

Fish Passage Barrier Removal Board – Meeting Notes

Date: September 29, 2015

Place: Association of Washington Cities, Olympia, Washington

Summary: Agenda items with formal action

Item	Formal Action
Meeting Notes - July	Approved
Watershed Pathway Nominations	Approved; except Puget Sound and Washington Coast

Summary: Follow-up actions

Item	Follow-up
Watershed Pathway Nominations	WDFW will continue narrow down the nomination list based on discussions from this meeting
Eligibility Criteria	WDFW will provide eligibility and criteria from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board as an example.

Board Members/Alternates Present:

<i>Julie Henning, Chair, WDFW</i>	<i>Marc Engel, WDNR</i>
<i>Casey Baldwin, Colville Tribe</i>	<i>Brian Abbott, GSRO</i>
<i>Paul Wagner, DOT</i>	<i>Carl Schroeder, AWC</i>
<i>Gary Rowe, WSAC</i>	<i>Jon Brand, Kitsap County/WSAC</i>
<i>Jonalee Squeochs, Yakama Nation</i>	

Welcome/Introductions/Agenda Review

The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. by Julie Henning. Julie announced that she would be facilitating in lieu of Neil Aaland who is on vacation. Julie welcomed Marc Engel with Washington Department of Natural Resources to the board. Marc is replacing Chris Hanlon-Meyer. Julie reviewed the agenda for the day. There were no comments, questions or additions to the agenda.

A motion was made by Paul Wagner to approve the July meeting notes; Carl Schroeder seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comments: No public comments.

Subcommittee Report on Communications Strategy

Brian Abbott provided an update on the Communication Strategy. Pyramid Consulting is still conducting their interviews. The subcommittee will be providing feedback on the guiding outcomes at their Oct 13 and early Nov meetings. It is expected to have that information for the board at their Nov 17 meeting to develop a draft communication strategy.

Budget Updates

Julie stated that WDFW is developing a decision package to ask OFM for about \$0.5M to increase capacity to move forward with this strategy. This will allow WDFW to take information from the prioritization process and move towards developing a project list by August 2016 to be submitted for funding to OFM. .

The “Workflow Timeline for Finalized FBRB Project List” handout was reviewed by the group.

Comments included:

- Julie stated that the program is on schedule adding that to remain on schedule; we need to be start narrowing in and focusing on areas and projects by the end of the year.
- Gary Rowe stated that the funding ask won't be available until July 2016.
 - Julie replied that she hoped it could be appropriated soon after it passes, closer to April 2016.
- Carl Schroeder highlighted that consideration and timing of landowner contribution needs to occur at the initial pre-scoping and landowner permission phase.

Information received from Recovery Regions and Puget Sound Lead Entities

Julie reminded the group that WDFW solicited information for the Watershed Pathway and Coordinated Project Pathway from Salmon Recovery Regions (SRRs) and Puget Sound Lead Entities in July 2015. WDFW is still receiving feedback on the Coordinated Project Pathway, so the focus today will be on the Watershed Pathway.

Thoughts and comments included:

- Brian asked how many entities have provided information in the Coordinated Project Pathway thus far.
 - Cade Roler said WDFW has received about 30 different nomination packages.
 - Julie added that some Lead Entities have been busy with other grant package requests and construction season, so more time has been allotted when requested.
- Brian asked if WDFW was going to give a hard end date for submission
 - Julie replied that WDFW is balancing between a hard end date and informational needs.
- Jon asked where the data is coming from.
 - Julie provided that WDFW has been working with the Associations who has been contacting local government's including direct solicitations to city officials, county representatives, lead entities, and salmon recovery regions.
- Casey Baldwin inquired if WDFW was applying intrinsic potential (IP) criteria to the ranking of the coordinated pathway projects.
 - Julie clarified that WDFW is using more of a priority index (PI) approach but will use IP to narrow focus areas within a watershed.
 - Jon asked how the ranking criteria overlap between the Watershed Pathway and the Coordinated Project Pathway.
 - Julie stated that the criteria are separate but there is some overlap. There will be more discussion on the Coordinated Project Pathway and project ranking at the next meeting.

Discussion of Watershed Pathway Nominations

It was discussed the SRR nominations are a high level approach and the next step, once the nominations are approved, is to narrow down to select streams or sub-watersheds by applying another set of criteria. The group will discuss the criteria specifics later in the meeting today. It was noted that the Washington Coast Recovery Region nominated three areas and did not prioritize.

The group reviewed each SRR nomination in the provided packet.

- Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board's nomination was accepted.
 - Gary asked if WDFW has done an analysis on barrier removal investments needed downstream of the nominated HUC10.
 - Julie stated that WDFW has not done that analysis yet, but because the nominations are HUC10s off of large mainstems it is anticipated that there won't be downstream barriers.
- Snake River nomination was accepted.
 - The Snake nominated two areas.

- WDFW to seek clarification from the executive director.
 - Because there are not many barriers in the two areas combined, the group was OK with the nomination and decided to develop a prioritized strategy reviewing both areas.
- Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board’s nomination was accepted.
 - The group observed that this was a very supported and informative nomination.
 - It was noted that culvert inventory in the nominated watershed is incomplete.

Bob Metzger, audience member, noted that there is opportunity to link efforts and prioritization with projects on federal lands.

- Julie clarified that those coordination opportunities will be looked at once we start narrowing down to sub-watersheds.
 - Casey stated that federal projects are not eligible for FBRB funding but coordination and leveraging should be considered.
 - Gary requested to talk about what federal priority means when discussing sub-watersheds.
- Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board’s nomination was accepted
 - The group noted that a culvert assessment priority was given as well.
 - Carl asked if “ground-truthing” in the next step will include culvert inventory assistance from WDFW.
 - Julie stated that WDFW will try to address the inventory gaps if needed but it would be a good idea to consider funding for inventory in the supplemental funding request.
 - Casey pointed out that the map in the packet only showed a portion of the nominated watershed.
 - Julie will look into correcting the map and sent that out to the board members.
 - Washington Coast Salmon Recovery Region nomination was not accepted
 - The group discussed that the four areas were nominated without any justification.
 - It was decided that the board should not prioritize HUC 10s for the Washington Coast. WDFW is to go back to the recovery region and lead entities, and ask them to narrow down to priority HUC10(s) and provide justification.
 - Paul suggested that the Washington Coast could take a more coordinated approach or a Watershed Pathway similar to what is going on in the Puget Sound.

The group discussed the “Next Steps of Watershed Pathway” handout to better understand the next steps for the approved nominated watersheds.

Thoughts and comments included:

- Casey suggested adding habitat work schedule and USFS barrier layer to the analysis.
- Carl suggested to reach out to local governments and see what they are doing and what barrier information they have, including their planned projects.
- Gary asked if WDFW is looking at barriers planned for correction.
 - Julie clarified that once sub-watersheds are focused-in there will be outreach to specific jurisdictions to gather relevant data.

A motion was made by Carl to approve the SRR Watershed Pathway nominations except Puget Sound and Washington Coast and authorize WDFW to move forward with the next steps to narrow the nominations down to focus areas. Jon seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Puget Sound Lead Entity Nominations

The group reviewed the draft Puget Sound HUC10 Scoring handout and table. WDFW described the science that went into the scoring criteria.

Thoughts and comments included:

- The group discussed the watershed impairment criterion of % impervious surface.
 - There were comments that the HUCs with large urban areas won't rank well even though there may be good habitat elsewhere in the watershed.
 - WDFW clarified that given the scale of Puget Sound, % impervious surfaces was the only way to statistically compare watershed impairment across the large area. The impervious values were taken from NOAA's 2011 CCAP monitoring data.
 - Several members commented that the top scoring HUC10s would not change if the impervious surface score was dropped.
 - After much discussion, the group preferred that the % impervious surface scoring criteria be applied at a finer scale once the priority sub-watersheds are chosen.
- The group discussed a possible third potential scoring variable to incorporate social/political factors and linkages to a salmon recovery plan.
 - Several members expressed opinions that the scientific prioritization approach needs to take precedence, and then a social/political criterion can be applied.
- The group looked at the IP and Impervious Surface breakpoint scales.
 - Minor differences in percentage can equal a big difference in score. Some HUCs were very close to a breakpoint. Some flexibility could be considered for these HUCs.
 - WDFW clarified that HUC10s with impervious surface percentages greater than 10% got the lowest point value (1). This determination was based on the research references on the table. From there, WDFW equally spread out the range of percentages on a 1-10 point scale. The higher the score the lower the percentage of impervious surface in the HUC10.
- Brian asked how many Puget Sound focus areas will be chosen.
 - Julie replied that it is undecided at this point.
- The general consensus was that the board liked the scientific approach that WDFW used to rank out the nominated HUC 10s.

Lunch Break was taken from 12:00 to 12:30. The meeting then re-convened as a working lunch.

It was decided to go through each Puget Sound nomination as a group.

- Green, Duwamish, and Central Puget Sound Watershed
Lower Green River
 - A large percentage of the population lives in this watershed.
 - 50 miles of habitat would be opened up assuming all the barriers were corrected.
 - It would be useful if the map included barrier ownership.
 - It was a bit surprising the justification did not talk about historic and current distribution of steelhead.
 - The cost per barrier is likely higher in this watershed. This is a possible metric to compare the nominated HUCs.
 - It was suggested that the % impervious surfaces may pick up on that as well.
 - This HUC may have one of the highest needs for barrier removal given the number of barriers and the poor impervious surface score. This needs to be balanced with overall benefit to increasing fish populations.
- Hood Canal Coordinating Council
Tahuya River – Frontal Hood Canal
 - Their justification focused on coho.
 - Not as much information as some of the other nominations.
 - Would like more information on past and planned barrier corrections.

- Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed LE
Middle Sammamish River
 - The LE spent a lot of time on their nomination and did a good job.
 - They incorporated the EDT Model to identify tiered streams with high restoration potential.
 - Focused on migrating juveniles and adults.
 - Provided specific creeks of interest in less urbanized/impacted areas.

- North Olympic Peninsula LE for Salmon
Pysht River – Strait of Juan de Fuca Frontal
 - Nomination was clear and thorough; the LE did a good job.
 - Low dollar fixes with high habitat benefit scenario, manageable amount of work with a significant impact.
 - It would be good to see a map of barriers and add RMAP information

- Pierce County LE
Carbon River (1st nomination), Upper Puyallup (2nd nomination)
 - Nominated two HUC10s within their jurisdiction.
 - Request more information:
 - Number of barriers, past and planned corrections, status of culvert assessment and inventory
 - The group was surprised the IP scores were so low for these two HUC10s
 - According to Brian, there are a lot of natural barriers on the floodplain; IP is cut off at natural barriers.

- Skagit Watershed Council
Finney Creek – Skagit River HUC 10
 - Ranked high for IP and watershed impairment (<1.11% impervious surface).
 - The most amount of inventory and assessment done out of all the nominated watersheds.
 - They invested a lot of time and effort in their justification.

- Snohomish Basin LE
Pilchuck River
 - A lot of work has been done in this HUC10. There is some good coordination potential for future projects.
 - 2nd highest biological score.
 - Tier one basin in conservation strategy.

- West Sound Watershed Council
Ollala Valley – Puget Sound Frontal
 - There is a lot of existing information on this watershed.
 - It is a Tier One watershed yet the IP scores turned out surprising low.
 - It was suggested that if there has been a lot of work done in this HUC10 it may make sense to continue work here instead of starting somewhere else.
 - WSDOT is doing work in the area.
 - It was decided to use the biological score to narrow down to focus areas, then consider other specific variables including past work/investment.

WDFW explained that a high IP for steelhead represents high quality habitat or potential habitat for steelhead. IP incorporates stream channel gradient, mean annual stream flow, and calibrated valley-width index. WDFW divided total IP-weighted stream length by the HUC10 area to get an IP density.

- WRIA 13 Salmon Habitat Recovery Committee
McLane Creek – Frontal Puget Sound
 - Low IP and watershed impairment scores.
- WRIA 14 Salmon Habitat Recovery Committee
Goldsborough Creek – Frontal Puget Sound
 - 3rd highest biological score, low percentage of impervious surfaces.
 - FFFPP is active in the HUC10
 - Seems like a good one, pristine area of the south sound, there has been a lot of effort already. What is left?
 - Brian believes there are a lot of private barriers left.
 - The Rail Road crossings are also present.
 - Carl highlighted the involved citizens of the area and their dedication to fish passage projects.

After further review and discussion of the biological scores, the group decided that the top three Puget Sound nominations were:

- Pysht, Pilchuck and Goldsborough

WDFW is to start their additional analysis there and then continue with:

- Finney, Lower Green and Middle Sammamish – in that order
 - Middle Sammamish was added to the list because it was on the break point for IP and the nomination write-up was very compelling.

Remaining thoughts and comments on Puget Sound Lead Entity Nominations included:

- Casey suggested looking at IP above individual barriers to better understand the habitat benefit when they are corrected.
- Paul added that project readiness and feasibility are important factors to consider in prioritization as well and that information will become clearer as we get more familiar.
 - Julie stated that some of the nominations give an indication of which projects are ready to go.
- Gary asked about the process of comparing all the Watershed Pathway projects with the same criteria, noting that the non-Puget Sound nominations do not have IP values.
 - Julie stated that board still needs to decide on how to rank projects for the August 2016 project list to the legislature.
- Casey suggested looking at the salmon recovery planning efforts when narrowing down to focus areas.
 - There is no steelhead recovery plan in the Puget Sound.
 - The Chinook recovery plan could be utilized to decipher between closely ranked HUC10s.

Eligibility Criteria

The group reviewed and discussed the FBRB Eligibility handout. The conversation revolved around barrier ownership and project types. Comments included:

- Need to define private landowners.
- Preference given to private landowners not eligible for FFFPP funding.
- Use “local governments” instead of counties and cities.
- State agencies should be eligible.
- Define small and large forest owners using DNR’s definition.
- Eligibility for funding does not limit project coordination and leveraging with ineligible owners or projects.

- Project eligibility – the group considered broadening the category to “man-made impediments to fish passage with a focus of road crossings.”

WDFW will look into the Salmon Recovery Funding Board’s eligibility and criteria to continue the discussion next meeting.

Summary/Next Steps

Julie summarized the next steps:

- WDFW will start working on identifying potential focus areas within the approved SRR nominations and the top Puget Sound nominations.
- WDFW will go back to the Washington Coast SRR and seek more information.
- WDFW to gather information on the Salmon Recovery Funding Board’s eligibility and criteria.

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 pm.

The next meeting of the Board is scheduled for 9:00 am to 3:00 pm Tuesday, October 20; and 9:00 to 3:00 pm Tuesday, Nov 17; December 15 and; January 19. The meeting locations to be determined.

Others present at meeting:

Justin Zweifel, WDFW	Bob Metzger, USFS
Cade Roler, WDFW	Samantha Tanner, Mackay Esposito
Jim Wright, NOAA Fisheries	Cheryl Baumann, Clallam County
Marian Berejikian, WSWC	Holly Harwood, BPA
Larry Dominguez, WDFW	Stacy Polkowske, WDFW