

# CHEHALIS BASIN BOARD SUMMARIZED MEETING AGENDA AND ACTIONS

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**Date:** August 3, 2023

**Time:** 9:00 AM, PST to 4:00 PM, PST

**Location:** Hybrid meeting – Veterans Memorial Museum: 100 SW Veterans Way, Chehalis Washington / Zoom Online

ITEM	FORMAL ACTION	FOLLOW-UP ACTION
1. Approval of Current Agenda and June 1 Meeting Summary	Decision: Current agenda approved; June 1 summary approved	No follow-up action.
2. Basin Legislator Perspectives	Discussion	No follow-up action.
3. Chehalis Basin Strategy Process Refinement	Discussion/Direction	<p>Staff will develop a memo or description of how the process will ensure the best available information will be used to inform the comparative evaluation.</p> <p>Mr. Imperati will continue to have conversations with Board members about the overall comparative evaluation process in preparation for the September meeting.</p>
4. Local Actions Non-Dam Alternative (LAND)	<p>Decision: Board members approved including the scope of work in a future RFQ to complete an alternatives analysis of the major infrastructure elements of the LAND Alternative.</p> <p>Decision: Board members supported Anchor QEA and WSE completing updates to the structure database.</p> <p>Decision: Board members supported the new consultant hired to support the CFAR program (Perteet) including a review of local jurisdiction</p>	No follow-up action.

ITEM	FORMAL ACTION	FOLLOW-UP ACTION
	comprehensive plans and development codes as part of their scope.  Decision: Board members approved forming a new Board sub-group to guide work of the new consultant hired to do an infrastructure alternatives analysis.	
5. Federal Funding Strategy	Discussion/ Direction	Staff will send the Board the list of federal funding opportunities they are tracking.
6. Skookumchuck Dam next steps	Discussion / Direction	No follow-up action.
7. Aquatic Species Restoration	Discussion	Staff will provide the Board more information on the potential ESA listing for spring Chinook after the end of the 90-day review process in October 2023.
8. Flood Authority 2023-25 Local Projects	Decision: Board members approved the Flood Authority's funding approach for the 23-25 biennium.	No follow-up action.
9. Director's Report	Discussion	No follow-up action.
10. Public Comment, Next Steps and Closing	Discussion	No follow-up action.

## Attendees

### *Chehalis Basin Board Members*

NAME	APPOINTING AUTHORITY	ATTENDANCE
Vickie Raines	Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority	Present
Edna Fund	Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority	Present
Jay Gordon	Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority	Present
Tyson Johnston	Quinault Indian Nation	Present
Glen Connelly	Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation	Present
J. Vander Stoep	Office of the Governor	Present
Steve Malloch	Office of the Governor	Present

## ***Chehalis Basin Board Ex-Officio Members***

<b>NAME</b>	<b>AGENCY</b>	<b>ATTENDANCE</b>
Michael Garrity	Department of Fish and Wildlife	Present
Katie Allen	Department of Natural Resources	Present
Mark Gaines	Department of Transportation	Excused
Josh Giuntoli	Washington State Conservation Commission	Present
Rich Doenges	Department of Ecology	Excused

### ***Board Staff/Board Guests Present:***

- See Attachment A

## **Welcome, Introductions**

Chair Vickie Raines called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed the Board, staff, and audience. She welcomed Katie Allen (DNR), who is replacing Alex Smith (DNR) as an Ex-Officio Member.

## **Agenda and Meeting Summary Review**

Ken Ghalambor (Ross Strategic) provided an overview of the meeting agenda. The Board did not have any additions or revisions to the [August 3, 2023](#) meeting agenda.

**BOARD DECISION:** Agenda approved by consensus.

The Board did not have any additions or revisions to the June 1, 2023 meeting summary.

**BOARD DECISION:** [June 1, 2023 meeting summary](#) approved by consensus.

## **Basin Legislator Perspectives**

Chair Vickie Raines welcomed Senator John Braun, who provided his perspectives on the Chehalis Basin Strategy, issues for the Board to consider regarding the state legislature, and time for Board member questions. Senator Braun and Board members highlighted several issues, including:

- The legislature is likely to experience significant turnover in the coming years, and the OCB and Board members should prioritize educating new legislators (e.g., through tours of the basin) on the work of the Chehalis Basin Strategy.
- Board members should recognize the unusual nature of the Office of Chehalis Basin receiving such large biennial appropriations over the past several biennia, and similar

levels of support cannot necessarily be assumed in future biennia. This highlights the need for developing consensus recommendations soon on a long-term strategy.

- Board members should highlight the many smaller, tangible, and cost-effective projects that have already been implemented with state funding, while broader decisions are still being made on larger-scale projects.
  - Board members discussed a forthcoming media push by the Chronicle on completed “fish and flood” projects in the basin.
- Senator Braun acknowledged and praised the Board’s ability to develop bi-partisan, consensus recommendations as a key to their longstanding legislative and budgetary support. Maintaining consensus will be a very important factor for continued legislative support.
- Senator Braun and Board members discussed the need for identifying long-term funding for the Strategy beyond biennial capital budget appropriations, including potential sources like bond measures, special purpose districts, and federal funding.

## Chehalis Basin Strategy Process Refinement

Sam Imperati continued the discussions with the Board regarding the Strategy development process and timeline. Mr. Imperati confirmed his charge is to push for Board resolution on an integrated long-term strategy and move the Board at an accelerated pace towards an optimal decision that balances “fish and flood” values. By the end of the December Board meeting, Mr. Imperati aims for the Board to decide: what is the overall process structure, what are the preliminary packages the Board would like to evaluate, what are the types of metrics to measure packages against each other, and what is the baseline. Mr. Imperati reviewed the process with an [explanatory packet](#). He highlighted several points and provided clarifications for Board members during the discussion, including:

- At a broad conceptual level, the comparative evaluation will look similar to the analysis in the Programmatic EIS, in terms of evaluating different packages that contain multiple work elements.
- To the degree possible, the comparative evaluation process wants to isolate major infrastructure and large-scale project decisions by pulling out “common elements” that the Board is likely to support regardless of what package is selected. The Board will likely choose “high, medium, or low” levels of investment for common elements within each package.
- The Board will need to consider the ongoing implications of the SEPA and NEPA EIS processes for the proposed FRE but should not let those processes restrict them from

thinking independently about how to combine elements in various packages for the comparative evaluation.

- A future Board retreat, currently anticipated for September, but which could occur in October, will allow for preliminary identification of packages to be evaluated, but in no way expresses support or opposition for any specific work element or package.
- The Board can create as many packages as needed to support their deliberations. The Board will compare packages to a baseline scenario and against each other.
- After collecting data on evaluation factors for each package, a benefit-cost analysis can be performed. Most evaluation metrics will be quantifiable based on best available science, but some may be qualitative. Following the benefit-cost analysis, a separate evaluation of the packages can be conducted based on more subjective or non-quantifiable aspects such as political acceptability, fundability, and legal/regulatory, such as tribal treaty rights.

Mr. Imperati described how the “highest” scored package only shows how well it scored in relation to other packages, but that it does not necessarily mean that it is the package the Board will select. Ultimately, the Board will be able to see how packages were scored and can do a sensitivity analysis to see how changes in weighting could change the ranking of packages. Regardless, the Board will use the scores to inform, but not dictate, their deliberations.

Board members did not raise concerns when asked about confirming their June decision to proceed with a level of information less than an EIS for the comparative evaluation. Most Board members also expressed support for the general direction of the 10-step comparative evaluation process, but there was some hesitancy to formally approve the process before a future retreat and more discussions.

Board members also discussed the need to use the best available information for the comparative evaluation, to ensure as much of an “apples-to-apples” comparison as possible. Mr. Imperati clarified the timing of certain work products (e.g., SEPA EIS estimated in Q1 2025, levee, diversion/conveyance analysis in Q4 2024) and how they would feed into the evaluation. Board members requested a memo or description of how the process will ensure the best available information will be used to inform the comparative evaluation.

Based on the Board discussion, Mr. Imperati suggested more time is needed to fine-tune this process before the first retreat, which is now likely to occur in October instead of September. He did not request a formal Board decision on moving forward with the 10-Step conceptual framework or directing OCB to implement the major process-development steps described during the meeting.

**FOLLOW UP:** Staff will develop a memo or description of how the process will ensure the best available information will be used to inform the comparative evaluation. Mr. Imperati will continue to have conversations with Board members about the overall comparative evaluation process in preparation for the September meeting.

Below is a link to the meeting materials:

- [Preface to Draft CBB LT Strategy Development 7-23-23](#)
- [Draft CBB Process for LT Strategy Development 7-28-23](#)

## Local Actions Non-Dam Alternative (LAND)

Ken Ghalambor summarized recommended next steps to refine several elements identified through the Local Actions Non-Dam Alternative (LAND) process and support the Board's upcoming comparative evaluation. Based on Board direction, staff developed a scope of work that could be included in a future RFQ to advance work related to the major infrastructure elements identified through the LAND process. Staff estimates that this work should be completed within 12-14 months from the time a contractor is hired, to support a future comparative evaluation for Board decision-making on a long-term strategy. Completing this scope of work will create more accurate and precise estimates at a 10% design level of the cost, impacts, and benefits of the various LAND infrastructure alternatives. The work will be sufficient to inform the future comparative evaluation of packages of strategy elements, including benefit-cost analyses. Mr. Ghalambor asked Board members if they support including the scope of work in a future RFQ to complete an alternatives analysis of the major infrastructure elements of the LAND Alternative to further support the Chehalis Basin Board's decision-making process on the long-term integrated strategy.

In addition, updated information for the structures database, including information about structures along the Skookumchuck River, is needed to determine the actual scale of flooding impacts under the modeled late century 2080 flood extent. This information is important regardless of whether levees, the FRE, or a combination of the two are advanced. Mr. Ghalambor noted that staff recommends that Anchor QEA and Watershed Science and Engineering staff complete the update to the structure database, as this would already likely be required for the Final EISs and potentially for the Skookumchuck dam evaluation. The updated data can be used to refine and prioritize CFAR/Safe Structures costs and implementation strategies and will be used in a future comparative evaluation to support Board decision making on a long-term strategy.

Finally, Mr. Ghalambor noted that staff recommends that the new consultant hired to support the CFAR program (Perteet) include a review of local jurisdiction comprehensive plans and development codes as part of their scope.

Key comments and discussion topics included:

- Ken Ghalambor clarified that updates to the structures database is purely an inventory identifying potentially floodprone structures.
- Some Board members noted that they do not foresee a local sponsor for the major infrastructure elements identified through the LAND process.
- Ken Ghalambor clarified that the scope to be included in a future RFQ will consider upstream and downstream impacts from the proposed projects.

**DECISION:** (Note: Board member Jay Gordon was not present during this portion of the meeting and did not vote on these decisions)

- Board members approved including the scope of work in a future RFQ to complete an alternatives analysis of the major infrastructure elements of the LAND Alternative.
- Board members supported Anchor QEA and WSE completing updates to the structure database.
- Board members supported the new consultant hired to support the CFAR program (Perteet) including a review of local jurisdiction comprehensive plans and development codes as part of their scope.

Next, Ken Ghalambor discussed the future role of the LAND Steering Group based on a recent LAND Steering Committee meeting. Board members Glen Connelly, Tyson Johnson, and Steve Malloch suggested forming a new Board subgroup to guide work of the new consultant hired to complete the infrastructure alternatives analysis. Steve Malloch clarified that the subgroup will likely consult with and engage other former LAND Steering Group members, local governments, technical experts, and others while the infrastructure analysis is completed. Board members also discussed that this subgroup is not a "LAND" Steering Group per se, but rather advancing specific infrastructure analyses that were originally identified through the LAND process.

**DECISION:** Board members approved forming a new Board subgroup to guide work of the new consultant hired to do LAND infrastructure alternatives analysis. (Note: Board member Jay Gordon was not present during this portion of the meeting and did not vote on this decision)

Below is a link to the meeting materials:

- [Memo LAND Scopes 2023-07-19](#)
- [LAND Next Steps Presentation 08-03-2023](#)

## Federal Funding Strategy – Technical Support Program

Cindy Malay (OCB) presented updates and next steps on the technical support being offered to partners for securing federal funding. OCB hired ICF and convened a federal funding support advisory committee to guide an approach to provide technical and financial resources to partners. In the last six months, OCB has worked to identify opportunities for Strategy partners and a suite of options for grant writing support. OCB also created a support consideration process and grant competitiveness evaluation process. Ms. Malay also proposed a process for the Board to consider for providing letters of support, with a slightly modified request in the event of a time sensitive letter of support request. She then proposed the following questions:

- Is this the level of support you envision OCB would provide through a federal funding strategy?
- What frequency do Board members want updates on the process?
- Does the Board want to see a formalized process developed for CBB letters of support requests?

Key comments and discussion topics included:

- Steve Malloch commented that there are many potential basin entities that would be sponsors of projects and wonders if they are aware of this process and if it matches their needs?
  - Ms. Malay responded that those asked to come to the advisory group have knowledge of their local partners.
  - Director Kale added that this process evolved based on feedback through the Advisory Group.
- Ms. Malay clarified that ICF developed a grant tracking system that identifies all relevant federal funding opportunities and timing of review cycles. As funding becomes available, OCB notifies project sponsors to see if they are interested.
- Board members agreed that quarterly updates on this work seems appropriate, and other major updates can occur more regularly if deemed appropriate.
- Board members suggested that when time is available, letters of support can be brought to the Board for a more structured approval process. When there are urgent requests, the Board Chair and Director can address letter of support requests independently.

**FOLLOW UP:** OCB staff will send the Board the list of federal funding opportunities they are tracking to notify local project sponsors.

Below is a link to the meeting materials:

- [Federal Funding Memorandum](#)
- [Federal Funding Presentation 07-27-23](#)

## Skookumchuck Dam Next Steps

Nat Kale reviewed a letter submitted by the Quinault Indian Nation that requested the Board revisit and confirm that “dam removal only” remains an option for the Board to consider regarding the Skookumchuck dam. For context, Director Kale noted that Board members recommended three options continue to be evaluated at their May and June 2023 Board meetings regarding the Skookumchuck Dam: fish passage only, combination fish/flood with direct piping, and dam removal with off channel storage. At the June meeting the Board discussed specific analyses to move forward with Anchor QEA to advance understanding of these options. Director Kale noted three possible ways to move forward based on the Quinault Indian Nation’s letter:

1. No change.
2. Add “dam removal only” as an option to be analyzed, recognizing TransAlta would likely be opposed to that due to impacts to their water rights.
3. Reconsider the June Board decision to look at specific options, and instead not advance any specific set of alternatives. Anchor QEA would still complete same analyses the Board discussed and approved, but would not necessarily relate to any specific options.

Board members commented:

- Michael Garrity (WDFW) noted WDFW would like to see dam removal with off-channel storage evaluated as an option, and that this analysis would still inform understanding of dam removal only. Unrelated to the QIN’s request, Michael posed some questions for future Board consideration: Under what circumstances would it be appropriate for the public to fund improvements at a privately owned dam? Can the state look at potential routes to acquire the dam from TransAlta, when TransAlta’s main obligations are under an exempt obligation with FERC? Is there opportunity for future discussion?
- Glen Connelly agreed with Michael that study of dam removal with off-channel storage would also inform understanding of a dam-removal only option.

- Director Kale clarified that looking into dam removal only as an option would not likely change the currently proposed workplan for Anchor QEA that the Board discussed in June.

Below is a link to the meeting materials:

- [Quinault Comments Skookumchuck Dam](#)

## Aquatic Species Restoration

Celina Abercrombie (WDFW) provided an update on the petition to list spring-run Chinook salmon under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) initiated July 17, 2023. She reviewed the ESA petition geographic area and process. The listing is currently in the 90-day review process. If the listing moves forward, NOAA will request data from a variety of agencies and Tribes and will provide public comment opportunities. If there is a determination to propose a listing, NOAA will conduct a 12-to-24-month Status Review period. There are potential impacts to Strategy elements from planning and coordination activities to in-water actions. Ms. Abercrombie also encouraged the Board to re-look at the slides from former WDFW fisheries director Ron Warren regarding harvest and hatchery laws, and processes and operations.

Steve Malloch noted discussion on the distinction of spring vs. fall Chinook, and that listing both spring and fall Chinook may have a bigger impact than just spring Chinook.

**FOLLOW UP:** Staff will provide the Board more information on the potential ESA listing after the end of the 90-day review process in October 2023.

Below is a link to the meeting materials:

- [ESA Petition to List Spring-Run Chinook Salmon](#)
- [ASRP 2023 Q2 Project Update](#)

## Flood Authority 2023-25 Local Projects

Ken Ghalambor introduced Scott Boettcher, staff to the Flood Authority. The Board's 2023-25 budget included ~\$3.5 million for Flood Authority projects. Scott Boettcher discussed:

- Scott is phasing down his workload to 15% and Erika Britney and Katrina Sukola from ICF will be taking over the majority of his work.
- In addition to staffing and administration costs, the \$3.5 million in 2023-25 funding will be used for five projects:

- Hoquiam 10th St. Pump Station (construction)
- Montesano Water Supply Resiliency (construction)
- Port of Grays Harbor Haul Road Mid-Term projects (construction)
- City of Chehalis Derelict WWTP Demolition and Removal (plan, study, design, permit)
- Lewis County South Fork Chehalis Boistfort CMZ (plan, study, design, permit)
- Scott noted that 88% of the funding is going towards construction projects, whereas last biennium's budget was used for more planning projects.
- The Flood Authority created a dashboard that can serve as a tool to explain local projects and be used for outreach. A more complete version will be brought back to the Board in October.

**DECISION:** Board members approved the Flood Authority's funding approach for the 2023-25 biennium. (Note: Board member Jay Gordon was not present during this portion of the meeting and did not vote on this decision)

Below is a link to the meeting materials:

- [Flood Authority Local Projects for CBB Aug. 2023](#)

## Director's Report

Nat Kale (Interim Director) reported:

- Department of Ecology Director Laura Watson is working to hire a permanent director. Director Watson is engaging the Board in the hiring process. Recruitment has been out for several weeks. Applications will be reviewed next week.
- The Erosion Management Program is launching this week.
- Staff are working to set up a celebration for former Director Andrea McNamara Doyle's work.
- Ecology was appropriated \$18.5 million for the North Shore Levee project. There have been internal conversations on the appropriate fiscal and contracting structure Ecology plans to use to get the funds to Aberdeen and Hoquiam.
- The Community Flood Assistance and Resilience (CFAR) program is extending bidding for four projects out until August 17<sup>th</sup>.
- Chair Raines and Director Kale provided a letter of support for Grays Harbor Conservation District's grant application for their Lower Satsop River Floodplain Resilience and Aquatic Habitat restoration project, an application to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

- OCB plans to institute the following changes in providing materials for Board meetings:
  - Tablets will be provided to Board members at the beginning of the Board meeting, with materials loaded. Tablets will be collected after the meeting. Ex-officio members will not be provided with these tablets.
  - OCB will work to get materials to Board members the Friday before the Board meeting.
  - If Board members prefer to continue receiving physical materials, they should contact OCB.
  - Documents will still be emailed ahead of the Board meeting and calendar invites will be updated with the EZ view link.

## Public Comment

There was no public comment.

## Next Steps

The next Board meeting will be September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at Fairfield Inn & Suites, Grand Mound, Centralia WA. The October Board meeting will be moved to the Satsop Business Park, where there will be a site visit and ribbon cutting ceremony for the Haul Road project.

## Appendix A

### ***Board Staff/Board Guests:***

*Those that participated virtually are noted with an asterisk.*

- Alex Dupey, MIG\*
- Amelia Webb, ICM
- Brandon Parsons, American Rivers\*
- Brian Stewart, Conservation Northwest\*
- Carrie Sessions, Governor's Office\*
- Casey Hart, Ross Strategic \*
- Celina Abercrombie, WDFW
- Chris Conklin\*
- Cindy Malay, OCB
- Col. Ronald Averill, Flood Authority\*
- Colleen Granberg, DNR\*
- Darrin Raines, City of Cosmopolis\*

- Dave Bingaman, QIN
- Dave Rodgers, MIG\*
- Diane Butorac, Ecology\*
- Drew Meador, WDFW\*
- Erik Martin, Chehalis Flood Control Zone District\*
- Erika Britney, ICF\*
- Frank Corbin, FCZD\*
- Heather May\*
- Heather Page, Anchor QEA\*
- Izzy Zucker, Pyramid Communications\*
- Jerry Otto, HDR\*
- Jenn Tice, Ross Strategic \*
- Jess Helsley, Wild Salmon Center\*
- Jim Weber, Center for Environmental Law and Policy
- Kat Dickey, OCB
- Katrina Sukola, ICF\*
- Ken Ghalambor, Ross Strategic
- Curt Hart, Ecology
- Kylin Brown, Pyramid Communications\*
- Lauren Dennis, Ross Strategic\*
- Larry Karpack, Watershed Science and Engineering\*
- Mark Glyde, QIN\*
- Matt Dillin, Chehalis Flood Control Zone District\*
- Matt Proxiv, HDR\*
- Merri Martz, Anchor QEA\*
- Nat Kale, OCB
- Nick Bird, City of Aberdeen\*
- Nicole Czarnomski, WDFW\*
- Sam Imperati, ICM
- Steven Lyle, Bucoda Council\*
- Stevie Colson, OCB
- Scott Boettcher, Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority\*
- Scott Brummer, Lewis County Commissioner
- Shelby Thomas, Ross Strategic\*
- Steven Lyle, Bucoda Council\*

- Tammy Domike\*
- Teri Wright, Wild Orca\*
- Todd Chaput, Economic Alliance of Lewis County
- Victoria Knorr, WDFW