

CHEHALIS BASIN BOARD SUMMARIZED MEETING AGENDA AND ACTIONS

Date: February 4, 2021
Time: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
Location: Zoom online meeting

ITEM	FORMAL ACTION	FOLLOW-UP ACTION
1. Consent February 4 meeting agenda; Approval of January 7 Meeting Summary	Decision: Current agenda approved; January 7 meeting summary approved	No follow-up action.
2. Local Actions Program	Direction	OCB staff will provide the Board information reviewed by the Implementation Advisory Group on various floodplain acquisition programs across the country.
3. Director's Report	Discussion	No follow-up action.
4. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP)	Direction	The ASRP Steering Committee will attend a future Board meeting to discuss additional details on each of the long-term ASRP program options presented for Board consideration.
5. Next Steps and Closing	Discussion	No follow-up action.

Attendees

Chehalis Basin Board Members Present:

- Vickie Raines, Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
- Edna Fund, Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
- Jay Gordon, Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
- J. Vander Stoep, Office of the Governor
- Steve Malloch, Office of the Governor
- Glen Connelly (alternate to Harry Pickernell), Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation

Chehalis Basin Board Ex-Officio Members Present:

- Rich Doenges, Department of Ecology
- Stephen Bernath, Department of Natural Resources
- Michael Garrity, Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Josh Giuntoli, Conservation Commission
- Bart Gernhart, Department of Transportation

Board Staff/Board Guests Present:

- See Attachment A

Welcome, Introductions

Chair Vickie Raines called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. and welcomed the Board, staff, and audience.

Consent Agenda

The Board did not have additions or revisions to the [February 4, 2021 Meeting Agenda](#).

BOARD DECISION: Agenda approved by consensus.

Approval of January 7, 2021 Meeting Summary

The Board did not have additions or revisions to the [January 7, 2021 Meeting Summary](#).

BOARD DECISION: January 7, 2021 meeting summary approved by consensus.

Local Actions Program (LAP)

OCB Director Andrea McNamara Doyle reminded the Board of their objectives for the overall strategy from September 2020 through March 2021, including determining:

- Potential for flood damage reduction through Local Actions Program, CFAR, local projects, etc., with and without dam (including estimated costs)
- Potential to avoid, minimize and/or mitigate aquatic habitat and species impacts of dam (including estimated costs)
- Magnitude, priority and sequence of ASRP actions necessary to protect and restore freshwater habitat and the abundance and resilience of aquatic species (including estimated costs)

To-date, the Local Actions Program Advisory Groups have assisted the Board in understanding certainty and uncertainty in technical information and how policy/programs could be affected by different actions and identifying additional information needed (short-term and long-term) for Board deliberations on next steps.

Floodplain Acquisition Program

Jim Kramer (Facilitator) introduced the topic of a Floodplain Acquisition Program as one potential element of a Local Actions Program. In developing an acquisition program, different strategies could include determining whether an acquisition program approach proactively seeks acquisitions and relocation to reduce all or most at-risk structures in certain strategic areas, and/or if it would respond to acquisition requests across a dispersed area.

Kelsey Moldenke (Quinault Indian Nation) then presented an overview of the Taholah Relocation and Hamilton Master Planning process and Toby Levey (Forterra) discussed the work currently being done in the Town of Hamilton, WA. Jim Kramer then summarized Implementation Advisory Group feedback on a potential Floodplain Acquisition Program, including:

- A Floodplain Acquisition Program should be responsive to interests across the Basin
- Relocation of a major portion of a community in specific areas could be challenged by available locations, interest, and potential economic/social equity issues
- Determination of feasibility requires significant advance work (master planning and outreach)

Kelsey and Toby were then joined by Katie Spidalieri (Georgetown Climate Center) to participate in a panel discussion focused on the following questions:

What were the key drivers and incentives in projects that you've been a part of that motivated community leaders and landowners to initiate a major buyout/relocation program? Or if your program has not moved forward at the pace you envisioned, what's missing?

- Katie Spidalieri (Georgetown Climate Center) highlighted the importance of incentives that resonate with local community leaders and landowners to initiate a major buyout/relocation program. Developing community messaging specific to what will happen to the land left behind is also an important component of effective programs.
- Toby Levey (Forterra) highlighted the importance of personal contact with landowners when initiating a major buyout/relocation program, which provides an empathetic component and builds relationships.
- Kelsey Moldenke (Quinault Indian Nation) highlighted the importance of developing a plan with community buy-in that drives the process, which allows for more inherent trust in the process.

What were the necessary factors that ensured successful implementation of buyout/relocation program in projects that you've been a part of? Or if your program is not at a stage of full implementation, what factors are missing?

- Panel members acknowledged that funding sources and opportunities for low-income individuals are more readily accessible than for those that are just above the threshold of low-income status.
- Panel members discussed the challenge of preserving community when implementing an acquisition or relocation program due to the risk of separating multi-generational ties to the land.
- Panel members reminded the Board that buyouts would not be the only flood damage reduction action in a Local Actions Program.
- Panel members discussed the importance of evaluating and addressing the potential for both increases and decreases in local tax revenue due to populations moving out of flood prone areas.
- Panel members highlighted the importance of education and building partnerships with local housing realtors and finding ways to disclose potential flooding concerns for perspective buyers and renters.

Structural Options for Flood Damage Reduction

Jim Kramer (Facilitator) provided an overview of the previous US Army Corps of Engineers Twin Cities Levees evaluation in 2011/2012, which included analyses regarding increasing flood storage behind the Skookumchuck Dam, and building a number of new levees that extended on the east side of the Skookumchuck river and the west side of the mainstem of the Chehalis river along I-5.

Bart Gernhart (Dept. of Transportation) provided the Board with an overview of the previous work done to evaluate alternatives for I-5 flood protection. The flood-prone area is between Exit 76 and Exit 81 (5-mile section, 13th Street to Mellen Street). During a flood event that inundates or threatens to flood I-5, a 20-mile stretch needs to be closed on either side of the flood-prone area to take advantage of available off-ramps and detours. Bart reviewed the alternatives that were previously evaluated by WSDOT, including conceptual designs, proposed operations during flood events, and some of the pros and cons of each approach. The alternatives that considered bypass lanes, a viaduct, or relocating I-5 outside the floodplain faced many technical, environmental, and community obstacles such as:

- Not solving traffic congestion problems and WSDOT's need to widen I-5.
- Creating many new stream crossings that would require expensive new fish passage facilities.
- Significant wetland impacts that would need to be mitigated.
- Cutting off important commercial areas and local roadways adjacent to the freeway that would not be connected to new freeway tie-ins/touch-downs.
- Bifurcating the communities, which WSDOT policy seeks to avoid in all future projects.

Some of the potential issues for the alternative to protect I-5 with flood walls and levees include:

- Challenges associated I-5 being 8 feet below the existing airport levee grade.
- Uncertainty of acquiring necessary railroad right of way since the railroads have superior rights to state DOTs.
- Existing bridges may not be capable of withstanding the necessary modifications, requiring expensive rebuild/retrofits.
- Some of the mitigation concepts for Alternative 1 included buyouts and raising structures, which may not be eligible for funding from gas tax revenues due to state constitutional restrictions.
- Magnitude of climate change impacts described in the Draft SEPA EIS makes this alternative infeasible since there is a much greater threat for flood waters to overtop or re-infiltrate I-5 infrastructure.

WSDOT's current approach is to find local solutions that have low cost and high benefit to reduce the negative impacts of flooding to the transportation system regardless of the size of flood.

Below is a link to the presentation materials:

- [Local Actions Intro Slides Board Presentation](#)
- [Taholah Village Relocation Presentation](#)
- [I-5 Flood Protection Presentation](#)

FOLLOW-UP ACTION: OCB staff will provide the Board with the information reviewed by the Implementation Advisory Group on various acquisition programs across the country.

Director's Report

OCB Director Andrea McNamara Doyle introduced recent OCB hire Nat Kale (ASRP Project Manager), who will be the OCB point of contact and liaison for ASRP partners and groups, working closely with both the tribal and WDFW project managers.

OCB Director Andrea McNamara Doyle has been invited to sit on a Regional Agricultural Steering Committee which will guild regional food systems within Puget Sound and SW Washington. The goal is

to develop key metrics for decisions on prioritizing and allocating investment projects that support regional food systems.

OCB is currently tracking three active legislative bills:

- HB 1147 - Office of resiliency
 - February 10, 2021 - Scheduled for executive session in the House Committee on Community & Economic Development
- HB 1329 - Public meetings
 - February 12, 2021 - Scheduled for executive session in the House Committee on Local Government
- HB 1382 - Salmon recovery projects
 - February 12, 2021 - Scheduled for executive session in the House Committee on Rural Development, Agriculture & Natural Resources

Board members were reminded of the additions to their regularly scheduled monthly Board meetings, including an upcoming meeting on February 18, 2021. This meeting is intended for the Board to review major considerations and content that could be included in the report on a long-term strategy that will be shared with the Governor's office and legislature.

OCB will be hosting an online public meeting on February 17, 2021, where staff will be presenting highlights of the work accomplished by the Board, ASRP Steering Committee, Flood Control Zone District, and Local Actions Program advisory group processes. The meeting's main focus will be on providing updates on the ASRP and the avoidance, minimization, and mitigation feasibility evaluations related to the proposed flood retention facility.

Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP)

Long-term ASRP implementation and funding options

Jim Kramer (Facilitator) introduced Emelie McKain (WDFW), who previewed information that the ASRP Steering Committee will provide the Board to support their upcoming decisions on a long-term strategy.

Emelie presented three long-term ASRP program options for Board consideration, including:

- 1) Full-Level Option - totaling 550 miles of habitat restoration in priority rivers and streams with an implementation period of 30 years. The estimated cost is \$610 million to \$1.3 billion.
- 2) Mid-Level Option - totaling 230 miles of habitat restoration in priority rivers and streams with an implementation period of 30 years. The estimated cost is \$300-600 million.
- 3) No-Action Option - Other existing local, state and federal programs would still operate outside of the Strategy. This option would not include ASRP program implementation and aquatic habitats would likely continue to degrade or be lost in the Chehalis Basin.

The Steering Committee recommends the Board include \$33 million in ASRP funding in the 2021-23 biennium. This level is consistent with the Governor's proposed budget and is almost level from 2019-21 funding for the ASRP. In terms of program options and 5-year funding strategies, this recommendation does not differ. The 2021-23 biennium budget recommendations represent a strategic shift in the program to:

- Allocate funding toward projects and away from planning
- Scale up implementation of projects

- Support implementation by funding key process related needs
 - Materials e.g., large wood, riparian plants
 - Technical review and consultation on project designs

Below is a link to the presentation materials:

- [Long-term ASRP implementation and funding options](#)

Key comments and discussion topics included:

- Board members were reassured that the biennial funding recommendations are scalable and consistent with previous biennial funding levels.
- Board members were reminded that the Science Review Team and Steering Committee have broken down implementation sequencing into three decades. Depending on the restoration goals and outcomes in project areas, the Steering Committee will determine if activities need to be completed in a specific order or if there can be actions taken independent of one another.
- Board members asked for more guidance on a detailed funding plan for the ASRP so the Steering Committee can tailor future funding requests.
- Board members are interested in seeing more details on the various long-term ASRP options for consideration.

FOLLOW-UP ACTION: The ASRP Steering Committee will attend a future Board meeting to discuss additional details on each of the long-term ASRP program options presented for Board consideration.

Next Steps and Closing

Jim Kramer (Facilitator) reminded the Board of their next regularly scheduled Board meeting on February 18, 2021.

Board Staff/Board Guests:

- Andrea McNamara Doyle, Department of Ecology, Director, Office of Chehalis Basin
- Betsy Dillin, Lewis County
- Brian Shay, City of Hoquiam
- Brian Stewart, Conservation Northwest
- Bob Amrine, Lewis County Conservation District
- Carson Coates, Office of Congresswoman Herrera-Butler
- Celina Abercrombie, Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Chrissy Bailey, Department of Ecology, Office of Chehalis Basin
- Cindy Bradley, Department of Ecology, Office of Chehalis Basin
- Curt Hart, Department of Ecology
- Dave Bingaman, Quinault Indian Nation, ASRP Steering Committee
- Diane Butorac, Department of Ecology
- Emelie McKain, Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Emil Pierson, City of Centralia
- Frank Corbin, FCZD Advisory Committee
- Frank Gordon
- Heather Page, Anchor QEA
- Hope Rieden, Chehalis Tribe
- Jim Kramer, Kramer Consulting (Facilitator)
- Jim Waldo, Consultant to Flood Control Zone District
- John Robinson, Consultant to Flood Control Zone District
- John Hendrickson
- Ken Ghalambor, Ross Strategic
- Katie Spidalieri, Georgetown Climate Center
- Kelsey Moldenke, Quinault Indian Nation
- Kris Koski, City of Aberdeen
- Lee First, Twin Harbors Waterkeeper
- Lizabeth Seebacher
- Larry Karpack, Watershed Science and Engineering
- Mark Glyde, Quinault Indian Nation
- Merri Martz, Anchor QEA
- Miranda Plumb, US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Nat Kale, Office of Chehalis Basin
- Scott Boettcher, Staff to Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
- Shelby Thomas, Ross Strategic
- Toby Levey, Forterra
- Tom Gorman, Department of Natural Resources
- Trent Lougheed, City of Chehalis