

**Fish Passage Barrier Removal Board – Meeting Notes**

**Date: February 20, 2015**

**Place: Governor Hotel, Olympia, Washington**

**Summary: Agenda items with formal action**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Formal Action</b>
Meeting Notes	Approved meeting notes from December 2014

**Summary: Follow-up actions**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>
WDFW Handout on Program	Julie will send out in a Word file for edits (not a significant re-write).
Working with Puget Sound Partnership on how to determine focus areas	1. WDFW will engage with PSP and the Salmon Recovery Council. 2. Develop some options to discuss with them.
Regional salmon recovery board follow-up	1. Go back to regions to further solidify chosen focus areas/ 2. Meet with regions at salmon recovery conference in May for further dialogue
Grant Program options	Develop more specifics on the “hybrid option #3” approach.

**Board Members/Alternates Present/on the phone:**

Julie Henning, WDFW	Chris Hanlon-Meyer, WDNR
Casey Baldwin, Colville Confederated Tribes	Brian Abbott, GSRO
Paul Wagner, DOT	Carl Schroeder, AWC
Jon Brand, Kitsap County/WSAC (phone)	Gary Rowe, WSAC

**Welcome/Introductions/Agenda Review**

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by facilitator Neil Aaland. Neil asked people around the table to introduce themselves, and then reviewed the agenda. A motion was made by Paul Wagner to approve the September meeting notes; Julie Henning seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Comments:** No one present offered comments.

**Updates on Legislative Session**

Paul Wagner said he has gotten questions about their program during the legislative session. Gary Rowe said the Senate voted out a 16 year transportation package that has \$280 million for DOT to address barriers. Paul said that’s a good number for a biennium, not enough over 16 years.

Carl reported that a water infrastructure bill is being considered that has three components: water supply projects, stormwater projects, and floodplain management project. Carl said AWC is not happy with the parcel tax as a funding mechanism. AWC asked for Transportation Improvement Board (TIB) funding to be included. They are having a hard time getting the legislature to want to fund local barrier projects. AWC has urged that fish barrier funding be carved out on its own, but not getting much support for that.

Gary said that \$1.2 billion for preservation is in transportation budget; the biggest part of this amount is paving programs.

Paul handed out a briefing paper they produced, responding to legislative inquiries. He reviewed the example projects included in the paper. He said in selecting these projects, they worked with WDFW and used the priority index, looking at where they lined up with funding and opportunities. They looked at lineal habitat gain, and picked projects from the stand-alone culvert project list. General comments from FBRB members were that this is helpful and these projects are good examples of successful coordination.

Chris said the capitol request for the Family Forest Fish Protection Program (FFFPP) is funded at \$10 million; the previous biennial budget for this was \$2 million. The Chehalis Basin group was going to request separate funding for barrier removal in basins that are further down DNRs list. One bill being considered requires getting landowner permission before accessing a site; this could have huge ramifications. Bill number is HB 1375. The bill has since died.

Julie discussed the handout WDFW prepared. WDFW and RCO met with Senator King, chair of transportation committee who wanted an update on the board's work. Julie asked if it is worth doing anything else with this handout. Paul thinks it is useful to have briefing materials, and mentioned his concern about language at the top of page 2. The group generally thought it would be good to revise it as a FBRB product. Julie said she would send it out as a Word document and members to provide comments, then she can revise it. She will also work with Brian on additional fact sheets and bring back their ideas to the FBRB.

### **Developments on the Statewide Strategy**

There are three general topics under this item. For the first item (using the regional salmon organization structure), Julie explained that she received feedback from regions, barely in time for the December meeting. She wants to affirm with the Board that using the focus area approach with in each salmon recovery region is the chosen approach. **All members agreed with the focus area approach.** Comments and questions from the FBRB include:

- Will Lead Entities be involved? [Yes]
- We'll need to consider how Puget Sound/Hood Canal fit in
- Gary asked to be reminded what the structure was in each of the regional boards? [they include local entities, including lead entities, elected officials, others]
- Will regional boards use their existing restoration work to inform their discussions? [We have not yet given them direction on that point]
- We will need to discuss the distribution of funding between boards
- We have not verified the choices being made by regional boards
  - Don't want to be second-guessing their choices
- The question for regions: where would you start in addressing barriers?
  - Sequencing versus prioritizing – different thought processes
  - Brian thinks that ultimately, each of the 62 WRIAs would have its own plan for barriers
- Focus of regions is on listed species; the need is to be broader
  - FBRB legislation says Endangered, threatened, depressed as criteria
  - Might want a broader focus
- Working with the regional boards is going to be an iterative process; we just need to get started and we need to be clearer with regions.

*Items to further refine with this approach:*

1. *Consider what questions we want to ask the regional boards as follow-up to their submittals (e.g. do they have existing inventories; how will they use their existing restoration work to inform their discussions; where would you start in addressing barriers)*
2. *Consider how the distribution of funding between regions will be developed.*

The second general topic is the two-step approach for prioritizing focus areas and funding barrier projects. Julie wanted discussion on how what the FBRB is thinking about the approach. With seven regions, each

of them will come forward with their priorities. We will also need to talk about project eligibility. Comments and questions from the FBRB include:

- We shouldn't plan on a state program funding removal of federal barriers (but also should be open to considering; Brian mentioned the SRFB funds projects on federal lands)
- Working with railroads can be challenging
- We don't want to just spread the money around, but be thoughtful
- With this approach, how do specific projects occur?
- We'll need to develop criteria and criteria should be kept broad; two scales
  - (1) Criteria for determining which watershed
  - (2) Criteria within the watershed
- What criteria do we ask regions?
  - What investments have already been made?
  - Re-ask: where could you do the most good?
  - Think about "scalability"
  - Think in terms of longer-term investments
  - Not a failure if the entire watershed isn't done
  - Need to standardize the questions
  - FBRB should meet with the regions [Brian suggested doing this in conjunction with the Salmon Recovery Conference being held in May; we could have a fish passage item on the agenda]

*Decisions:*

1. *Further develop, based on starting questions above, some criteria for determining which watersheds should be selected; and criteria for selecting projects within a watershed*
2. *Meet with the regions for further dialogue about how the program could be implemented*

The third general topic relates to Puget Sound. Julie and Dave talked with the Puget Sound Partnership. They think each Lead Entity should be consulted. Julie is wondering about bringing in the Puget Sound Recovery Council to help prioritize within Puget Sound; Dave Price is on the Council for WDFW. There was some discussion about the FBRB role and the Recovery Council roles, and whether the FBRB accepts Recovery Council recommendations more than the other 6 regions.

Julie asked if we should engage with the Recovery Council. There were some reservations but **generally, FBRB members think the answer is yes, the FBRB should engage with them.**

*Decisions/follow-up:*

1. *Engage with the Puget Sound Partnership and with the Salmon Recovery Council about their recommendations how the program could work within Puget Sound. Develop some options to present to stimulate their thinking.*

### **Grant Program Options**

Julie explained that DFW has come up with two primary options for discussion. Option 1 envisions a process where applicants turn in pre-applications to WDFW, with basic information. WDFW works with the applicant to "scope" them, and then creates a report to send to the scoring committee. This committee reviews and ranks the applications, and conducts site visits with the highest ranked ones. The applicant then provides any other information needed and submits a package to the FBRB. The FBRB reviews, ranks, and approves a project list.

Option 2 involves a "broker" system. A local broker within each region (and maybe within each watershed) would receive funding to scope, determine project feasibility, and coordinate applications. They would develop 1 package of projects for their geographic area and submit to FBRB. The broker would then find sponsors to take on an approved project.

Questions and comments from FBRB members include:

- Might be valuable to provide a list of ranked projects to the legislature for funding; similar to WWRP
- A list of projects assumed that everything is in place – landowner agreements, match, etc.
- The initial scoping of projects in option 1 is based on existing information only
- Where in the process is match found?
- Carl likes the broker concept
- The data part is hugely important; how do we get gaps identified and addressed?
  - If a region submits a sub-region and doesn't provide data, we'll need to go back to the region and ask
  - Early criterion: If a jurisdiction isn't willing to participate should not propose there – a "pre-box 1 step"
- If we go with option 2, a feedback loop is needed for steps 2 and 3
- Brian thought we might want more of a hybrid approach; both options have pros and cons
  - Basic difference: with Option 1, applicants do a pre-application
  - Option 2 has FBRB doing more work
- Need to discuss the grant program level of funding – how much to ask the legislature for
- Does the "hybrid" approach mean being more opportunistic the first time, then using a "brokered" type of approach later?
- What if a certain level of funding is provided to each region to further develop their choices – get the low hanging fruit?

*Decisions/additional information needed:*

1. *The decision centers around a "hybrid" version, including elements of the two options presented. Additional work should be done to describe what this hybrid version would include.*

**Summary/Next Steps**

- **Workplan:** Julie has asked Neil to put a draft workplan together for consideration at the March meeting. Neil asked for volunteers to react to a proposal; Brian, Jon, Carl offered to help.
- **Additional work** will be done to develop the "hybrid" grant program option.
- **WDFW will engage** with the Puget Sound Partnership/Recovery Council.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:30 p.m.

**The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for Friday, March 20 at the Governor Hotel.**

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**Others present at meeting:**

Neil Aaland, Facilitator	Justin Zweifel, WDFW
Cade Roler, WDFW	