



**Chehalis Basin Collaborative
for Salmon Habitat**

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Minutes

July 13, 2026

9:00 am- 11:30 am

Online Only

Alex Bradberry – Coast Salmon Partnership	Jane Atha - <i>CSP Executive Director</i>
Alex Gustafson - <i>Trout Unlimited</i>	Jeff Mach – <i>Grays Harbor Cons. Dist.</i>
Ann Weckback - <i>Lewis County PW</i>	Jesse McMahan - <i>Chehalis Tribe Fisheries</i>
Amelia Schwartz – <i>Thurston County</i>	Kelly Verd - <i>Lewis Conservation District</i>
Anthony Waldrop – <i>Grays Harbor Cons. Dist.</i>	Key McMurry - <i>Citizen</i>
Bella Padgett - <i>Ducks Unlimited</i>	Kirsten Harma - <i>CBCfSH Coordinator</i>
Bill Teitzel – Port of Chehalis	Kim Figlar-Barnes – <i>WDFW Region 6</i>
Bob Russell - <i>Lewis County Citizen</i>	LeeAnn Frank – <i>Lewis County PW</i>
Brandon Carman – <i>WDFW Region 6</i>	Mack Hunter – <i>Grays Harbor Cons Dist.</i>
Breana Downs – <i>Grays Harbor StreamTeam</i>	Martin McCallum - <i>Thurston County Citizen</i>
Brian Combs – <i>Mason Cons Distc.</i>	Olivia Williams - <i>USFWS</i>
Donna Albert– <i>Chehalis RB Land Trust</i>	Sofia Sherman - <i>Chehalis Tribe Noxious Weeds</i>
Drew Meador - <i>ASRP Implementation Mgr</i>	Tina Neils - <i>Grays Harbor County Citizen</i>
Jacob Murray - <i>Mason Conservation Dist</i>	Vanessa LaValle - <i>Conservation NW/CSP</i>
	Victoria Knorr - <i>WDFW</i>

1. Welcome, Introductions

2. Minutes—June

Minutes approved by the group without discussion. With Jonathan no longer taking notes, there was discussion around using AI to take meeting notes. Several members brought up concerns regarding the environmental impacts of AI which directly conflict with much of the work done by members of this group. For now, Sofia Sherman has agreed to take meeting notes.

3. Organizational Business

a. HWG Membership Changes

Lonnie Crumley is retiring from the Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force with the barrier project at Kirkpatrick going to construction this summer being his final hoorah. His wife Brett is pulling back from her duties with CBC-fSH at the same time, so the group is looking for a representative from Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force. Tina Niels provided Kirsten Harma with contact information for Phil Allen who may take over this role.

September 22nd will have site tour of the Kirkpatrick barrier on the Humptulips to celebrate the many years of salmon restoration efforts him and his wife have contributed to the basin.

As of November, Bob Russell and Key McMurry will have both served their two-year term as citizen volunteers for CBC-fSH but can reapply for additional terms. The group will be looking for nominations for these positions in October.

b. CBC-fSH Outreach – Annual Report + Celebrate!

Kathy Jacobson is in the San Juan islands through September engaging in education and outreach. Kirsten provided outreach updates including the 2025-26 Community Outreach Report from Kathy.

c. Barrier Subcommittee Update & Scheduling

Jane Atha stated that Geosyntec has been contracted to move the Chehalis Barrier Priority Index tool over to ArcPro. Vanessa LaValle informed the group that they have updated the model for determining priority index to see if they get different scores and prioritizations than with previous model's algorithm. Challenges with model running slowly due to size of the basin. There was discussion of which SWIFD layer to use in the model, either the official SWIFD layer, which has fewer total fish stream miles, or the Chehalis-specific one, which includes more total fish miles. Further discussion to come from barrier subcommittee on this topic at fall meeting.

4. USDOT Culvert AOP Grant:

a. Request for Letter of Support – Independence Creek Culvert Bundle (LeeAnn Frank, Lewis County Public Works). Discussion / Decision.

LeeAnn Frank presented on Lewis County Public Works' Independence Creek Culvert replacement four-culvert bundle. Powerpoint available upon request.

Discussion: Appreciation for how these culvert replacements involve coordination between three counties, Lewis, Thurston, and Grays Harbor, and build on the work of 16 previously replaced culverts and 2 future replacements in the Independence system.

Decision: Bob Russell motioned to provide letter of support for this project, Anthony Waldrop seconded. Motion passed.

b. Update on Letter of Support for Thurston County - Prairie Creek

The Habitat Work Group previously provided a letter of support for this Thurston County culvert replacement on Prairie Creek. In 2026, this was resubmitted for the federally required reapplication to this funding source.

c. Request for Letter of Support – Invasive Bass Program Initiation (Jesse MacMahan, Chehalis Tribe Fisheries). Discussion / Decision

Chehalis Tribe applied for Bureau of Indian Affairs grant to initiate invasive bass program on Tribally owned land.

Discussion: Appreciate collaboration with WDFW to create synergy between this project and already existing bass monitoring and removal efforts.

Decision: Bob motioned to provide letter of support for this project, Martin McCallum seconded. Motion passed.

5. Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)

a. SRFB Grant Round Timeline Update

The Habitat Work Group voted on SRFB projects at June HWG meeting. The ranked list has been approved and is in PRISM. We have to wait until July 28 to see ranked lists from other lead entities on the Coast to see if there are any funding swaps that may benefit multiple parties. We won't know until then if Vance Creek will have to give up its partial funding, or if it will receive funding to be fully funded. The Coast Salmon Partnership will approve the funding list for all Coast Lead Entities at their July 30th meeting.

b. Update on SRFB project Milestones

i. Scatter Creek

Scatter Creek project still designated as Project Of Concern (POC) by the SRFB state Review Panel. We will hear from RCO as to whether or not this designation will be final on

July 24. HWG requested that they be allowed to provide technical review before the project goes to construction. The sponsor indicated that they accept this request. The request will be written into a milestone by RCO.

ii. Riparian Assessment engagement strategy

Review committee requested coordination with HWG during strategy development and that the sponsor document methods in shareable format so work can be replicated around the basin. Sponsor agreed and prepared an engagement plan, will be reviewed and discussed at August HWG meeting.

iii. Vance Creek project scope

HWG approved project at their June meeting with the request that there be check-ins with the group between conceptual and preliminary design. The Local Review Team decided that full scope of project wasn't likely to provide much more benefit to salmon than just work in the downstream portion of the reach. RCO didn't support adding this request as a milestone because it could change the scope and activities of the project after an approved scope was funded. The Sponsor agreed to rescope the project to be just a conceptual design and alternatives analysis. This will allow the sponsor to come back to reviewers with several alternate designs to choose from.

c. Thurston County Independence Trib project update

Kirsten provide updates since Marcus was not in attendance. A previously unknown culvert was discovered downstream of Thurston County's proposed SRFB culvert replacement on Backman Rd, unnamed tributary to Independence Creek. Thurston County agreed to use local funds to create alternatives analysis for this downstream barrier and come back to HWG with design plans. The County provided a letter, attached in PRISM, that they would likely seek funding to construct the more downstream barrier before the upstream barrier, which is the recipient of this SRFB grant.

d. Funding swap with Klickitat Lead Entity

Two pots of money for SRFB: salmon funds and riparian funds. Salmon funds can be used for any project, however riparian funds must go toward riparian projects. It is customary in the region to do SRFB funding swaps to help completely fund projects, but this will be the first time we do a funding swap with a different region.

Chehalis Basin had more riparian projects that required riparian money rather than salmon money. Keaton Curtice with the Klickitat Lead Entity (KLE) had the opposite issue, too much riparian funding that they couldn't spend on non-riparian projects. CBC-fSH was able to

swap \$302,741 with KLE, allowing HWG to still provide the same amount of funding for all 6 projects while allowing KLE to fully fund three additional projects.

Project Funding

Before Switch:

Bucket:
Riparian
Regular

Project	Grant Request	Award
Assessment	\$ 187,500	\$ 187,500
Scatter	\$ 340,631	\$ 168,500
		\$ 172,131
Loosestrife	\$ 206,401	\$ 206,401
Independence	\$ 135,000	\$ 135,000
Garrard	\$ 85,583	\$ 85,583
Vance	\$ 80,871	\$ 38,480

Project Funding

After Switch

Bucket:
Riparian
Regular

Project	Grant Request	Award
Assessment	\$ 187,500	\$ 187,500
Scatter	\$ 340,631	\$ 264,840
		\$ 75,791
Loosestrife	\$ 206,401	\$ 206,401
Independence	\$ 135,000	\$ 135,000
Garrard	\$ 85,583	\$ 85,583
Vance	\$ 80,871	\$ 38,480

Discussion: Presentation was well received. Low-tech, project-based restoration techniques implemented, similar to restoration efforts occurring in the Chehalis. Appreciation to RCO for the ability to move SRFB funds around like this to maximize benefit across the state.

Decision: Bob Russell motion to accept the funding swap, Donna Albert seconded. Motion passed.

6. Website Update – Presenting your new Website!

The website has been modified to be viewable on phones, tablets, and laptops. Kathy and Kirsten have revamped this resource with updated information about the watershed, fish

and salmon life cycle and restoration methods, projects completed, contacts and sponsor groups, SRFB grant information, watershed hero stories, education outreach resources, sub-basin information, events calendar, and much more.

7. Associated Program Updates

a. Grays Harbor Stream Team (Breana)

Breana Downs noted the transition from formal in-school education to informal education programs as schools have let out for the summer. Increase in outreach events this time of year; large focus on pilot year for Macroinvertebrate Sampling Program and Insect ID, both citizen science programs. Other outreach events this summer include trivia, invasive plant removal and native plantings, beach and boat launch cleanups, and kid friendly activities at the library.

b. Coast Salmon Partnership (Jane)

CSP will be working with the Office of the Chehalis Basin to bring ASRP projects into the SFRB database to further provide continuity between these funding programs. Washington Seagrant Coastal Resilience Fellow will be starting at CSP in September and assisting with coast regions monitoring strategy, especially coordinating fish, habitat, and effectiveness monitoring.

c. Aquatic Species Restoration Program (Drew and Victoria)

No RIT meeting in July, next one in August. Two new ASRP projects are going to construction this summer, NF Newaukum Lasen-Reach project, which received a grant increase recently from OCB, and the Mima Creek Pond Creation, which could inform future Oregon Spotted Frog restoration efforts. Steering Committee this Wednesday (07/15) to discuss multiple different projects.

Work Group members should have received, or will be receiving, an invitation soon for the October 14th ASRP workshop.

Freshwater Mussel Strategy was finalized and posted on Salish Sea Wiki.

d. USFWS Grant Update (Olivia)

USFWS Chehalis Fisheries Program RFP is currently out, due September 14th. Looking for projects focused on salmonid restoration efforts, including education, in-stream restoration, and science or research projects.

e. Chehalis Cooperative Weed Management Area (Sofia)

Last year's knotweed treatment on WF Satsop seemed highly effective, lots of dead canes with minimal regrowth observed. Staff able to access new infestations particularly in more back-channel areas. New upstream-most knotweed point found on WF Satsop R when out treating in June. Interviews to hire contractor for ASRP Brazilian elodea project happening this Friday, 07/17. Grays Harbor Noxious Weed Board working on treating purple loosestrife weeks of July 13 and July 20 with in-house funding. Same work they applied to SRFB for treating this species in the 27-29 biennium. Putting together information on different methods of reed canary grass treatment for Scatter Creek subcommittee, staff can reach out to her with any questions about this species. Reminder to be on the lookout for orange hawkweed that is in bloom currently and not overly abundant in the Chehalis. This species looks like a dandelion but has an orange, instead of yellow flower. If you see it take pictures and post on iNaturalist or email them to Sofia.

8. Meeting Closing