



**Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board – Draft May Meeting Notes**

**Date:** May 17, 2022

**Time:** 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Location:** Virtual Meeting

**Summary: Formal Actions/Decisions**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Formal Action</b>
Meeting notes from April 19, 2022	Approved
Outreach email on the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program for distribution to the FBRB distribution list	Approved

**Summary: Follow-up Actions**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
USFS Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) Project List	Chair Jameson distributed the AOP project list and map to the Board following the meeting.
Updated 2023 – 2025 Project List	RCO and WDFW distributed the updated 2023-2025 project list and map of projects to the Board following the meeting.
Outreach Letter for Federal Culvert Program	Triangle distributed the approved letter to Board members for them to distribute within their networks. A copy of the letter will also sent to the FBRB distribution list.
Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SFRB) Funding Pathway Report Out	Alice Rubin, RCO, will attend the next SFRB meeting on June 1-2, 2022, and will report out on the discussion around funding cost increase requests at the next FBRB meeting.
Prioritizing Cost Increase Requests on the 2023 – 2025 FBRB Project List	At a future meeting, the Board will discuss how to rank project cost increase requests on the list.

**Welcome/Introductions/Agenda Review:** Triangle Facilitator, Joy Juelson, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Alex Sweetser, Triangle Associates, facilitated introductions with FBRB members and staff. A quorum was present.

**Public Comment:** No public comments were received.

**Old Business:** The meeting notes for the FBRB April 2022 meeting were reviewed by the facilitator and approved by the Board.

### **General Updates:**

#### ***Proviso Strategist hiring update***

Chair Tom Jameson, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) explained that WDFW received funding to fill this position in the 2022 legislative session. The second round of interviews for this position are scheduled for later this week and an offer is anticipated for next week. Based on the hiring status, he hopes the position can be filled by early June. Additionally, there is an RFP to contract with a consulting firm to support the new Strategist. The release of the RSP has been postponed to after the Strategist position is filled to ensure the focus is on where the most support is needed.

#### ***US Forest Service Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) Program***

Chair Jameson reviewed that WDFW was approached by the US Forest Service (USFS) for a potential funding opportunity linked to their AOP Program. The USFS believed funds could be provided for barrier removal downstream from USFS lands. However, a review of downstream areas found there were no downstream barriers.

John Foltz, Council of Regions, explained he is working with Lead Entities and Recovery Boards to identify projects downstream of AOP projects. Additionally, he noted USFS are looking for potential sponsorship opportunities for AOP projects since the projects are capacity limited. John requested the AOP project list so he can send it to sponsors to gauge interest and capacity to implement any of the projects.

Paul Wagner, WSDOT, requested to be informed if any WSDOT road crossing or barriers are downstream of USFS lands.

**Action Item:** Chair Jameson distributed the AOP project list and map to the Board following the meeting.

#### ***Webinar Report Out: Improving Infrastructure for Salmon + People***

Chair Jameson explained this webinar was sponsored by the WA Department of Commerce. Chair Jameson and Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities, noted there was not a lot of new information provided and there was not much linkage to the Board. Carl noted the federal staff on the webinar seemed unaware of the FBRB. He suggested inviting them to a future meeting as an educational opportunity to increase their awareness of the Board.

**Path Forward:** Consider inviting federal staff to a future Board meeting to increase their awareness of the FBRB.

### **Update on FBRB 2023-2025 Grant Round**

Matt Curtis, WDFW, explained the initial list of 113 applications have been reduced to 104, primarily from projects withdrawn due to ineligibility or post-habitat survey discoveries. He presented a map of projects, including those removed from the list, and explained why projects were withdrawn. He closed the presentation by thanking the local recovery entities and other parties who voiced support for the current projects. The next step will be for the Technical Review Team (TRT) to rank and prioritize the remaining projects, which is currently ongoing. Immediately after the meeting, Matt provided the Board an updated preliminary project list.

*Path Forward:* RCO and WDFW distributed the updated 2023-2025 project list and map of projects to the Board following the meeting.

### **Funding Solutions and Outreach for Anticipated Construction Cost Increase Requests**

The facilitator explained that at the last FBRB April meeting, the Board identified a need to discuss funding pathways and solutions for anticipated construction cost increase requests this summer.

In response to a question about how other grant programs are trying to get ahead of cost increase requests, Alice Rubin, RCO, explained that the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) has a cost increase funds set aside each year. This is typically \$500,000, though this year the total was raised to \$750,000. RCO staff will present a list of cost increase requests at the next SRFB meeting on June 1-2, 2022. The Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) is also able to set funding aside for cost increase request. However, several grant programs managed through RCO, such as FBRB, do not have the ability to set funds aside for cost increase requests or have strict restrictions on using returned funds. Alice noted RCO is aware of the need for cost increase request funding pots and relaxed restrictions on returned funds and are actively discussing solutions.

Chair Jameson explained FBRB does not have a cost increase funding pot and they have not received approval from the state legislature to have one. FBRB receives cost increase requests from grant managers. Per the current protocols, if it is under \$100,000 or 10%, the FBRB Chair can decide to approve or reject it. Otherwise, it is brought to a FBRB subcommittee for discussion and the full Board for a decision. Currently, there is only one active cost increase request for the FBRB.

### *Board Questions and Discussion*

- Dave Caudill, RCO, noted he spoke to Brock Milliern, the new RCO Policy Director, and confirmed Brock hopes to attend the next FBRB meeting on June 21, 2022.
- In response to a question from John Foltz about when RCO is expecting to receive cost increase requests, Alice and Dave explained sponsors generally receive bids in June and this is when RCO would be made aware of any cost increase requests. As of late May 2022, RCO has not received any requests.
- Board members identified a need to discuss how to prioritize cost increase requests coming in through the 2023-2025 grant round. This will need to wait for sponsors to receive construction bids and submit any cost increase requests.
- John Foltz recommended reaching out to RCO to confirm the deadline for cost increase requests. This is contingent on when RCO will send the final 2023-2025 FBRB Project List to the Governor's Office.

*Path Forward:* Alice Rubin, RCO, will attend the next Salmon Recovery Funding Board on June 1-2, 2022, and will provide a report out of the discussion at the next FBRB meeting on June 21, 2022.

*Path Forward:* At a future Board meeting, the Board will discuss how to rank project cost increase requests on the 2023-2025 FBRB Project List.

### **Subgroup Reports on Outreach Opportunities around the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program**

The facilitator explained that a subgroup met on May 10, 2022, to discuss outreach opportunities around the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program. The subgroup consisted of Chair Jameson (WDFW), Carl Schroeder (Association of WA Counties), Jeannie Abbott (GSRO), and

Paul Wagner and Megan Cotton (WSDOT). At the meeting, the subgroup agreed one outreach pathways could be to develop an outreach letter for the FBRB distribution list focused on established facts of the in-development program.

The Board reviewed the notes and outcomes from the subgroup meeting. This included possible outreach actions for the Board to engage in. The Board decided to hold off on most outreach beyond the outreach letter of program facts until the RFP is released. The Board reviewed the draft language of the outreach letter and approved it for distribution to FBRB partners and the FBRB distribution list.

#### *Questions and Discussion:*

- Paul Wagner explained the RFP has yet to be released yet and recommend the Board and its partners start considering projects they would like to submit that are ready to be funded.
- Chair Jameson noted there is interest in having an option to submit project bundles to the program. Additionally, state agencies are discussing this option and working with the Governor's Office to submit a letter to U.S. Department of Transportation.
- Carl Schroeder recommended the Board engage with specific outreach with restoration entities on priority watersheds before the RFP is released. Additionally, he requested Counties be included in the advocacy letter and additional outreach opportunities.

**Decision:** The language in the Outreach Letter on the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program was approved for distribution to the FBRB distribution list.

**Action Item:** Triangle distributed the approved letter to Board members for them to distribute within their networks. A copy of the letter will also be sent to the FBRB distribution list.

### **Discuss Upcoming Opportunities for Engagement**

#### ***Update on In-person Board Meeting this Fall***

Joy Juelson and Alex Sweetser, Triangle Associates, shared the results from a Doodle Poll to schedule the in-person Board meeting this fall. The Board decided to hold the in-person meeting for September 28 and 29, 2022. Additional information on the logistics for this meeting will be discussed and the Board at upcoming meetings.

#### **Upcoming Conferences:**

Joy Juelson shared three upcoming conferences for Board members to consider. These are:

- 1) Fish Passage 2022: International Conference on River Connectivity 13-16 Jun. 2022 in Richland, WA
- 2) Annual American Fisheries Society (AFS) 21-25 Aug. 2022 in Spokane, WA
- 3) Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council (IACC) 18-20 Oct. 2022 Wenatchee, WA

Registration links and additional information on the details of these conferences can be found in the meeting materials.

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

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 21, 2022 – online meeting**

**ATTENDANCE**

**Board Members/Alternates:**

Axel Swanson, Washington State Association of Counties	Matt Curtis, WDFW
Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities	Paul Wagner, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
Casey Baldwin, The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	Susan Eugenis, Washington State Association of Counties
Chair Thomas Jameson, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)	Susan Kanzler, WSDOT
Jeannie Abbott, Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO)	Terra Rentz, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
John Foltz, Council of Regions, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (SRSRB)	Tim Resseguie, Yakama Indian Nation

**WDFW, RCO Staff and Triangle Facilitation Team:**

Amber Martens, WDFW	Julie Groebelny, WDFW
Casey Costello, WDFW	Kaylee Kautz, WDFW
Cassandra Weekes, WDFW	Alice Rubin, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)
David Collins, WDFW	Dave Caudill, RCO
Gabrielle Stilwater, WDFW	Alex Sweetser, Facilitation Support
Gina Piazza, WDFW	Joy Juelson, Facilitation Support

**Others observing:**

Cade Roler	James Ellis	Shane Scott
Cheryl Baumann	Jim Heytvelt	Steve Helvey
Daniel Howe	Kevin Long	Tracy Gilson
David Varner	Maria Jawad	
Evan Lewis	Matthew Miskovic	