



Chehalis Basin Collaborative
for Salmon Habitat

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MINUTES

April 6, 2026

9:00 am- 12:00 pm

Chehalis Tribe Community Center Class 1b

461 Secena Rd, Oakville, WA – Library

Alex James – <i>Capitol Land Trust</i> Alex Gustafson - <i>Trout Unlimited</i> Ann Weckback - <i>Lewis County PW</i> Amelia Schwartz – <i>Thurston County</i> Bella Padgett - <i>Ducks Unlimited</i> Ben Amidon - <i>Chehalis Tribe, CBCfSH Chair</i> Bob Russell - <i>Lewis County Citizen</i> Brandon Carman - <i>WDFW</i> Brett Demond - <i>Streamworks, CBFTF</i> Caprice Fasano - <i>Quinault Indian Nation</i> Connor Leahy - <i>CSP Program Director</i> Daron Williams – <i>WDFW Region 5</i> Danika Davis – <i>GH Noxious Weed Board</i> Donna Albert - <i>Chehalis River Basin LT</i> Drew Mealor - <i>ASRP Implementation Mgr</i> Jacob Murray - <i>Mason Conservation Dist</i>	Jane Atha - <i>CSP Executive Director</i> John Stepanek - <i>GH Conservation Dist?</i> Kathy Jacobson - <i>CBC-fSH Outreach Coordin.</i> Kelly Verd - <i>Lewis Conservation District</i> Kirsten Harma - <i>CBCfSH Coordinator</i> Kim Figlar-Barnes – <i>WDFW</i> Lisa Nelson – <i>Recreation and Conservation O</i> Martin McCallum - <i>Thurston County Citizen</i> Neina Chapa – <i>American Rivers</i> Olivia Williams - <i>USFWS</i> Sofia Sherman - <i>Chehalis Tribe Noxious Weeds</i> Tina Neils - <i>Grays Harbor County Citizen</i> Vanessa LaValle - <i>Conservation NW/CSP</i> Victoria Knorr - <i>WDFW</i>
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1. **Welcome, Introductions**

2. **Minutes – March**

Minutes were approved by the group without further comment.

3. **Organizational Business**

a. **Thurston County Citizen Rep**

Donna Albert moved to nominate Martin McCallum as CBCfSH Thurston Citizen Representative, which Caprice Fasano seconded. Donna then moved to vote on his nomination, which Kelly Verd seconded. After a vote, he was unanimously approved to continue in another two-year term.

b. **Appointment of an *interim* new Board Member to Coast Salmon Foundation from Chehalis Basin (Discussion/Decision)**

Kirsten shared that Bob Russell has stepped down as a Chehalis LE representative to the Coast Salmon Foundation board, and as such the board needs an interim representative for their June meeting. She shared that any nominees simply have to be enthusiastic about the well-being of salmon in the Chehalis River - and don't even necessarily need to live on the Chehalis. Jane Atha shared that fiscal experience would be helpful in this position, but is not required. The group

brainstormed on a handful of community members to reach out to, including members of the Chehalis Basin Partnership, and will be following up with those individuals in the coming months.

c. CBC-fSH Outreach

Kathy Jacobson shared that about 45 community members attended the Lynda Mapes talk at Centralia College this month, and that it was well-received with good community discussion. She also shared that the 33rd annual Student Congress took place at Evergreen State College, with involved 500 students, faculty, volunteers, and facilitators, with keynote speaker Jeff Hogan. It culminated on a final action proclamation from the group on priorities from the congress. Next, Kathy shared that she is working on a broad salmon and steelhead factsheet, soliciting review from the team. She then shared a calendar of interpretive walks, talks, and programs at Lake Sylvia and Schafer State Parks in 2026. Further, she shared that in the coming month she would be participating in Tenino's upcoming Earth Day celebration; and presenting the river table at Satsop elementary and Simpson elementary and today. Last, she shared that she will be taking CBCfSH on a Mill and Wisner Creek restoration project tour.

d. Cloquallum Subcommittee update

John Stepanek shared that the group - which includes Olivia Williams, Kirsten Harma, Jane Atha, Jacob Murray, and Connor Leahy - is continuing to develop. He shared specifically that they received feedback in December to include more restoration on the mainstem of the Cloquallum, rather than primarily pursuing headwater restoration as planned with earlier modeling.

e. Barrier Subcommittee update

Kirsten Harma shared that the Barrier subcommittee reconvened this month. She shared that they took a look at whether they need to do a deeper reassessment of the barrier prioritization formula. To this end, she asked the group to look at any barriers that they know to be high priority culverts, and see how they match up with the barrier ranking tool. Drew Mealor then shared that an additional option is to look at the top 50 or 100 barriers, and screen out any barriers that present unique problems not suited to the formula. After a brief discussion, the group decided the next barrier subcommittee would likely take place in the fall. Lastly, Kirsten noted that any of the above changes would wait until after the CSP's reworking of the tool, which is ongoing. As an update, Jane Atha shared that the CSP has hired Geosyntech to update this decision support tool to ArcPro. Though this is an extensive process, it will be a much stronger product when done. At that point, hosting of the tool will likely migrate from WDFW to the CSP.

f. Newaukum Subcommittee

Kirsten Harma shared that there was a recent Newaukum Subcommittee meeting, at which the most recent rounds of significant Newaukum flooding was a significant discussion. She noted that beavers were discussed quite a bit as a key opportunity to mitigate the consequences of that flooding, particularly to the Chinook salmon populations. Jane Atha discussed a presentation that was shared on a comparison study between the salmon runs on the Skookumchuck and Newaukum subbasins. Other discussions included Newaukum land use dynamics, as well as Ecology's addition of new flow data stations in the basin.

4. Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)

a. RCO, State and Federal Funding Updates

Kirsten Harma shared that the notice of funding for PacSRF has been released from the federal government, which funds 2026 SRFB. She also shared that the request for extra SRFB money from the state in case PacSRF did not come through was not granted.

b. Feedback on Site Visits

The group shared insight from the site visits to 2025 SRFB projects. Ben Amidon appreciated the opportunity to see the #2 barrier in the basin, and other members of the visits also really appreciated having the van to convene in between site visits, particularly given the rain.

Kirsten shared that all the sponsors have received feedback from the technical group, and a time for sponsor questions and answers with that committee is upcoming.

Kirsten then shared that one project, Thurston County's Independence at Bachman project, is "cleared," and one project, the Cozy Valley Scatter Creek Upper Watershed project, received a "project of concern" ranking. The rest received "needs more information" rankings.

c. W. Beeville Rd at Dry Creek Fish Passage Construction – Endorsement from Lead Entity (Discussion, Decision)

Kirsten reminded the group about the state's statewide Targeted Investment grant round, which is an opportunity for the state legislature to seek funding for more expensive projects, as regional SRFB funds have remained at a more or less consistent level of funding.

Kirsten shared that the Chehalis LE's submission for this funding needs to be approved by CBCfSH. It would then be submitted to and ranked by a Coast Region-wide ranking team. This team will be choosing two projects from several regional submissions to go up for state funding.

Kirsten then described the Chehalis LE's project for submission, which is a culvert replacement on W. Beeville Road at Dry Creek, which is a tributary of Dekker Creek, which flows into the Satsop. The project would replace the culvert with a bridge, and is the third-ranked project in the basin. This project has also received state review comments through its SRFB submission, which the group reviewed in discussing providing approval. In reviewing those comments, the group determined that concerns as brought up by reviewers could most likely be sufficiently addressed before without significantly altering the project.

Martin McCallum moved that CBCfSH promote the W. Beeville Road at Dry Creek Fish Passage Construction project as the Chehalis LE's submission to the Coast Salmon Partnership for consideration as one of the CSP's submissions to the statewide Targeted Investment fund. Kelly Verd seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

d. Planned Project Forecast List exercise

Kirsten reminded the group of a biannual request from RCO to submit an Chehalis LE Planned Project Forecast List for presentation to the legislature. She shared the list as submitted two years ago, confirming continued relevance of listed projects, and removing completed projects. Further, the group added newly developing projects to the list. This new Forecast List will need to be approved for submission by the group during June's CBCfSH meeting. Items suggested for addition to the project list include projects that will follow assessment work in the Newakum

and Cloquallum; construction projects currently submitted to SRFB as design; among others. Kirsten requested that the group reach out to her in the coming months with upcoming projects, and shared that the group would vote on the list during the June meeting.

- e. Kirsten shared that the LE SRFB sponsor meeting will be talking place on the coming Thursday from 1-2PM.

5. Website Update – Review, Exercise

Kathy Jacobsen shared that she has been working to develop an updated website, and walked the group through a preview of the draft website.

Cindy Wilson, Daron Williams, Olivia Williams, and Bob Russell expressed interest in serving on the subcommittee to review the website. Additionally, anyone who would like to browse and provide feedback on the draft website can reach out to Kathy for a link.

Last, she suggested that the group can submit photos throughout the year at the monthly meetings to keep the website fresh.

6. Low-Tech Projects – Lessons from Webinar

A number of folks who attended a Low-Tech projects workshop shared out to the group. Briefly:

Jon Stepanek shared that he appreciated the tools “PBR [Process Based Restoration] Explorer” and “Riverbase Consortium,” two project mappers that show relevant work done around the world. He also noted that a point of discussion was that concerns about fish passage at beaver dam analogues are pretty minimal - these structures are much more minimal when compared with historical wood in the streams. He also spoke to the unique input of process-based restoration, which is more focused on restoring riparian processes, and less focused on precise engineering goals.

Martin McCallum shared that the group who put on the session, the Pacific Salmon Foundation, are focused mainly on British Columbia and Washington State. He shared that a lot of informational video is available through the foundation’s youtube site. He was very impressed by a number of the presentations, and encouraged the group to check out the webinar, which is available video-by-video on theme. Additionally, previous year webinars are available.

Sofia Sherman shared that a talk about reed canary grass was interesting. She encouraged the group to check out the video, but described a strategy that involves covering and shading out - for a year and a half - the infestation, noting that rhizomes of reed canary grass are actually very shallow. Sofia did note that this doesn’t seem practical for many of the large sites with which she is familiar, but plans to reach out for clarification.

Ben Amidon shared that a speaker shared that beavers generally leave about a foot of willow when they eat, and that this can be used to increase survival - by planting shorter willow stakes. He also shared that the speaker had recommended planting willows in clusters, and fencing in those clusters - ideally for several years.

7. Other Business

- a.** Sofia Sherman shared that the next CWMA meeting will be May 14th at the Tribal Community Center.
- b.** Jane Atha shared that the Coast Salmon Partnership had their joint board meeting the previous week; and that SRFB is in technical committee work.
- c.** Danika Davis shared that GH Noxious Weed Control Board, the Grays Harbor College Forestry Program, and the City of Cosmopolis will be hosting an Earth Day Event. She further shared that her team is investigating a potential False Brome report in the county, which is a very challenging invasive grass.
- d.** In light of all the present meeting's conversation about continuing education opportunities, Bob Russell suggested that the group spend 10 or 15 minutes of each CBCfSH meeting watching a topical informational video. Kirsten seconded the idea, and in the coming months the group will try it out.

8. Meeting Closing