



Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board – April Meeting Notes

Date: April 19, 2022

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Location: Virtual Meeting

Summary: Formal Actions/Decisions

Item	Formal Action
Meeting notes from March 15, 2022	Approved

Summary: Follow-up Actions

Item	Follow-up
WDFW fish passage barrier Fox 13 tour	Once a report and/or video of the Fox 13 fish passage barrier tour is released, it will be emailed to Board members and staff.
Subgroup meeting to discuss outreach opportunities around the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program.	Triangle will work with the Board in May/June to hold a subgroup meeting to discuss education and outreach opportunities in Washington around the federal grant program.
Funding outreach and solutions for anticipated construction cost increase requests.	Board will discuss legislative outreach opportunities and funding solutions for anticipated construction cost increase requests at the next FBRB meeting on May 17, 2022.
2023-2025 Grant Round	RCO staff and the Technical Review Team (TRT) will keep the Board updated on the 2023-2025 grant round at each Board meeting until a prioritized project list is submitted to the Board in August 2022.

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 March 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), reviewed that WDFW received funding to fill this position in the 2022 legislative session. WDFW has begun two rounds of interviews and anticipates concluding them in early May. Additionally, Chair Jameson has written a preliminary RFP to contract with a consulting firm to support the new Strategist. This will likely be moving forward in mid-May, 2022.

21-23 Project List Alternates Funding Error Corrected by Legislature

Chair Jameson explained that 25 alternative projects were accidentally left off the 21-23 FBRB Project List approved by the legislature. Alternates on the list are legislatively approved projects that can advance if additional funds become available. This administrative error was remedied during the 2022 legislative session.

WDFW Fish Passage Fox 13 Barrier Tour

Chair Jameson shared that Fox 13 has done an annual special on Long Live the Kings (LLTK) since 2017 and WDFW was approached for a fish barrier tour. Chair Jameson, Matt Curtis, and Christy Rains, WDFW, met with an anchor and toured Chico Creek bridge, which is the highest cost Board project completed to date. This tour included a high-level overview of salmon biology and restoration. WDFW is responding to a list of additional questions sent to them by Fox 13 following the tour.

Path forward: Once the Fox 13 fish passage barrier tour report and/or video is released, it will be emailed to Board members and staff.

US Forest Service (USFS)

Chair Jameson explained that USFS was looking for fish passage barriers downstream of USFS lands to provide removal funding through their Aquatic Organism Passage (AOP) program. However, they were challenged to identify qualifying projects downstream of USFS lands on the west side of the cascades.

There were more opportunities on the East side of the state and John Foltz, Council of Regions, noted he met with USFS, and he is working with the Region to identify eastern Washington projects that align with USFS AOP projects. He offered to speak with any Board member interested in learning more about any potential fish passage projects linked to the AOP program.

Path Forward: John Foltz offered to speak with any Board member interested in learning more about the fish passage projects linked to US Forest Service's Aquatic Organism Passage program.

FBRB Board and Staffing Changes

Chair Jameson reminded the Board that Joe Shramek has fully retired from the Board as Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and has been replaced by Terra Rentz. The FBRB provided Joe with a gift at the March 15, 2022 Board meeting.

Chair Jameson and Alice Rubin, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), provided an update on a staffing shift at RCO's Family Forest Fish Passage (FFFP). FFFP received \$6 million for fish passage and tends to fund relatively small and less expensive projects. Currently, they have a backlog of approximately 1000 fish passage projects, which would require significant funding to implement.

Board Outreach on National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program

Chair Jameson provided a review on the background on the grant program and explained it was part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill. The program would provide \$200 million per year and runs for five years. If there is a congressional appropriation, the annual total could be raised to \$800 million. Currently, the Board is waiting for an RFP to be released to better understand the program's structure and its application process.

The facilitator reviewed the meeting summary from the March 2022 FBRB meeting to provide the Board an overview of the discussion from the last meeting. She explained that a Board subgroup met in March 2022 to brainstorm opportunities for the Board to engage with the program's design and implementation. Largely, the subgroup agreed the Board could not advance with recommendations until the RFP is released, however, key ideas and suggestions are characterized below:

Board Questions and Discussion

- Erik Neatherlin, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO), reminded the subgroup that at the October 2021 Board meeting, Margen Carlson and Meagan West, WDFW, expressed the FBRB could serve as a resource to inform the design or interpret the implementation of the program.
 - Based on conversation with the State's federal lead, Erik believes this will not be a block grant for the state and instead it may require applicants to submit individual applications. This means the application process will likely be complex and small applicants, such as cities and counties, may not have the resources to apply. Erik recommended the Board and its staff be prepared to discuss and support opportunities when the RFP is released so that the Board can serve as a resource for applicants.
- Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities, expressed support for the Board being a resource to aid applicants who apply to the program. This would likely require the Board to ask the legislature for additional support capacity. Additionally, he recommended the Board explore opportunities to reduce the complexity of applications and make it easier for sponsors from Washington to apply since the language was largely influenced by Washington legislators. This would be highly beneficial for cities, counties, Tribes, and smaller organizations to apply to the federal program.
- John Foltz requested the Board explore opportunities to use FBRB funding to provide matching funds to applicants of the federal program. Then, the Board could engage in targeted outreach around incoming projects to help them secure federal funding.
- Erik noted there are several other federal programs through the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. He recommended education around these programs could be helpful for potential applicants.
- Chair Jameson noted WDFW's federal liaison expects the RFP to release in October 2022, which would be after the Board submits its preliminary funding request to the legislature and it is advanced to the Governor's Office. He expressed concern about advancing with a path forward given the lack of details for the program and about FBRB staff capacity. He explained the Board requested 4.8% of funds from the legislature to go to support staff capacity and FBRB administration, but they only received 4.12%.

- Paul Wagner, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), explained their agency's federal liaison is advocating for bundling of proposals that are geographically close together. Then, multiple barrier owners could work with the same contractor and be under the same application to seek funds. Additionally, he recommended board outreach should be focused on making eligible applications aware the program is coming and details are forthcoming.

Path Forward: The Board recommended a subgroup meet in May/June to discuss education and outreach opportunities in Washington around the federal grant program. WSDOT's federal liaison, Megan Cotton, will be invited to the meeting to help inform the discussion.

Action Item: Triangle will work with the Board to hold a subgroup meeting to discuss education and outreach opportunities in Washington around the federal grant program.

Project and Policy Issues

Legislative Session Outcomes

Carl Schroeder provided an overview of this year's legislative session outcomes. He explained city and counties did not receive funding through Move Ahead Washington and there were small investments towards smaller programs cities and counties care about. Moving forward, cities and counties would like to see a substantial increase in funding come to the FBRB and to make sure the recommended amount in the Governor's budget is as robust as possible to meet the needs of the large 23-25 Project List. Carl recommended the Board discuss outreach opportunities with RCO and the Governor's Office this summer to ensure the Board meets its funding needs.

Matt Curtis explained the Technical Review Team (TRT) is still reviewing projects in the 23-25 Project List. In addition to submitting a large list, the Board could work with regional partners to highlight projects in priority watersheds to demonstrate the need.

Board Questions and Discussion

- John Foltz recommended the Board add cost increases from 21-23 projects in the 23-25 Project List to demonstrate the need for funds, avoid stranding of investments, and to meet cost increases stemming from the pandemic and supply chain issues.
- David Collins, WDFW, noted the TRT is anticipating several cost increase requests in the immediate future as projects from the 21-23 list go out to bid for construction and are acquiring building materials.
- Chair Jameson mentioned the preliminary suggestions at previous Board meetings to add these cost increase requests to the 23-25 Project List. The Board will need to engage in further discussions at upcoming meetings to explore this idea and identify where these requests would rank on the list.
- Carl stated the legislature is aware of increasing costs for construction, especially around transportation, and these are being considered going into the next legislative session in 2023.
- Alice Rubin shared RCO is actively monitoring cost increase requests as they come in. However, the current situation is unprecedented and RCO is exploring solutions within and beyond their agency. She said RCO would be highly receptive to suggestions from the Board that result from upcoming meetings.
- In response to a question about the Board's process for evaluating incoming applications, Chair Jameson explained the TRT reviews applications for completeness, RCO reviews them for

eligibility, and then the TRT evaluates and ranks the applications into a prioritize project list, which is presented to the Board in August, 2022. Then, the Board reviews the list and votes to approve it for RCO to advance to the Governor's Office.

Path forward: The Board agreed to discuss pathways and funding solutions for anticipated construction cost increase requests at the next meeting on May 17, 2022.

Planning legislative outreach with Governor's Office this summer

The facilitator reminded the Board that at the March 2022 Board meeting, the Board discussed the possibility of holding an in-person meeting and tour this fall. Since the meeting, Triangle Associates has coordinated with John Foltz and Carl Schroeder to begin brainstorming the logistics for this meeting/tour. She pulled up a brainstorming document and worked with the Board to live edit the document with their suggestions for the meeting and tour opportunities.

Action Item: Triangle will send a Doodle inquiry to the Board to identify dates for an in-person meeting and site tour in the fall of 2022. Additionally, Triangle will continue to work with Board members to determine the logistics and itinerary for this meeting

Update on FBRB 2023-2025 Grant Round

David Caudill, RCO, explained the 2023-2025 Grant Round is progressing well. The final applications are due May 2, 2022 and only three sponsors have dropped their applications and plan to re-apply during the next grant round. Additionally, he noted the process between RCO and WDFW is going well this year and coordination before the grant round has paid off.

Matt Curtis explained all the projects have been reviewed by the TRT for eligibility and completeness. A larger update on the grant round will be shared at the May 2022 Board meeting.

Discuss Upcoming Opportunities for Engagement

International Fish Passage Conference

Chair Jameson noted the International Fish Passage Conference will be held from June 13th – June 16th 2022 and is being hosted by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. Interested participants can register here: [Fish passage conference – Fish Passage 2022 \(fisheries.org\)](https://www.fisheries.org/fish-passage-conference-2022)

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:30 a.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, May 17, 2022 – online meeting

ATTENDANCE

Board Members/Alternates:

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
Erik Neatherlin, 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
Matt Curtis, WDFW	

WDFW, RCO Staff and Triangle Facilitation Team:

Adam Fleming, WDFW	Alice Rubin, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)
Amber Martens, WDFW	Alissa Ferrell, RCO
David Collins, WDFW	Dave Caudill, RCO
Gina Piazza, WDFW	Alex Sweetser, Facilitation Support
Julie Groebelny, WDFW	Joy Juelson, Facilitation Support
Kaylee Kautz, WDFW	

Others observing:

Betsy Lyons	Don Gourlie	Shane Scott
Damiano Seghetti	Evan Lewis	Steve Helvey
Daniel Howe	Jim Heytvelt	Steve Malloch
David Varner	Matthew Miskovic	Tracy Gilson