

Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board – Draft September Meeting Notes

Date: September 21, 2021

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual Meeting

Summary: Formal Actions/Decisions

Item	Formal Action
Meeting notes from August, 2021	Approved
Project Evaluation Scoring Criteria revised with Board member input.	Approved
Convene a Proviso Subcommittee to advance the Proviso Report and a general Policy Subcommittee to discuss policy topics as identified by the Board when a need arises.	Approved

Summary: Follow-up Actions

Item	Follow-up
Determine membership for subcommittees.	Triangle will send a survey to Board members to gauge membership interest. Membership will be approved at October meeting.
Incorporate Board member feedback to finalize the proposed Cost Increase Course of Action (COA).	The Board will provide their comments and revisions to the COA. The Cost Increase Subgroup will meet to update the document and present for approval at the October meeting.

Welcome/Introductions/Agenda Review:

Facilitator, Joy Juelson, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Alex Sweetser called on FBRB members and alternates and asked them to introduce themselves. A quorum was present.

Public Comment: There was a question regarding Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s (WDFW) authority and permitting pathway to remove willow roots that may be affecting salmon passage at a culvert. Casey Costello, WDFW biologist, explained this technical issue is not covered under the Aquatic Plants and Fish pamphlet Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) and WDFW does not have the authority to require removal of the roots. Instead, WDFW can provide technical assistance or direct a private property owner to a grant program to help with costs.

Casey recommended using WDFW’s [Areas of Responsibilities Map: WDFW Assistance \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com) to identify the local WDFW habitat biologist for additional questions.

Old Business: The meeting notes for the FBRB August meeting were approved.

General Updates:

Fish Passage and Screening Rulemaking Update

Gabrielle Stilwater, WDFW, presented the status of the ongoing Fish Passage Rulemaking Update. WDFW has finished the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) process discussions and is finalizing the draft language. Board member feedback was used to revise the draft rulemaking language.

She noted the agency will be using a Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) instead of a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as most of the impact from the rulemaking will be fiscal and not environmental. To assess these impacts, WDFW will conduct a small business economic impact assessment to determine if the rulemaking will cost businesses over \$100 and will contract out to conduct a cost-benefit analysis.

WDFW aims to publish the CR-102 in March or April of 2022 to be considered by the Fish and Wildlife Commission and the rules will go into effect 30 days after CR-103 approval.

Lewis River Dams Fish Passage Requirement

Chair Tom Jameson explained there was a preliminary determination on the Lewis River Dams that allowed habitat restoration in lieu of fish passage. However, trap and haul operations have not led to an increase in juvenile fish and, after effort from Tribes and agencies, the determination was revoked. This means the dam owners need to provide adult and juvenile fish passage at all dams, which is good news for the salmon of Cowlitz County.

Review and Approval of Project Evaluation Scoring Criteria

Joy explained the Board worked through the first 13 out of 22 questions of the Project Evaluation Scoring Criteria (Criteria) at the August FBRB meeting and select changes were made based on discussion at the meeting. Following the meeting, Board members provided comments on the remaining Criteria questions and the Technical Review Team (TRT) – composed of WDFW and Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff – provided responses to these comments. The Board discussed the TRT’s feedback and agreed to minor revisions to the Criteria’s questions.

Board Questions and Discussion:

- Multiple Board members were interested in the technical review process of project designs and requested more information on how issues are identified and/or addressed before a project is funded. Casey Costello, WDFW, clarified a technical review is included in project analysis and the TRT works with project sponsors to address issues before projects are submitted. A presentation and Q&A of the project review process can be scheduled for a future Board meeting.
- Dave Collins, WDFW, explained the TRT is working with a team from the University of Washington to improve the analysis of projects’ cost effectiveness. The current process will be replaced when a new statewide strategy is developed, and this work will inform the new analysis method.
- Board members requested a review of the project list to see if proposals in priority watersheds are being funded or missed.

Decision: A motion was made to approve the Project Evaluation Scoring Criteria with the revisions from the Board. The motion was approved.

Briefing on Cost Increase Course of Action

The facilitation team provided an overview of the work done by the Board's cost increase subgroup to develop a cost increase course of action (COA) for times when funds are limited. Tom explained this is not a problem yet as funds have been available for cost increase requests and the group is meeting preemptively to establish a path forward if an issue arises.

Subgroup members explained the purpose of this document is to have guidance around when to decline a cost increase request. Additionally, one path forward is to establish a cost increase subcommittee who evaluates the request at a more detailed level than is possible at a Board meeting. This subcommittee would then provide a recommendation for the full Board to consider as a formal vote.

Path Forward: The COA will be distributed to the Board for comments and revisions. The Cost Increase Subgroup will meet to update the document and present for approval at the October FBRB meeting.

Discuss Options to Convene a Board Policy Subcommittee

Joy reviewed with the Board that several potential subcommittees were proposed at the August meeting and there was an interest from Board members to work to convene one or more subcommittees. She presented a proposal to convene subcommittees starting with a Policy Subcommittee and additional subcommittees to be created based on need and interest. Tom explained the goal of establishing subcommittees is to discuss important policy issues to bring back to the full Board for discussion and decisions. The largest immediate task for a new subcommittee would be to address the Proviso Report.

Board Questions and Discussion:

- Several Board members proposed and agreed that a separate Proviso Subcommittee should be developed in addition to the Policy Subcommittee. The Proviso Subcommittee would work to advance the Proviso Report and the Policy Subcommittee would convene, when the need arises, to address specific policy topics.

Decision: A motion was made to convene: 1) a Proviso Subcommittee to advance the Proviso Report, 2) a general Policy Subcommittee to discuss policy topics as identified by the Board, and 3) Additional subcommittees for Communications and Engagement, Grant Applications, Grant Review, and Legislative and Funding can be established when the need arises. The motion was approved.

Upcoming Opportunities for Engagement

- Tom noted Senator Erikson has an ongoing inquiry the process for fish passage projects in his district.
- Tom noted Rep. Kilmer had a recent press release on the federal infrastructure bill. This bill, which includes the National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program will not be voted on by the Senate until the larger spending bill is passed.
- Tom noted the Washington State Department of Transportation published their Fish Passage Delivery Plan on the WSDOT website.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Board Members/Alternates:

Axel Swanson, Washington State Association of Counties	Paul Wagner, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities	Susan Eugenis, Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC) (Cowlitz Co.)
Erik Neatherlin, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO)	Susan Kanzler, WSDOT
Jeannie Abbott, GSRO	Tom Jameson, WDFW
John Foltz, Council of Regions, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (SRSRB)	Tim Ressegiue, Yakama Indian Nation
Mary McDonald, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)	

WDFW, RCO Staff and Triangle Facilitation Team:

Adam Fleming, WDFW	Alice Rubin, RCO
Alison Hart, WDFW	Alissa Ferrell, RCO
Amber Martens, WDFW	Dave Caudill, RCO
Casey Costello, WDFW	Josh Lambert, RCO
Cassandra Weekes, WDFW	Kendall Barrameda, RCO
Christy Rains, WDFW	Marc Duboiski, RCO
Dave Collins, WDFW	Wendy Brown, RCO
Gabrielle Stilwater, WDFW	Joy Juelson, Facilitator
Gina Piazza, WDFW	Alex Sweetser, Facilitator
Julie Groebelny, WDFW	

Others observing:

Cheryl Baumann, North Olympic Lead Entity	Erica Bramlet	Kevin Long, North Olympic Salmon Coalition
Chuck Purnell	Evan Lewis	Kristen Currents, MacKay Sposito
Dan Berentson	Gregg Dunphy	Maria Jawad, Department of Commerce
Don Gourlie, Puget Sound Partnership	Heidi Reynolds	Steve Helvey