

Fish Barrier Removal Meeting Notes

Date: June 15, 2021

Place: Online Meeting

Summary: Agenda items with formal action

Item	Formal Action
Meeting Notes from May.	Approved
Turner Creek cost increase request of \$214,545 utilizing remaining funds from Cowlitz County.	Approved

Summary: Follow-up actions

Item	Follow-up
Discuss how decisions are made on requests for cost increases.	A cost-increase Subcommittee meeting was scheduled for July 8 th .

Welcome/Introductions/Agenda Review: Facilitator Neil Aaland called the meeting to order at 9:00. Neil called on FBRB members and alternates and asked them to introduce themselves. A quorum was present. Neil noted he will be facilitating the June meeting, providing the Triangle Associates team an opportunity to observe his facilitation process.

Public Comments: No public comments were received.

Old Business: The meeting notes for the May meeting were approved.

Updates:

Introduce New Facilitation Team: Joy Juelson and Alex Sweetser, Triangle Associates: Chair Tom Jameson introduced the Triangle Associates Facilitation Team who will be taking over for Neil after he retires this month. Joy Juelson brings over 20 years of experience and will serve as the Lead Facilitator & Project Manager. Alex Sweetser has worked on a wide range of salmon recovery and marine projects and will serve as Project Support. Thomas Christian brings several years of experience in facilitation and project management and will serve as a backup Facilitator.

Farewell to Neil Aaland and Jane Wall:

- Jane Wall has accepted a new position at the County Road Administration Board (CRAB) as their Executive Director. Jane has been on the board for nearly 3-years and has made a strong impact, especially her work with the legislature to secure funding for barrier removal.
- Since the FBRB's creation, Neil Aaland has served as the board's lead facilitator for seven years. Before becoming a consultant, Neil had over 25 years of experience working for local and state

government. As a facilitator, Neil facilitated meetings and recorded meeting minutes, developed the board's communication plan, and served as a trusted counsel with a deep knowledge of board decision-making for Tom Jameson and WDFW staff.

Proviso Report to Legislature

Tom Jameson provided background on the proviso report to develop a Statewide Strategy. Tom provided context and noted that a Request for Qualifications (RFW) to develop the Statewide Strategy was published. However, there were no bidders and WDFW still needs a strategist to develop the statewide strategy.

Several WDFW staff have been working on the Statewide Strategy biennial report to the Legislature. Once the report is finished, they will debrief Jeff Davis and WDFW Agency Director and the report will be sent to WSDOT and FBRB for review. The due date for the report to be submitted to the Legislature is June 30 but may have to be submitted later.

Tom stated WDFW needs funding to hire an Environmental Planner 5 with ESA and GIS experience to work on the report and to coordinate with Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB), Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP), cities, and counties.

Project and Policy Issues

Cost Increase Sub-committee

Tom noted there has been a significant cost increase at every meeting. He explained if a cost increase comes in that is less than 10% of the original amount or less than \$100,000, he (acting as the chair) will approve or disapprove it. Proposed increases higher than one of those amounts come to the Board. He would like to convene a sub-committee to resolve how to consider these increases. A Doodle poll was sent to board members and a meeting was scheduled for Thursday, July 8 from 10:00 a.m. to 12: p.m. This meeting will need to be kept to a maximum of 4-board members to avoid a quorum.

Presentation: Cost Increases – Turner Creek (17-19 biennium project)

Tom explained this project has already been completed and is ready to be closed out. However, Cowlitz County has submitted an amendment to increase the funding amount by \$214,545 to primarily account for a miscalculation in costs of concrete for the retaining wall and structural fill. He noted this project was a high FBRB priority when it received funding in 2018 and Cowlitz County has one of the most generous match programs at 16.67%.

Josh Lambert, RCO Grant Manager, clarified that the County did provide a notice about a potential cost overrun during the design phase in 2019, but did not submit a cost increase request at the time due to uncertainty around the project being able to absorb the costs. He noted that Cowlitz County has another project that has returned under budget and these funds would be enough to cover the funds requested under the new funding amendment.

Rodger Maurer, Cowlitz County Project Manager, noted in addition to the concrete costs, this culvert is located on a larger roadway and additional costs were required for design and phasing of traffic for larger trucks and logging equipment.

Questions and discussion:

- In response to a question from John Foltz, Rodger clarified this amendment would have the same match percentage as the project at 16.67%. John noted there was ongoing communication around the potential for an overrun and all funds would remain within the 2017-2019 pot, so no carryover is required.
- In response to a question from Erik Neatherlin about the remaining balance of the 2017-2019 budget, Dave Caudill, RCO, noted there are five projects left to be finished and \$329 left in the budget.

A motion was made to approve this sequencing of the project as presented. The motion was approved.

Nelson Dam Cost Increase

Elizabeth Buter, City of Yakima, explained the city received project bids of \$18 million, which is \$4million above the city's proposal of \$14 million for the first phase of removal. This means there would have been a \$4 million shortfall. However, funds were found by the city so the project will be able to proceed in July, but there will not be a lot of wiggle room in case of future issues.

Tom noted this is the top priority project on FBRB's 21–23 project list and the most expensive. This dam is an 8ft tall dam with large amounts of sediment accumulation and a screening diversion installed by WDFW. At certain times of the year, sediment deposition and flows make the dam impassable for fish. Removal to replace the dam with a roughened channel would be a complex project.

Discuss Upcoming Opportunities for Engagement

Senator Cantwell's Office Inquiry

Tom explained Senator Maria Cantwell Office's recent inquiry was for pulling together language for a culvert replacement grant program with funding from the US Department of Transportation. Their inquiry was for a tally of non-WSDOT culverts that do fall under the Culverts Case Injunction. This would apply to DNR forests, State Parks, WDFW wildlife areas and near hatcheries, and WSDOT roads. Additionally, this would apply to culverts on newly acquired properties or that require repairs. DNR has seven injunction culverts requiring correction, State Parks has two, while WDFW currently has none. WDFW estimates there are approximately 18,000 to 20,000 barriers across the state based on GIS data and intersections from roads and streams. The rough estimate of cost to replace these barriers is \$16 billion. This estimate was submitted to Cantwell's Office and WDFW is waiting for a response.

Since the meeting, Cantwell and Wicker submitted a new bill that was unanimously voted out of the Commerce committee which would spend \$4 billion over the next five years on fish passage projects.

Questions:

- Erik Neatherlin asked how WDFW has been engaging and coordinating with other state agencies on this inquiry. Tom clarified the request came from Megan West, a federal liaison, and WSDOT's liaison was informed of the inquiry. Erik noted it is good if it came through Megan and GSRO has been working with her.
- Susan Eugenis, Cowlitz County, noted Cantwell's Office recently had the same inquiry for counties and cities. Counties had noted they were concerned about passage correction costs due to aging infrastructure.

King County Fish Passage Barrier Correction Prioritization Effort

Thomas noted Evan Lewis, King County Fish Passage Manager, has been working with sub-group of Muckleshoot, Tulalip, and some agencies on prioritizing fish passage barrier corrections for King County. Prioritization efforts. Dan Barret is a database expert who will be working with King County on the databases and database management. Matthew Curtis, WDFW, noted he will be sending a WDFW bio to join the group.

Questions:

- John Foltz, FBRB, noted the Snake Recovery Region and Yakima Recovery Region and working to get a contractor to run fish passage prioritization model in Yakima and Snake Regions. He asked if Evan’s group is connecting with partnering counties for prioritizing corrections? Evan noted they have been working to coordinate with Snohomish and Pierce counties, but these counties have not joined the group yet.

NOAA Restrict Salmon Fishing

Tom explained federal officials from NOAA are proposing to curtail nontribal recreational and commercial harvest for Chinook in years when populations are forecasted to fall dangerously low to help the Northwest’s endangered southern resident orcas. Currently, NOAA Fisheries is taking public comment on the proposed plan.

Questions and comments:

- Erik Neatherlin clarified the purpose of this proposal is to address Southern Resident Orca Recovery.
- Tom noted any cuts to harvest would apply only to Chinook because they are the orca’s primary food source.

Adjourn: Meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30.

Next meeting: Tuesday, July 20, 2021 – online meeting

ATTENDANCE

Board Members/Alternates:

Erik Neatherlin, Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO)	Paul Wagner, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
Jeannie Abbott, GSRO	Susan Eugenis, Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) (Cowlitz Co.)
John Foltz, Council of Regions, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (SRSRB)	Tom Jameson, WDFW
Matt Curtis, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)	Tim Resseguiue, Yakama Indian Nation

WDFW and RCO Staff:

Adam Fleming, WDFW	Alice Rubin, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)
Alison Hart, WDFW	Dave Caudill, RCO
Casey Costello, WDFW	Elizabeth Butler, RCO
Christy Rains, WDFW	Josh Lambert, RCO
Dave Collins, WDFW	Neil Aaland, Facilitator
Gabrielle Stilwater, WDFW	Joy Juelson, Facilitator
Gina Piazza, WDFW	Alex Sweetser, Facilitator
Melissa Erkel, WDFW	Thomas Christian, Facilitator (substitute)

Others observing:

Bailey Thorniley	Erica Bramlet	Roger Maurer, Cowlitz County
Cade Roler, WSDOT	Evan Lewis	Steve Helvey
Cheryl Baumann	Jane Wall, County Road Administration Board	Tracy Gilson
Chuck Purnell	Mara Zimmerman, Coast Salmon Partnership	Wendy Clark-Getzin, Jefferson County
Daniel Howe	Paul Schlenger	Call-in user (2)
Dawn Nolan	Richard Vacirca	