



## **CHEHALIS BASIN PARTNERSHIP**

**Zoom**  
**March 25, 2022**  
**9:30 am – 12:00**

### **Meeting Summary**

#### **MEMBERS\* and ALTERNATES' PRESENT**

Alissa Shay\*, *Port of Grays Harbor*  
Bob Johnson\*, *WA DNR*  
Brian Shay, *City of Hoquiam*  
Chris Stearns\*, *Thurston PUD*  
Colleen Parrott\*, *Chehalis Tribe*  
Jan Robinson\*, *Chehalis River Basin Land Trust*  
Jason Walter\*, *Weyerhaeuser*

Jill Warne\*, *Grays Harbor County*  
Marshall Read, *City of Ocean Shores*  
Nick Bird, *City of Aberdeen*  
Paula Holroyde\*, *League of Women Voters*  
Suresh Bhagavan', *Grays Harbor County*  
Terry Harris\*, *City of Chehalis*  
Tye Menser\*, *Thurston County*

#### **GUESTS**

Angela Johnson, *Department of Ecology*; Chanele Holbrook, *Citizen*; Elena Fernandez, *Thurston County*; Jill Van Hulle, *Aspect Consulting*; Kenna Fosnacht, *Lewis Conservation District*; Kevin Eldred, *City of Aberdeen*; Lauren McFarland, *Quinalt Indian Nation*; Mark Mobbs, *Quinalt Indian Nation*; Nat Kale, *Department of Ecology*; Stacy LaClair, *Chehalis Generation Facility*,

#### **STAFF**

Kirsten Harma, *Watershed Coordinator*  
Amy Booth, *Intern*

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- Meeting summaries are available on the Chehalis Basin Partnership website: [www.chehalisbasinpartnership.org](http://www.chehalisbasinpartnership.org)

#### **MEETING**

##### **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Terry Harris welcomed everyone to the meeting. Members and guests provided self-introductions and went into breakout rooms for individual updates.

##### **2. Review of January Meeting Minutes**

A quorum was present. All minutes were approved.

##### **A. Presentations & Discussions**

##### **Presentation- Stream Team Updates – Kenna Fosnacht, Lewis County Stream Team**

Ms. Fosnacht presented on the recent creation of a Lewis County Stream Team and future goals for the organization. Some future projects include noxious weed removal, stream cleanups,

nature walks, storm drain marking, water quality monitoring, and educational talks for students. They are also looking to involve Veteran Conservation Corps for a Stream Team internship. Ms. Fosnacht also stated the focus basin is Wisner and Mill Creek since they have a landowner who is very passionate about conservation (Bob Russell). The Lewis Conservation District did a project on Mr. Russell's property a few years ago to redefine channels and plant native plants. Mr. Russell is a huge advocate for salmon, plantings, and beavers.

The first Stream Team event planted almost 500 willows and cedars with 16 volunteers. Future plans include an Earth Day work party at Borst Park, World Fish Migration Day, educational workshops, citizen science activities, planting Salzer creek, drone for monitoring project sites, and quarterly work group meetings to plan events.

### Discussion

If members want to get involved, contact Ms. Fosnacht; she is passionate about expanding and getting more funding. Ms. Harma asked Ms. Fosnacht if she knows if the Thurston County Stream Team has any plans for work in the Chehalis. Ms. Fosnacht answered that Thurston County has a Stream Team but she has not been to any events lately. Ms. Fosnacht added that Alexa Brown with Grays Harbor Stream Team has been essential in offering advice and putting together the Lewis County Stream Team. Mr. Kale added that there is a Stream Team partnership between 4 entities: Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and the county. The main focus has only been on Olympia, Lacey, and the Tumwater area. Mr. Stearns added that the Thurston Conservation District has ran salmon recovery and lost portfolios of salmon recovery due to staff leaving; also stated he doesn't know if anyone is running the Stream Team and the Conservation District might be interested. Mr. Menser will look into who is running it.

### **Discussion- CBP Funding - Kirsten Harma, Chehalis Basin Partnership**

Ms Harma stated that restoration-oriented organizations have continued interest in the Chehalis Basin Partnership because they can receive support letters for grants and gain support from many entities at once. The group is very diverse and was needed to develop the streamflow restoration plan. Ms. Harma expressed a call to action – we need to maintain the group and get base funding.

Ms. Harma also updated the group on how funding strategies are being worked on. As discussed in previous meetings, the Partnership has attempted to get Ecology permit exempt well fees, which has been unsuccessful so far. Ms. Harma spoke with a former legislator and she recommended we create a legislative outreach strategy, do outreach, and take action for the next legislative session; specifically, request that legislators amend the Streamflow Restoration Act language regarding collection of fees so that fees collected from WRIA 22 & 23 come specifically to the Chehalis Basin Partnership. As another funding source, there could be potential for a donation from the City of Chehalis.

Mr. Harris spoke with a District 20 legislator about the difficulties the Partnership been having. He stated that he does not think this has reached a high enough level and that the request caught them at the wrong time. Mr. Harris reached out again today and should hear back by Monday/middle of next week. He also encouraged members to reach out to any other legislator contacts. Mr. Menser offered to help with 22<sup>nd</sup> District and asked if the change should be a change of verbiage or the actual funding money. The recommendation was to change the language and any mechanism that will let the Partnership access funds. Ms. Warne and Ms. McFarland also offered to help and asked for a summary of the ask.

Mr. Harris asked for a list of people who have helped with funding along the way. There have been previous donations from PUD and the Chehalis Tribe. Mr. Harris also spoke with Jill

Anderson, City of Chehalis Manager, and she thinks the City could provide annual funding of \$5,000 from their wastewater budget and \$5,000 from water budget. The funding is on the agenda for a meeting on Monday. Mr. Harris encouraged members to go to their organizations and see if there is any funding available to support the Partnership. As far as the \$25,000 from Chehalis Generation Facility, there is a question from the city on what thiers could be used for. Ms. LaClair stated that Ms. Anderson said they may be able to donate their portion to the Chehalis Basin Partnership, but she will look into it. Mr. Menser mentioned previous donations from Thurston County so he can make a request again. Ms. Parrott added that the Chehalis Tribe contributes quite a bit to the Partnership and hosts certain aspects. Ms. Harma stated Grays Harbor County contributes administrative support there is a cost to staff time and managing our budget.

Ms. Harma updated the group on the Chehalis Generation Facility funds and the results of a subcommittee planning meeting. Some ideas include hiring an intern from Evergreen, CBP administrative support, Managed Aquifer Recharge for sites on the Newaukum River, BDAs, headwater wood treatments, and agricultural irrigation efficiencies.

April's meeting will be a member-led meeting and Ms. Harma encouraged members to reach out and express interest in topics and find speakers.

### **City of Hoquiam- West Fork Hoquiam Dam Removal and Groundwater Supply -- Jill Van Hulle**

Ms. Van Hulle updated the group on the West Fork Hoquiam Dam Removal project. She stated that in addition to the Streamflow Restoration Grant, they are looking to file a redundant application for Washington Coast Restoration and Resiliency Initiative (WCRRRI) funding. The difference is that they are requesting more funding for the development of the new wells as opposed to the other grant focusing on analysis. They are looking to get a support letter from the Chehalis Basin Partnership; they also will be continuing to reach out to other organizations. The City is committed to removing the dam and restoring the site. Ms. Van Hulle stated it would be great to get letters from the Chehalis Tribe and QIN. The project was deemed eligible and made it through first round for Streamflow Restoration Grant consideration.

Mr. Shay asked if anyone else could do a letter of support. Ms. McFarland is interested in more aspects of the projects and how much they are asking for. Mr. Shay stated it would be great to have letters of support done by the middle of May.

Partnership members provided concurrence that a letter of support could be provided by the CBP for this new funding source. Ms. Harma added we might be able to tailor this letter to speak to community benefits so asked both sponsor and CBP members what they thought the community benefits of this project were. As part of community benefits, Ms. Van Hulle stated the City is planning to remove one of their two surface water impoundments and replace it with a groundwater source located at the same treatment plant. They would be restoring habitat and opening up river habitat for salmon migration. The surface water source is less reliable in the summer because of variable flows and more prone to contamination.

### **Salmon Recovery Projects Seeking Funding in the Chehalis Basin - Kirsten Harma**

Ms. Harma updated the group on salmon recovery projects in the basin seeking funding. The funding sources being pursued include Washington Coast Restoration and Resiliency Initiative (WCRRRI), Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board (FBRB), Streamflow Restoration Act,

and Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB). Sixty-five percent of proposed project costs are barrier removals. The other projects proposed include assessments, river restoration, invasive weed removal, dam removal, land protection, and water right acquisitions. Lewis County has the highest proposed costs (~\$11M), followed by Grays Harbor County (~\$8M), Thurston County (~\$6M), and lastly Mason county (~\$0.3M) with a total of \$25.2 million. 11 projects are designed to help Chinook salmon.

Mr. Stearns asked about water right acquisitions and what was happening with that project. Ms. Harma responded that it is regarding the Cooke Aquiculture project and the Washington Water Trust is responsible and they are waiting for Streamflow Restoration Grant funding. She also added Emily Dick has left Washington Water Trust and won't be working with us anymore.

Mr. Stearns asked if we are impacted by the decision regarding culverts replacement requirements (culvert case). Mr. Mobbs answered that the decision is only for state highways/roads. The state asked for specific actions that would help salmon. ASRP has put culverts in a lower priority intentionally because they wanted to focus on spring chinook salmon. Premature migration is genetically determined, so if we lose them, we will not get them back. Mr. Stearns praised Weyerhaeuser and how they were willing to put in the capital of putting in bridges instead of culverts to for long term benefits.

Mr. Harris added that the project on Highway 6 project is nearly finished (\$8.9 million project); Mr. Mobbs thinks it is an injunction culvert project. Mr. Harris asked how it functions because it seems a long way away from a waterway. Ms. Parrott stated it corrects a fish passage barrier because there is a tributary there. Originally, WSDOT wanted to do a full flood/habitat project there with a remainder, but the landowner said no. The stream is not in its original position, so it does not function well. The state was required to fix it because it was deemed a barrier. Mr. Stearns added it is always best to get the stream back to a meander because channelization can cause problems downstream for fish. Ms. Parrott stated it can also cause water velocity to increase, which reduces storage, instream flow, and groundwater recharge. Mr. Shay mentioned that Hoquiam is a large timber owner and had to replace all their culverts far before the state (23 culverts). Replacing them had huge benefits for salmon and it's been 7-8 years since they completed their projects.

Ms. Johnson updated the group that the Streamflow Restoration grant round for 2022 closed last month and the application summary is now online. More updates are coming out next week on the listserv. There is about \$40 million to distribute, 57 applications, and a total of \$96 million requested.

Mr. Mobbs attended the Skookumchuck Dam webinar held a few weeks ago and stated it was informative. Mr. Kale stated the webinar presented an overview and no decisions were made. There are still a lot of decisions to be made before the final decision.

Mr. Stearns updated the group and stated the legislative raided the public works trust fund, which means TPUD won't be able to fix as many water systems as they would like. It includes Lewis/Grays Harbor/Mason County; they have gotten involved in broadband and are able to help out a lot. There is some funding rolling out; the Nisqually Tribe has \$6M to create broadband infrastructure throughout south Thurston County.

Ms. Holroyde added that the League of Women Voters is working on a water study report and it's moving faster. She also added that there's hope for opening up the Capital Estuary.

It's hard to request funds for the Partnership from any particular source. Mr. Harris stated, "We don't fit in anybody's particular box when it comes to funding, but we fit in everybody's box". He also added wanting to have discussions regarding having meetings in-person/hybrid next meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With there being no further business, Chair Terry Harris adjourned the meeting.

**NEXT MEETING:** April 22, 2022