

Fish Passage Barrier Removal Board – Meeting Notes

Date: March 15, 2016

Place: Washington State Association of Counties, Olympia, Washington

Summary: Agenda items with formal action

Item	Formal Action
Meeting Notes - February	Approved
Nomination of 30 projects in coordinated pathway	Approved

Summary: Follow-up actions

Item	Follow-up
Communications subcommittee	Neil will arrange and staff
Workplan	Continue implementing; this will come back to FBRB in May or June for update
Develop proposal for high-level aspects of the coordinated pathway grant program, including match requirements	Subcommittee of Jon Brand, Dave Caudill, and Steve Martin to meet with Cade Roler

Board Members/Alternates Present:

David Price, Chair, WDFW	Joe Shramek, WDNR
Paul Wagner, DOT	Jonalee Squeochs, Yakama Nation
Gary Rowe, WSAC	Jon Brand, WSAC/Kitsap County
Tom Jameson, WDFW	Dave Caudill, RCO
Carl Schroeder, AWC	Steve Martin, Council of Regions
Neil Aaland, Facilitator	

Others present at meeting:

Dave Collins, WDFW	Dan Barrett, WDFW
Cade Roler, WDFW	Finlay Anderson, Kleinschmidt Associates
Larry Burnsbad, WA Council of TU	Gina Piazza, WDFW
Alison Hart, WDFW	Devona Ensmenger, Wild Salmon Center
Jim Wright, NOAA Fisheries	

Welcome/Introductions/Agenda Review

The meeting was called to order at 9:05 a.m. by Facilitator Neil Aaland. Dave Price introduced Tom Jameson, new Fish Passage Division Manager with WDFW. Tom replaces Julie Henning in a different role within the agency. A motion was made by Paul Wagner to approve the January meeting notes as drafted; Jon Brand seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments: Devona Ensmenger, Wild Salmon Center, asked the Board to consider adding one additional watershed to the Coast priority watershed. She recommended adding the Clearwater, which has high Intrinsic Potential value. There are only five culverts in the whole system. Dave Price asked Devona about the discussions within the region. She replied that the coast is established as a federation of strong Lead Entities. She also noted that the Clearwater is very different geomorphically than the other priority watershed, the Newaukum.

Dave said this would be a good conversation between WDFW and Coast and they should discuss next steps. For this timeframe, the FBRB has already made the decision.

Communication Plan: Neil Aaland noted that the subcommittee had not been able to meet, but have a meeting scheduled on Thursday. He will report back at the next FBRB meeting.

Workplan: Neil reviewed the table discussed at the last meeting, and pointed out specific items that the Board had discussed. FBRB members had several comments and observations:

- Paul asked about the intent of connecting with Ecology; the purpose is that through the water quality program they may have some interest in the program. Steve Martin is meeting with them later today and will mention it. Paul said it would be good to follow up with Lauren Driscoll, SEA Program.
- Dave noted that WDFW has done the assessment of resources needed, and thanked counties and cities for their help. The due date on that item should change; the FBRB can consider that in conjunction with the workplan update in May or June
- Dave noted that WDFW will continue working on the FAQ sheet and bring it for review

Watershed Pathway

Cade Roler, WDFW, provided an update. There are two separate pathways: a watershed based pathway and a coordinated pathway. The watershed pathway is aimed at fixing high priority passage barriers in high priority watersheds. In order to build off the existing WA salmon recovery framework, Salmon Recovery Regions and Lead Entities across the state were asked to submit priority watersheds in their respective areas at the HUC 10 spatial scale.

He then reviewed the list of approved HUC 10 nominations:

- Coast: The Middle Fork Newaukum River in Lewis County is the focus. They are working on next steps including downstream barrier checks, habitat surveys and cost estimates. Gary Rowe noted recent legislative funding of the Chehalis Basin program, and suggested there is a need to coordinate with Ecology on that work
- Lower Columbia: The Lower Cowlitz was nominated by the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board and approved by the FBRB. Dave Collins joined Cade. They met with the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board to identify priorities, and narrowed to three sub-watersheds. WDFW has been working with the region to prioritize the top two sub-watersheds. The three sub-watersheds being considered in the Lower Cowlitz are Leckler Creek, Delemeter/Arkansas, and King Creek. Dave said with all the focus watersheds, the intent is to finish with focus watersheds before moving to others. That is something the FBRB needs to discuss.
- Snake: Priority watersheds are sub-watersheds of the Grand Ronde and Snake Rivers. Next steps include meeting with the regional organizations to finalize lists. Dave noted that relevant private barriers should also be considered as part of a package.
- Yakima: they have put forth a couple of streams; a major issue is that streams are “co-mingled”. High priority projects there are likely going to include fixing some diversions. Dave Price noted that it seems late to be developing a package; Dave Collins said they do have enough information to develop one.
- Upper Columbia: the focus is the Okanogan watershed; four creeks have been identified. One of their needs is inventory. Dave Price thinks we can consider inventories, but they need to develop a list. Steve Martin noted that the legislature expects to see projects.

Gina Piazza, WDFW, updated the FBRB on Puget Sound packages under development.

- Pilchuck River HUC 10: there are two creeks for which projects are being considered. The highest priority package includes Little Pilchuck Creek and a main tributary. She showed a set of maps in a PowerPoint presentation. The maps showed all barriers, then the priorities and what would be opened. Some blockages are only partial, and need to reflect that blockages may allow some smaller level of passage. Dave wonders how the FBRB should consider partial versus total barriers; currently they are considering partial to be the same as full in the Watershed Pathway. This issue should be teed up for the next meeting. Gina also showed a map that included Lake Stevens; the Board had some discussions about the wisdom of opening Lake Stevens, since it

includes invasive species and poor habitat. Dave said he would like more information and thinks WDFW should have a conversation with Tulalip tribal biologists.

- Goldsborough Creek HUC 10: The Lead Entity habitat work group along with the help of WDFW has identified Goldsborough Creek as the highest priority sub-watershed within the HUC 10. Within Goldsborough Creek, nine high priority culverts have been identified. The Board had some dialogue about how far to go in correcting all barriers in a watershed. Paul noted that the “gain” should be the deciding factor in funding projects, not the notion of “completing a watershed”. Dave Caudill agreed. Gary said that project readiness needs to be considered by WDFW staff.

Coordinated Pathway Nominations

Cade Roler summarized this process. A solicitation was sent out, and 244 sites were nominated statewide. WDFW used several initial project filters to sort submittals, including:

- Is the project on an anadromous stream?
- Are there downstream barriers
- Are there nearby recently fixed barriers or funded barrier corrections?

244 sites were nominated and 110 qualified for further review after this initial filtering process. He passed out a sheet on criteria used for ranking the 110 projects. He then proposed to do a second tier ranking on the 30 projects, which makes it more feasible (since the list is shorter). He suggests leaving in past coordination (criteria #6).

Gary proposed the Board consider scrapping the points for coordination, and instead having a qualitative discussion of a tentative list by the Board. Joe thought the points should be kept; the second tier screening mentioned by Cade will provide more information and that’s where qualitative information can be assessed. FBRB members agreed with Joe.

A motion was made by Dave Price to adopt the list of 30 projects; Joe seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Cade asked if the Board had anything to add to a proposed tier 2 ranking. Steve mentioned a “response potential” that included the following factors:

- Dollars per lineal gain
- Habitat quality index upstream
- Hydrologic conditions/dewatering
- Spawning area available
- Juvenile refugia

Regarding coordination, the Board suggested considering whether cost-share is available and match is secured.

Cade noted that Brian Abbott has previously talked about re-opening the watershed pathway for nominations. Cade proposes opening soon for future biennia. Brian has envisioned a rolling nomination process. The Board decided to have this discussion at a future meeting.

Funding Picture

Dave Price noted that there are two aspects of funding for today’s agenda: near term funding and the match requirement. Regarding near term funding, he thanked the counties and cities for the immediate needs. This will offset some WDFW time and allows for some contracts to help WDFW.

Cade Roler then opened the discussion on match requirements. WDFW is getting some questions about this and the Board should discuss this. The legislation talks about a 25% match requirement, but doesn’t define. He reviewed some other grant programs and compiled some potential match requirements that

seemed appropriate; some of them are from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board Manual. He handed out this list of potential requirements for discussion. He would like the Board to provide feedback and guidance to Cade on the document. He handed out a letter from Mason County that discussed a couple of upcoming projects.

Discussion points included the following:

- The “fair value rate” listed on the handout seems too detailed for this stage
- Gary thinks it would be good to be consistent with the SRFB and would make it easier for project proponents
- SRFB does not require match for design-only projects (as long as design is done within 18 months)
- Dave Price noted there is some legislative language on match in the enabling legislation; he views this as an opportunity to help make this process as user-friendly as possible, and would provide a better benefit for fish
- Cade thinks the FBRB should try to keep the requirement as liberal as possible
 - For example, he is suggesting allowing upcoming restoration projects occurring within the sub-watershed as match, even if it’s not a fish passage project
- Paul has reservations about allowing restoration projects to be used as match
- Steve wondered if the FBRB should just adopt SRFB manual #18, as they spent a lot of time developing those criteria
- Gary noted that nothing is specified now about program administration
- Paul is concerned about pulling pieces from other programs to create a new one, and wonders if any potential grant program should be combined with an existing one, instead of creating a new one
- Other sideboards for a grant program include match, eligibility, the standard of the correction, and follow-up monitoring
- Carl agrees with Paul that it is hard to make a case to use restoration as match; he noted the legislature is very interested in the notion of project proponents having “skin in the game”. He worries about accepting the guidelines of other grant programs, but we don’t need to create all new guidelines.
- Dave Price said required mitigation is often not eligible for match, but we need more discussion as it can be important for fish passage barrier corrections and there is an important linkage to the Board with mitigation for DOT barriers (where appropriate) described as an important source of funding for barrier corrections in recent legislation; Carl agreed that we should discuss further and consider what the appropriate use of those mitigation dollars might be
- Gary said we’re looking at project readiness and match is an important part of that
- Cade suspects that most projects currently in the coordinated pathway wouldn’t be able to identify a 25% match right now
- Dave Price wonders about time; can match be used within a biennium, or within four years, for example?
 - Gary said that, for some federal highway funded projects, match must be available in the same time period that the project is funded
- Carl wants to be sure that projects we might fund are as certain of funding, including match, as possible

The Board decided Cade should hold off on giving guidance to Mason County on their ideas, and that it would be good to have a small subcommittee meeting before the April meeting and work with Cade to develop a proposal. Volunteers are Jon Brand, Dave Caudill, and Steve Martin. Carl suggested the subcommittee focus on the big picture items first – such as what kind of things make sense to use for match.

Summary/Next Steps

Neil reviewed next steps-

- Upcoming meetings will continue to have updates on the two pathways
- We will have a report from the communications subcommittee next meeting
- The new subcommittee will report back at the next meeting on match criteria and other high level sideboards
- We are going to consider a meeting in Eastern Washington, since three members of the FBRB are from there; perhaps June
- Regarding meeting length, these will remain from 9:00 to 2:30, depending on specific agenda
- Regarding regular meeting day, Neil will send a Doodle poll to see if there is a better day than the current third Tuesday of each month

The meeting adjourned at 1:30 pm.

The next meeting of the Board will be set pending the results of the Doodle Poll on future meeting days.