



Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board – May 2023 Meeting Summary

Date: May 16, 2023

Time: 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual Meeting

Summary: Formal Actions/Decisions

Item	Formal Action
Meeting notes from March 21, 2023	Approved
Cost increase request for Ostrander Creek	Approved
Creation of a non-voting “emeritus” position	Approved
Make Paul Wagner, formerly WSDOT, an emeritus FBRB member	Approved

Summary: Follow-up Items and Next Steps

Item	Follow-up
Update FBRB Bylaws with emeritus membership	Triangle will draft an update to the Bylaws with the details of the emeritus membership positions.
Track Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) discussion of match funds	The Board will track ongoing conversations at the SRFB around match requirements and will consider making similar changes.
Discussion of match requirements	In June, the Board will discuss revising or dropping match requirements for planning projects or restoration projects under \$350,00 to align with other grant programs.

Welcome/Introductions/Agenda Review: Triangle Associates facilitator, Joy Juelson, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. Chair Thomas Jameson, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), welcomed attendees. Alex Sweetser, Triangle Associates, facilitated introductions with Board members and staff. A quorum was present.

Public Comment: No public comments were received.

Old Business: The notes for the FBRB March 2023 meeting were reviewed by the facilitator. A motion to approve the notes was made by John Foltz, Council of Regions, and seconded by Chair Jameson. The motion was approved with no objections.

Decision: Board approved the March 2023 Meeting Notes.

General Updates

Dave Caudill's retirement from RCO

Dave Caudill, formerly Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), retired in May. He served as a technical expert for the Board and its grant program for the last five years. He was also the lead grant manager for the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFPPP). Board members thanked Dave for his work and longstanding support of the Board. Chair Jameson presented him a farewell gift.

Dave Caudill thanked the Board. He shared his work on fish passage barriers began in 1998 when WDFW began inventorying barriers. He could not have imagined the importance of that work and how it eventually led to the formation of the FBRB. Now there are several FBRB barrier removal projects aimed at the barriers he inventoried.

Chair Jameson shared RCO recruited John Foltz to be the new RCO Outdoors Grant Manager. As a Board member, John has been a strong advocate for the Council of Regions and for recovery work in the Snake River Region. Now, John will work with the Board and shift to providing technical support.

Statewide Fish Passage Barrier Removal Strategy Update

Jane Atha, WDFW, gave a presentation on the Strategy at the Salmon Recovery Conference, which was beneficial for outreach. She noted contactors from Triangle Associates (Triangle) met with several agency partners for assessment interviews and recently did a briefing for Tribes. WDFW and its contractors from Cramer Fish Science are forming a science panel of volunteer scientists to inform Strategy development.

Review FBRB's 2023-2025 Budget and Funding from the Legislature

Chair Jameson shared that the Board received \$48.4 million this biennium for its grant program, which is the largest amount of capital funds the Board has ever received. This funds down to project #31 on the Board's 2023-2025 project list. The remaining projects were listed as alternatives. He noted the administration rates for WDFW and RCO were far below their request. The agencies plan to explore solutions in the next biennium.

Update on Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-saving Transportation (PROTECT) Funding

Chair Jameson shared nine eligible sponsors on the FBRB's 2023-2025 project list are pursuing 2023 PROTECT funds. The sponsors are still working to meet the federal requirements before September 2023 so WSDOT Local Programs can allocate the funds.

Chair Jameson noted the eligible sponsors were able to increase their requested funding amount in their PROTECT applications since their original estimates were over two years old. Additionally, Local Programs said the state would cover federal match requirements using state toll credits. If sponsors are unable to meet the requirements, Local Programs will reallocate funds elsewhere.

Susan Eugenis, Washington State Association of Counties (Counties), noted Cowlitz County's project received a design contract and is working to meet the right-of-way requirements. However, it could take several months for the federal government to fully certify their plan.

Board Questions and Discussion

- Chair Jameson noted projects with unobligated funds could seek PROTECT funding in the future.

- Dave Caudill shared project sponsors must meet the federal requirements and submit their PROTECT applications by September 13 so WSDOT can decide on funding allocations by September 30.

Department of Commerce (Commerce) Utility Relocation Appropriation Bill

Chair Jameson shared there was an appropriation bill for Commerce to conduct a study on the costs to utilities due to fish passage barrier corrections. Currently, the state cannot pay for utility relocations. So, utility companies pay for the relocations and pass the costs to their customers. The appropriation says Commerce should engage with the FBRB as well as other agencies and Boards as part of the cost study. It is anticipated the FBRB will only be engaged for their projects and possibly WSDOT injunction projects.

Project and Policy Issue / Opportunities

Cost Increase Request for Ostrander Creek in Cowlitz County

The Cost Increase Subcommittee met on May 11, 2023 to discuss the Ostrander Creek cost increase request. A summary of the Subcommittee’s discussion was provided to Board members in advance of the meeting as part of the meeting materials. The main driver of the cost increase request is regrading the road for installation of a bridge that would replace the existing three-box culvert. The Subcommittee considered two versions of the cost increase request: one with and one without a temporary bridge. Chair Jameson reached out to the project sponsor to receive more information about the need for the temporary bridge. The sponsor submitted a detailed explanation of the impacts and pictures of the alternate route, which was a narrow, unpaved road.

John Foltz explained the cost increase request was due to material costs and not issues about the project or design. Additionally, the sponsor’s explanation showed there would be significant traffic and safety impacts. Chair Jameson noted there are funds available for the request and there is another FBRB project upstream of this project.

Board Questions and Discussion:

- In response to a question from Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities, Josh Lambert, RCO, confirmed the county went with the lowest bidder and increased costs were largely due to increased material rates.
- In response to a question from Alice Rubin, RCO, Chair Jameson explained the cost increase request would be funded with returned funds from the 2019-2021 funding round. The project was funded for design in 2019-2021 and funded for construction in 2021-2023.

Decision: A motion to approve the cost increase request for Ostrander Creek was made by Chair Jameson and seconded by John Foltz. The motion was approved with no objections.

Board Honorary Membership

Joy Juelson reviewed the Board’s discussion at the last meeting in March. She noted the Board decided they needed further discussion about the details of the position since their decision could set a precedence. After discussion, the Board decided to develop an “emeritus” position for past Board members. The intent is for past Board members to continue to attend meetings and engage in discussions to share their institutional knowledge. They decided on the following details for the position:

- After serving on the Board for five years, a member becomes eligible to be appointed as a non-voting emeritus member.

- Emeritus membership is a time-limited position, lasting for two years, and may be renewed upon completion of the initial term.
- Emeritus members are invited to attend all Board meetings and can be invited to participate in subcommittees as required.
- While attending meetings, emeritus members can engage in discussions to share their institutional knowledge, but they are not allowed to participate in the decision-making process of the Board.

Decision: A motion to create a non-voting “emeritus” position was made by Carl Schroeder and seconded by Chair Jameson. The motion was approved with no objections.

Decision: A motion to make Paul Wagner, formerly WSDOT, an emeritus FBRB member was made by Chair Jameson and seconded by Susan Kanzler, WSDOT. The motion was approved with no objections.

Discuss Upcoming Opportunities for Engagement

FBRB Mailing List Sign-up Overview

Christy Rains, WDFW, shared the Board has a mailing list and anyone can sign-up through the Board’s website. Currently, it is used to notify the public of monthly Board meeting. In the future, it will be used to advertise funding opportunities. The mailing list will become more relevant with the FBRB’s upcoming request for proposals for 2025-2027 funding.

FBRB Session at 2023 Salmon Recovery Conference

John Foltz thanked Chair Jameson and Christy for developing the conference session on the Board. The session was well received and well attended. The Board thanked Jeanie Abbott, Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO), for organizing the event.

Chair Jameson shared that one presenter was concerned the Board’s grant program is biased towards restoration projects over design projects. Christy explained that there were only two design projects in the top 31 projects on the 2023-2025 list. However, 18 projects from this list were funded for design in previous funding cycles, which indicates the FBRB’s grant program is working.

Another concern expressed at the conference was the Board’s 15% match requirements. The match requirements can create equity issues for NGOs, Tribes, private landowners, and small local governments because these potential sponsors have limited capacity and the match amount can be a difficult barrier to entry. The Board considered this feedback and reflected on how the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) is discussing changes around how match funds are managed. The Board identified this as a discussion topic for the next meeting.

Path Forward: At the next Board meeting in June, the Board will discuss dropping match requirements for planning projects and restoration projects under \$350,000 to align with SRFB grant program.

Path Forward: Members will track SRFB conversations around match requirements to see if the Board should adopt similar changes for their grant program.

Interagency Fish Passage Portal

Alex Sweetser provided an overview of the US Fish and Wildlife Service’s [Interagency Fish Passage Portal](#), which is a web-based GIS dashboard that tracks that Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), federal funding opportunities. It includes a GIS database of all projects funded to date.

- Evan Lewis, King County, shared the [Aquatic Barrier Prioritization Tool \(sarpdata.com\)](#) which could be relevant to the prioritization project.

Additional Items:

- Puget Sound Day on the Hill was held on May 8-11 in Washington, D.C. Margen Carlson, WDFW, attended as well as Erik Neatherlin, GSRO.
- Jeannie Abbott shared Salmon Day on the Hill will be in Olympia this November.
- Chair Jameson noted he will be presenting at the Annual Conference for Washington State Associate of County Engineers on June 27. Additionally, there will be a fish passage rulemaking presentation on June 28.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: Virtual meeting on June 20, 2023

ATTENDANCE

Board Members/Alternates:

Axel Swanson, Washington State Association of Counties	John Foltz, Council of Regions, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (SRSRB)
Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities	Karen Zirkle, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Chair Thomas Jameson, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)	Susan Eugenis, Washington State Association of Counties
Christy Rains, WDFW	Susan Kanzler, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
Erik Neatherlin, Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO)	Tim Resseguie, Yakima Nation
Jeannie Abbott, GSRO	

WDFW, RCO Staff and Triangle Facilitation Team:

Amber Martens, WDFW	Joshua Rogala, WDFW
Casey Costello, WDFW	Julie Grobelny, WDFW
Cassandra Weekes, WDFW	Alice Rubin, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)
Christopher Clemons, WDFW	Dave Caudill, RCO
David Collins, WDFW	Josh Lambert, RCO
Gabrielle Stilwater, WDFW	Alex Sweetser, Facilitation Support
Gina Piazza, WDFW	Joy Juelson, Facilitation Support
Jane Atha, WDFW	

Others observing:

Dawn Nolan	Evan Lewis	Matthew Miskovic
Diane Hennessey	Heidi Reynolds	Tracy Gilson
Don Gourlie	Kristen Harma	Call-in Number (2)