <i>Office of Chehalis, ASRP</i> John Stepanek - <i>Grays Harbor Conserv Dist</i> Julie Tyson - <i>WDFW</i> Kathy Jacobson - <i>LE Education Coordinator</i> Key McMurray - <i>Grays Harbor Citizen Rep</i> Kirsten Harma - <i>LE Coordinator</i> Kim Figlar-Barnes - <i>WDFW</i> Mack Hunter - <i>Grays Harbor Conserv Dist</i> Martin McCallum - <i>Thurston Citizen Rep.</i> Molly Paige - <i>Non-Point Coordinator, Ecology</i> Ned Pittman - <i>Coast Salmon Part/Fdn</i> Nikki Atkins - <i>Lewis Conservation District</i> Olivia Williams - <i>USFWS</i> Shannon Shula - <i>Thurston County Planning</i> Tina Niels - <i>Grays Harbor Citizen</i> Victoria Knorr - <i>WDFW</i>
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1. Welcome & Break-Out Rooms

2. Minutes – December

No corrections were offered for the minutes

3. Organizational Business

a. Tina Niels as Citizen Rep – Decision!

Tina Niels has been nominated to serve as the Grays Harbor citizen representative in the seat recently vacated by Sarah Watkins, and a vote on her membership passed unanimously.

Kirsten Harma also shared with the group that Mara Zimmerman has transitioned from her work leading the Coast Salmon Partnership to a new position leading programs at WDFW. In response to this news - as well as throughout the remainder of the meeting - members expressed gratitude for her dedication, insight, and knowledge.

b. Website Subcommittee

Kirsten shared with the group that she and Kathy Jacobson, outreach director, are looking to update CBC-fSH's website to be more relevant and streamlined. They sought participation from the group to form a subcommittee to accomplish this, and a group of five or six members was formed.

c. Logo! A brief discussion

Kirsten shared that as CBC-fSH is looking to update our logo, she has reached out to Kenna Fosnacht, former Lewis County Stream Team coordinator for the design. Kenna developed the stream team's recent logo, and looks forward to developing one for CBC-fSH. Members discussed input on what this design should include.

d. CBC-fSH Outreach

Kathy Jacobson shared that the LE partnership with WA State Parks and WDFW at Lake Sylvia to host a First Day Hike with the New Year. She noted that approximately eighty community members participated. Kathy was able to share informational resources, as well as host a forest-bathing hike.

Kathy also shared that she is beginning to schedule River Table programming in Onalaska on February 11th. She will be reaching out to the group for participation.

e. Committee Updates (Cloquallum, Newaukum, Barrier)

John Stepanek shared that the Cloquallum PWR work group has a few meetings left, the last of which is planned for May. Following this, the group will publish a report similar to that produced for the Newaukum PWR for the Cloquallum and Wildcat Creek. He also noted that this plan will incorporate the climate resilience guidance developed by the CSP. Finally, he shared a draft vision statement for the work group.

Kirsten shared that an upcoming reconvening of the Newaukum subcommittee will involve both a discussion of current progress, as well as a discussion of what a local strategy for the lower Newaukum could look like.

Kirsten then noted that the culvert/barrier subcommittee met recently to incorporate an update to the barrier database facilitated by Mara Zimmerman, and that this update has been sent on to WDFW. Kirsten also noted that there is some continuing work that the subcommittee will continue to meet around, particularly around understanding how to make good use of the updated Salmon Recovery Portal.

4. Salmon Recovery Funding Board–

a. 2025 SRFB Grant Round Process Update

Kirsten shared that the 2025 Salmon Recovery Conference has been cancelled due to state budget concerns. Second, she shared that the February HWG meeting will take place at the Chehalis Tribe community center, which will be followed by a pre-application workshop for sponsors. Also, Kirsten noted that conceptual projects are being accepted, and that a presentation template will be available this year. Site visit dates are slated for April 8, 9, and/or 10. Finally, she noted that a completed project field trip will take place January 28th.

b. Approve 2025 Local Review Team – Decision!

Kirsten led a discussion and vote approving the 2025 SRFB Local Review Team. The team approved includes Ben Amidon, Brandon Carman, Caprice Fasano, Cindy Wilson, Key

McMurray, Ned Pittman, Olivia Williams, Daron Williams, and Martin McCallum and/or Bob Russel.

c. RCO Updates

Alice Rubin shared that December 18th and 19th was the most recent SRFB meeting, and provided details about the postponement of the Salmon Recovery Conference. She also shared that PRISM will be open in the next week or so, and that the RCO application workshop will take place from 10AM-12PM on January 30th. It will be recorded, as well. Additionally, she shared that Manual 18's update should be published in the coming week. Alice stated as well that Inslee's draft budget came out on December 18th, but that this budget is still in flux given the coming change in administration. She noted that the SRFB received its full funding request, as did the federal appropriation for the program; this will likely include funding for a Riparian-specific grant round as well. WCRRI, however, she noted, only received 5.8 million of 16 million dollars in requested funding. Alice also reminded the group that she would be facilitating a training for SRFB budgets and applications in February, and asked applicants to reach out to her ahead of time with questions and desired areas of focus.

d. Monitoring! SRFB 2025 Grant Process – Update, Presentation, and Request for Guidance

Ned Pittman shared a Powerpoint with updates on the SRFB monitoring grant process. First, he shared that the CSP's newly-formed regional technical committee is working on developing a Regional Monitoring Strategy. He outlined this strategy, and focused on the goals of the strategy, as well as the uses of the resulting information for salmon recovery. The goals of the strategy include establishing priorities; guiding monitoring methods; improving coordination; defining success indicators; and developing a realistic approach. The draft uses of this information include improvement of effectiveness of restoration; improve quality of data; improve access to studies and results; improve coordination among agencies; have a common understanding of success; and encourage specific and measurable project objectives.

Second, Ned discussed the upcoming 2025 Monitoring Grant. As the monitoring strategy is in development, the 2025 grant round will not be directly related to this strategy. As such, this grant round will be somewhat ad-hoc. However, the technical committee has established a "high priority" definition, and developed feedback for proposed monitoring project concepts.

Ned shared that there is a new Manual 18M for this grant round, which lays out the schedule and details, which he described. To summarize briefly, the grant round has \$1M available, with a \$300K project cost cap. Proposed projects must address: lifestage bottlenecks; limiting factors; and/or effectiveness monitoring. Letters of Interest are due Feb/March, and applications are due May 1st. Final applications are due in June, after which state-wide scoring and ranking take place.

Ned then shared the technical committee's definition of "high priority" projects, which is as follows: Projects must 1.) have an anticipated response likely to occur in the study timeframe *or* provide baseline data needed to evaluate future change; *and* 2.) provide results that are transferable across the region or otherwise benefit the region by broadly informing restoration approaches or priorities in: effectiveness monitoring, life stage bottlenecks, and/or limiting factors.

He then shared conceptual monitoring projects under consideration, as well as feedback from the group. These projects include: smolt residency time and survival through Grays Harbor

estuary; fish response in Upper Quinault to engineered log jams; evaluation of spatial and temporal overlap of stream pH with salmonid spawning and rearing; and species-specific distribution model of field data collection to improve barrier prioritization and restoration priorities in Willapa Bay. Finally, he noted that at the upcoming Coast Salmon Partnership meeting, the board will decide on submitting letters of intent for each of these projects.

e. **Celebration of 2022 Completed SRFB Projects!**

Kirsten shared a summary of completed SRFB projects since the 2020 SRFB grant round. This includes eight barriers corrected, one acquisition, and one “other” project.

5. Associated Program Updates

a. **Open Federal Funding NOFOs**

Drew Mealor noted that the ASRP met with the Watersmart grant funders, and learned about better ways to combine the projects that are under consideration.

b. **Stream Teams** (Breanna, Maggie, as available)

Breanna Downs shared that the GH Stream Team will be hosting a variety of volunteer events in the coming months, including stream restoration along Newskah Creek, a stormwater and watershed trivia night at a local brewery, and a riparian restoration event at Zelasko Park with GHCD. She also discussed plans for upcoming collaboration between the GH Stream Team with the Lewis County Stream Team.

c. **Coast Salmon Partnership**

Ned noted that the upcoming CSP board meeting is January 23rd.

d. **Aquatic Species Restoration Plan**

Drew Mealor noted that the ASRP will be having their next regular RIT meeting on January 16th. He shared that the transition from RCO to ECY is still in progress, and is particularly aiming to work toward a longer timeline and more flexibility for that transition. Funding-wise, Drew said that the upcoming funding looks to be on level with previous years.

6. Other

Brett DeMond shared that a coho buck was observed using the crossing at the Newskah project site, which before the replacement had a severe outfall drop, and was unpassable.

Caprice Fasano reminded the group that the Quinault Tribe is hosting a screening of the film Fish War at the 7th Street theatre at 6PM on January 17th.

7. Discussion of Celebratory event at Riverside Park

Kirsten asked the group for input on behalf of a community member who reached out to her with a request to release salmon fry at a celebratory event at Riverside Park in Centralia. Kathy Jacobsen suggested that the community member reach out to the WDFW Salmon in the Schools program coordinator, the staff at the Skookumchuck hatchery, and/or the Chehalis River Basin Land Trust.