

Fish Barrier Removal Board – Meeting Notes

Date: April 21, 2020

Place: WebEx Meeting with all on phone or computer (due to requirements governing meetings by WA Governor Inslee)

Summary: Agenda items with formal action

Item	Formal Action
Meeting notes from March 2020	Approved
Change in scoring to address inability for DFW teams to get out in the field	Approved changes in scoring as discussed

Summary: Follow-up actions

Item	Follow-up
Tribal representation from two western Washington tribes	WDFW will continue to work on finding two new members of FBRB, working with WDFW senior management
Board strategy review	Tom will find help to work on this
Rulemaking	This effort will continue

Board Members/Alternates on phone:

Matt Curtis, WDFW	Dave Caudill, RCO
Jane Wall, WSAC	Jeannie Abbott, GSRO
John Foltz, COR	Paul Wagner, DOT
Tom Jameson, Chair, WDFW	Casey Baldwin, Colville Tribe
Joe Shramek, DNR	Carl Schroeder, AWC
Jon Brand, WSAC	

Others present on phone:¹

Neil Aaland, Facilitator	Gina Piazza, WDFW
Alison Hart, WDFW	Dave Collins, WDFW
Cade Roler, WDFW	Betsy Lyons
Christy Rains, WDFW	Daniel Howe
Julie Grobelny, WDFW	Eric Doyle
Gabrielle Stilwater, WDFW	Evlewis
Jess Helsley	Rvacirca
Josh	Spwjsb
Olivia Vito	Steve Malloch
Paulusap	Tracy
Robert Paine-Donovan	Wendy

Welcome/Introductions/Agenda Review: Meeting started at 9:00. Facilitator Neil Aaland reviewed the agenda. He explained that if anyone has public comment to offer, to e-mail it to FBRB@dfw.wa.gov. Comments will be read into the record.

Public Comment: No public comment was provided via the e-mail link.

¹ We only have the identification provided by those who joined by phone; may not be full names

Old Business

Meeting notes: The meeting notes for the March meeting were approved as submitted.

Potential scoring changes to final application (due to constraints from Covid-19 on doing fieldwork):

Matt discussed this item. WDFW is limited on whether it can get into the field, depends on when the Governor revises his directives on staying in place. The scoring criteria for final applications assigned 15 points to a question that requires fieldwork. His proposal is to divide those points and assign to other questions:

- 5 points to benefits of productivity/life history
- 5 points to scope/objectives
- 5 points to linear gain

Comments and questions:

- Dave Caudill pointed out the project list is not due till the end of August
- Are there lots of projects without the needed information? [yes]
- Matt noted if they can get out in the field after May 4 this will not be a problem
- Can we ask the sponsors to provide the required information? [Some can, but do not want to assume this – some sponsors might not be able to get out in field]
- Carl suggested leaving 5 points with the original question and moving the other 10 points; 10 is a lot to add to project scope [Matt's reservation about keeping points there is that it is rare that sponsors have enough information]
- John wonders about asking the sponsors to provide this; asking sponsors to provide is a good idea due to our capacity issue
- Casey suggests not penalizing by assuming upstream passability; give more points to a better description

Matt asked if re-assigning points is appropriate or should something else be considered? Carl thinks it makes sense to reassign points but wonders how it will affect the habitat assessments component. Matt said it will not be as good as being able to get out in the field. Carl likes Jeannie's suggestion of either allowing sponsors to provide what already exists or provide a narrative description and evaluate the quality of that description.

Dave Caudill said we have already started reviewing projects; if changes are made it is hard on sponsors. Jeannie said we just need to pick a question and let sponsors know they have to provide additional information.

Matt suggested a motion that redistributes the 15 points to refining lineal gain from the RFP; adding 5 points to item 1; and adding 5 points to item 2. Carl moved to approve this motion; Casey seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Updates from Chair Jameson

- *PRISM application changes:* RCO's server crashed and due dates had to shift two weeks later to allow repair time.
- *FBRB strategy discussion:* Tom noted that the Office of Financial Management (OFM) wants the project funding list in August. There are almost 100 projects totaling \$80 million presently on the list. The Board will need to discuss soon, might be a hard lift in the current budget climate. Regarding fieldwork, WDFW thinks the staff are going to return to work in a reverse order from how they left. First things to reopen might be fishing/hunting seasons and public areas. May 18 is probably when more restrictions will be loosened.

Tom reminded members of the two provisos, which were NOT vetoed by the Governor. There is \$143K in the operating budget to assist in developing an FBRB strategy, available July 1. There is also funding in the capital budget to assist with rule writing and other things. Tom will need help to do the strategy. He has written a position description for an Environmental Planner (EP-4) that is currently being reviewed by Margen Carlson, who has the hiring authority.

Gabrielle Stilwater is responsible for the rulemaking projects. She has been contacting stakeholders and tribal members and working on posting the CR-101 (announcement that rulemaking is beginning). An outreach document is being reviewed by the AGO. The Board is also tasked with pursuing federal funding for barriers. Senior management in WDFW is willing to help. Tom noted that the Senate Republican caucus sent the Governor a letter about re-opening and recommended suspending all rulemaking if it is not directly related to the pandemic.

Tom updated the Board about the invitation to the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) to help with finding two FBRB members representing western Washington tribes, to add to our two current eastern Washington tribal representatives. WDFW received a letter from NWIFC on April 6 declining that invitation and said individual tribes may be willing to serve. Board members are still interested in trying to find two more members but were concerned with the process of how to select only two. Tom noted that Margen can work with Director Susewind to identify two potential new FBRB members from a list of interested tribes.

Discussion/Decision: Should tide gates be considered in 21-23 biennium grant round?

Matt Curtis opened this discussion. Two projects were submitted dealing with tidegates. He briefly discussed each project. In response to a question, he said they were transportation related projects. He wonders how the Board should view tidegate projects that do not completely remove a barrier. Comments and questions included:

- Carl thinks, as a general matter, that the Board should consider funding these types of projects
- Dave agreed with Carl and suggested it should be a case-by-case consideration; he has concerns about tidegates, but they may provide a benefit
- Casey suggested offering only partial funding for tidegates that are a partial fix. This would require some case-by-case analysis on the amount of increased fish benefit from the partial fix and scaling the FBRB portion of the budget to match the fish benefits.
- Paul is not a fan of tidegates for FBRB funding but would be okay on a case-by-case basis for projects offering high habitat gain; he likes Casey's suggestion of partial funding
- John Foltz agrees with that and suggested requiring a higher match, partial funding
- Matt thinks the partial funding and partial fix is for future grant rounds; he asked the Board if we want to put a threshold on the miles of habitat gain provided?
- Carl likes the idea of an alternatives analysis and likes setting a minimum threshold for a high amount of passability
- Matt noted that the Tukwila project is changing to a total removal project

Upcoming Opportunities for Engagement

Paul asked the Board to look at a map showing WSDOT's plans for the 21-23 biennium. They tried to group projects together geographically to minimize the impacts from project construction on traveling. This will be posted on their website. There is an excel spreadsheet showing more information on each site. He is interested in any comments that something may be missing, not bigger changes.

Wrap-up/Next Steps: Tom noted these next steps:

- E-mail will be sent to project sponsors explaining changes in points

- There are two hiring actions for WDFW related to barriers
- A decision is pending from Margen Carlson on the strategy
- Some people are having trouble accessing the WebEx; he asked people when they sign in to have WebEx call them back for audio. He will look into the difficulty. Tom, Alison, Neil, and Matt will work on better phone access.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 am.

Next meeting: Tuesday, May 19, 2019 – likely by WebEx