

CHEHALIS BASIN BOARD SUMMARIZED MEETING AGENDA AND ACTIONS

Date: December 3, 2020
Time: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
Location: WebEx online meeting

ITEM	FORMAL ACTION	FOLLOW-UP ACTION
1. Consent December 3 meeting agenda; Approval of November 4 and 5, 2020 Meeting Summaries	Decision: Current agenda approved; November 4 and 5, 2020 meeting summaries approved	No follow-up action.
2. Local Actions Program	Discussion	No follow-up action.
3. Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District plan for continued analysis of potential for FRE avoidance, minimization, and mitigation (AMM)	Discussion	<p>The FCZD will seek to address the Board's questions regarding the FRE and AMM to help inform the Board's decision making.</p> <p>OCB staff will compile and circulate the comments submitted by both agencies and tribes on the Draft NEPA EIS.</p>
4. November 10 Public Meeting Debrief	Discussion	<p>OCB staff will send out official notices for two additional public meetings scheduled for Wednesday, February 19, 2021 and Tuesday, March 9, 2021.</p> <p>OCB staff will compile responses to the November 10 public survey and distribute to the Board.</p>
5. Local Flood Damage Reduction Projects	Discussion/Direction	No follow-up action.
6. Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP)	Decision: Board approved sending a letter to WDFW, QIN, and the Chehalis Tribe requesting a briefing on how harvest, hatcheries, predation and prey are being managed or could be managed in a manner that will support the success of the ASRP.	Schedule presentations by WDFW, QIN and Chehalis Tribe to brief the board on the issues in the letter.

ITEM	FORMAL ACTION	FOLLOW-UP ACTION
7. Legislative Session Preparation	Decision: Board approved use of the “backgrounder” document for legislative and community outreach to highlight what the strategy is and what has been accomplished to date.	No follow-up action.
8. Next Steps and Closing	Discussion	No follow-up action.

Attendees

Chehalis Basin Board Members Present:

- Vickie Raines, Chair, 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
- Tyson Johnston, Quinault Indian Nation (QIN)
- 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 9:06 a.m. and welcomed the Board, staff, and audience.

Consent Agenda

The Board did not have additions or revisions to the [December 3, 2020 Meeting Agenda](#).

BOARD DECISION: Agenda approved by consensus.

Approval of November 4, 2020 Meeting Summary

The Board did not have additions or revisions to the [November 4, 2020 Meeting Summary](#).

BOARD DECISION: November 4, 2020 meeting summary approved by consensus.

Approval of November 5, 2020 Meeting Summary

The Board did not have additions or revisions to the [November 5, 2020 Meeting Summary](#).

BOARD DECISION: November 5, 2020 meeting summary approved by consensus.

Local Actions Program

OCB Director McNamara Doyle provided an update on the Local Actions Program, including summarizing work completed to-date by the Technical and Implementation Advisory Groups and reminding the Board of their objectives through March 2021 in order to respond to the Governor's July 2020 letter.

In response to the Board's request for a summary of how the predicted late-century catastrophic flood (i.e., 100-year flood in 2080) compares to peak historical flood events at several gages within the Chehalis River Basin, the OCB team developed a summary table comparing historical and modeled future flows in the Basin.

Since November, the Technical Advisory Group has met to discuss the following topics:

- Near-term climate assumptions for modeling future floodplain
- Refined detail for areas of flood damage
- Near-term approach to delineate erosion areas
- Review of past studies for floodplain storage and structural solutions

The Implementation Advisory Group has primarily focused on a review of past land use recommendations from the 2010 Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan and 2016 recommendations from the Chehalis River Basin flood Authority.

Below is a link to the presentation materials:

- [Local Actions Program Late Century 100-Yr Flood Magnitude Memo](#)
- [Local Actions Update](#)

Key comments and discussion topics included:

- Board members discussed work the Technical Advisory Group is evaluating regarding areas that can increase storage of floodwaters during major flood events.
- Board members discussed how the series of figures reviewed depicting the future floodplain were focused on the extent and depth of flooding, not the projected change in frequency of flood events.

Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District plan for continued analysis of potential for FRE avoidance, minimization, and mitigation

Jim Kramer (Facilitator) introduced Erik Martin (Flood Control Zone District (FCZD) Administrator), who provided the Board with an update on the FCZD's plan for continued analysis of the potential for avoidance, minimization, and mitigation (AMM) of impacts for the proposed flood retention facility (FRE). In order to make a decision to move forward with their proposal, the District Supervisors will consider three factors:

1. Benefits of Flood Damage Reduction
2. Net Environmental Impacts
3. Project Costs

AMM, as well as additional understanding of economic impacts are key to understanding these three factors. In reviewing the environmental impacts identified in both the Draft SEPA and NEPA EISs, the FCZD has prioritized AMM efforts. They are considering the feasibility of AMM related to a number of topics regarding aquatic habitat and are considering a number of other questions. These include:

- What portion of the overall effects to aquatic species and habitats are attributable to the Project and what will otherwise occur as a result of climate change?
- Are feasible measures available to avoid, minimize and mitigate these effects to acceptable levels?
- How will the identified avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures affect specific aquatic habitats and species?
- What effect will management of vegetative cover related to shading in the temporary inundation reservoir have on water temperature and upland terrestrial habitat?
- Are potential losses to fish populations in the project area (above and below the FRE site) mitigatable with respect to identified species, and how do these impacts and mitigations fit within the context of the Chehalis Basin strategy?
- What will be the impact on jurisdictional wetlands and how will this effect be mitigated?
- What is the most effective design concept for fish passage during construction?
- What other questions / concerns does the board have that the District can attempt to answer before March?

The FCZD provided the following initial conclusions and responses to their questions:

- The information developed in answer to these questions will describe what the most likely expected impact of the project will be on aquatic species and habitats
- A number of other impacts were identified in the Ecology and Corps EISs that call for avoidance, minimization measures to reduce those impacts to acceptable levels
- The District fully accepts responsibility to address all of the impacts that have been identified
- In most if not all these cases the impacts are integral to the issuance of a permit that the project must obtain to ultimately construct
- During the permitting process the District expects that acceptable specific means of addressing these impacts can and will be found
- Until that time, the District will continue to provide strong technical information supporting the feasibility of avoidance, minimization and mitigation of these impacts

After the FCZD presentation, Board members were divided into two breakout rooms to discuss if there are other questions the Board thinks the FCZD should consider, or refinements to the questions the FCZD has already developed.

Additional questions identified in the breakout rooms included:

- How would the facility operate given climate change predictions?
- Given climate change predictions, how will I-5 be affected?
- What are the results in reducing flood damage, but also the affects to aquatic species, when considering climate change predictions?

- What are the costs (construction and operation) if any of the assumptions change?
- What are the impacts from constructing and operating mitigation? For example, what impacts would there be to land use and natural resources?
- What changes to the assumptions are they making upfront to achieve mitigation (including avoidance and minimization)? How will you accomplish this, and how is that a change from the original proposal?
- Where are the points of certainty and uncertainty in terms of ability to achieve the stated goals, but also to implement the project?
- The list of general questions may change as the District gets feedback on the USACE NEPA public comments. There may be a different weight placed on the areas to mitigate based on public comments.
- Would the board like more interactive meetings to get into details via briefings with individual or collective board members?
- Wetland mitigation:
 - North Fork of Newaukum – WSDOT bank, would not be willing to give up any until the widening is completed (about 100 acres available).
 - The Hanaford Valley wetland mitigation bank is proposed for wetland impacts.
- Should the kinds of measures reflected in the ASRP also be incorporated in the FRE mitigation to look for comprehensive impacts?
- By March, can we make a decision on FRE permitting in conjunction with the decisions surrounding long-term ASRP activities?
- What types of conflict are there between the FRE proposal and the ASRP? (ex – There are fish restoration actions that overlap with the impoundment areas of the FRE)
- What are the opportunity costs of precluding actions to address environmental constraints?
- What does the FRE AMM look like both separate from and in combination with all other mitigation actions?
- What does the basin look like with all the activities that we are considering?
- Board members are interested in seeing both a technical evaluation and a programmatic view of mitigation.
- Board members discussed the advantage of being explicit in the roll out of different aspects of the strategy and figuring out how the ASRP relates to flood reduction actions, to allow for a better understanding of what an overall strategy would look like.
- Can we analyze precluded opportunity under a no-action alternative to see what the future would look like without the facility while taking a refined look at climate change and other foreseeable actions and what those might mean for the environment, habitat and species?
- How can we make sure that there are realistic aspirations on what might be done in a no-dam alternative to make the basin more resilient, so we have a better idea of what we are losing if we put in an FRE?
- What is the estimated commitment of resources and total costs for the FRE?

Below is a link to the presentation materials:

- [FCZD Flood Damage Reduction Project AMM](#)

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- The FCZD will seek to address the Board's questions regarding the FRE and AMM to help inform the Board's decision making.
- OCB staff will compile and circulate the comments submitted by agencies and tribes on the Draft NEPA EIS.

November 10 Public Meeting Debrief

OCB Director McNamara Doyle provided an overview of the November 10 public meeting, which included a presentation covering the overall strategy, the Governor's July 2020 letter to the Board, and current work that is underway. The meeting ended with an opportunity for audience Q&A and public comments. About 60 people participated in the meeting. An online survey was sent out directly following the meeting to the broader OCB email distribution list in order to better understand three main themes:

1. What do people think is the most important flooding problem?
2. What are people's greatest concerns about flooding in the basin?
3. What kinds of actions do people believe could be taken to help protect residents from future damage?

There were over 155 responses received on the online survey. Danger to human lives and public safety was the number one concern about flooding of respondents, followed closely by actions to reduce flood damage having negative effects on the river and ecosystems that fish, wildlife, and humans depend on, and economic damages to people's homes, personal belongings, and livelihoods.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- OCB staff will send out official notices for two additional public meetings scheduled for Wednesday, February 19, 2021 and Tuesday, March 9, 2021.
- OCB staff will compile responses to the November 10 public survey and distribute to the Board.

Local Flood Damage Reduction Projects

Scott Boettcher (Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority staff) reminded the Board of the Flood Authority's previous request to bring their 2021-23 local project submittals back to the Board after refinements to the prior scopes and budgets. The total cost of all projects has been reduced by \$1,272,796 (originally \$10,440,405).

The Flood Authority recommends that the Board include in their 2021-23 budget recommendations to:

- Fund all nine projects at \$9,167,609 (2021-23); Address future projects at future date (2023-25).

OR

- Fund all nine projects at \$9,167,609 (2021-23); Supplement request with cost to evaluate implementation of regional floodwater management/maintenance/capitalization approaches; Address remaining future projects at future date (2023-25).

Below is a link to the presentation materials:

- [Flood Authority Local Projects Update](#)

Key comments and discussion topics included:

- Board members supported the approach taken by the Flood Authority in ranking the 2021-23 local projects list and noted that they will not make recommendations on levels of funding for local flood damage reduction projects until their final 2021-23 budget recommendations are developed in March 2021.

Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP)

Jim Kramer (Facilitator) and Jay Gordon (Board member) summarized Jay's letter addressed to the Board, requesting a more in-depth briefing from Aquatic Species Restoration Plan (ASRP) staff and Steering Committee members on several questions affecting the priorities and constraints of the ASRP, including the scientific basis for large habitat corridors proposed in the ASRP, the need to strategically invest in the most important actions early in the implementation of the plan, and how other factors affect salmon in addition to freshwater habitat. The letter included a request that the Board submit a letter to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), the Quinault Indian Nation (QIN), and the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation requesting them to brief the Board on how harvest, hatcheries, predation and prey are being managed or could be managed in a manner that will support the success of the ASRP.

Below is a link to the presentation materials:

- [Comments regarding the ASRP Phase 1 Document](#)
- [Letter to Board on ASRP](#)

Key comments and discussion topics included:

- Board members supported the request to send a letter to WDFW, QIN, and Chehalis Tribe as highlighted in Jay's letter.
- Board members are interested in also receiving briefings and additional information on water supply, water quantity, and water quality issues, and how they relate to the ASRP.
- Board members are interested in understanding what to expect in the event of an Endangered Species Act listing and how that may play into recovery efforts or opportunities to access different sources of funding.
- Board members were reminded that the ASRP scenario cost estimates provided in November were draft cost estimates and the ASRP Steering Committee is working to develop refined estimates for future Board consideration.

BOARD DECISION: Board approval for sending a letter to WDFW, QIN, and the Chehalis Tribe requesting a briefing on how harvest, hatcheries, predation and prey are being managed or could be managed in a manner that will support the success of the ASRP.

Legislative Session Preparation

OCB Director Andrea McNamara Doyle provide a number of legislative updates including:

- **Budget update:** The November revenue forecast for general funds was released and was up more than \$630 million for 2019-21 and up over \$325 million for the 2021-23 biennium. This is a significant increase over earlier forecasts and will be used by OFM to develop the Governor's 2021-23 budget. However, this forecast is still \$2.4 billion lower than the pre-pandemic level. In addition, the state's current bond capacity for capital funding is being estimated at \$3.3 billion, but total agency bond requests total over \$6.6 billion.
- **Election update:** The Chehalis Basin will have three new legislators. In the 19th District, Jeff Wilson and Joel McEntire will be replacing Representative Takko and Representative Blake. In the 20th District, Peter Abbarno will be replacing Representative DeBolt. Representative Braun was elected by the Senate Republican caucus to be the new minority leader.
- **Legislative session update:** Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, there have been changes made to accommodate social distancing guidelines. There will be significantly fewer committee hearings, which will be held virtually. All testimony will be delivered via Zoom, which means fewer legislative proposals will be heard and have an opportunity to be passed. There will also be no in-person legislative meetings, all will be held over a virtual platform. These meetings do still fall under the PDC reportable activities.
- **CBB overall strategy for legislative session:** OCB has submitted a 2021-23 biennial funding request that aligns with previous funding requests. The initial budget request submitted to the legislature provides placeholder estimates for different budget elements with the understanding that the Board will develop a more detailed 2021-23 budget recommendation by March 2021. There is an understanding that the legislature will want to hear more about the Board's detailed funding request moving into session.

Key comments and discussion topics included:

- Board members acknowledged the importance of communicating with legislators and other key stakeholders that they are following through with what the Governor has asked them to do in response to his July 2020 letter.
- Board members highlighted the bipartisan and collaborative nature of the Chehalis Basin Strategy and the steps that have been taken to move both flood damage reduction and aquatic species restoration efforts forward, while acknowledging that recommendations on the approach for all elements of the overall strategy are still uncertain.
- Board members discussed the value in finding agreement on elements of the strategy that they agree should move forward for the near and mid-term while they continue to determine what is needed to make decisions on other long-term actions.

Below is a link to the presentation materials:

- [Updated Backgrounder Document](#)

BOARD DECISION: Board approved use of the "backgrounder" document for legislative and community outreach to highlight what the strategy is and what has been accomplished to date.

Next Steps and Closing

Jim Kramer (Facilitator) reminded the Board of their next regularly scheduled Board meeting on January 7, 2021.

Board Staff/Board Guests:

- Andrea McNamara Doyle, Department of Ecology, Director, Office of Chehalis Basin
- Anthony Waldrop, Grays Harbor Conservation District
- Arthur Grunbaum, Friends of Grays Harbor
- Betsy Dillin, Lewis County
- Brandon Parsons, American Rivers
- Brian Shay, City of Hoquiam
- Brian Stewart, Conservation Northwest
- Buddy Rose
- 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
- Cindy Hansen, Orca Network
- Col (Ret) Ronald Averill, City of Centralia, Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
- Colleen Granberg, Department of Natural Resources
- 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
- Erik Martin, Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District
- Frank Corbin
- Frank Gordon
- Gardner Johnston, InterFluve
- Heather Page, Anchor QEA
- Hope Rieden, Chehalis Tribe
- Izzy Zucker, Pyramid Communications
- Jeannie Beckett
- Jessica Helsley, Wild Salmon Center
- Jim Kramer, Kramer Consulting (Facilitator)
- Jim Waldo, Consultant to Flood Control Zone District
- Joenne McGerr
- John Gaffney, InterFluve
- Ken Ghalambor, Ross Strategic
- Kim Marcotte, Anchor QEA
- Kirsten Harma, Chehalis Basin Lead Entity
- Kris Koski, City of Aberdeen
- Kristen Godkin, InterFluve
- Lara McRea, Lewis County
- Larry Karpach, Watershed Science and Engineering

- Lee First, Twin Harbors Waterkeeper
- Lindsey Pollock
- Mara Zimmerman, Coast Salmon Partnership
- Mark Glyde, Quinault Indian nation
- Merri Martz, Anchor QEA
- Nicole Czarnomski, Department of Fish and Wildlife, ASRP Steering Committee
- Rona Spelleccy, HDR
- Ryan Walker, Forterra
- Scott Boettcher, Staff to Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority
- Sean Swope
- Steve Emrich
- Steven Lyle, Bucoda Council
- Tammy Domike, Citizens for a Clean Harbor
- Tom Gorman, Department of Natural Resources

Public Comment:

Brandon Parsons, American Rivers:

“American Rivers has been involved in the Chehalis Basin Strategy since its creating and have long supported the development of a an integrated plan to reduce basin wide flood damage and restore aquatic species habitat. We have always wanted to take a constructive approach, offering solutions when we identify issues and work collaboratively to address them. This approach has allowed us to develop other successful plans in the region, like in the Yakima Integrated Plan. In Chehalis, we have previously completed a report on local flood reduction alternatives and now sit on the implementation committee for both the ASRP and the local actions. This unique position has allowed us to see how the different components of the plan fit together in the larger context and could potentially complement each other. This is better-utilized tax payer dollars and improves the odds of implementation of both elements. For example, 70 percent of the land needed for the ASRP is on private property, yet the top priority for landowners is not necessarily habitat. It is localized flooding and erosion on their land. If we want to complete the habitat restoration components, we will have to address flooding and erosion simultaneously. Looking at these elements in greater detail may help us identify other opportunities to help land owners, help meet our habitat goals, but when we zoom in it could also help reduce catastrophic flooding impacts throughout the basin and to I-5 specifically. This type of multi-benefit approach is at the heart of the strategy, but it feels like over time the different programs have come further apart and we have a really interesting opportunity to see how they could potentially reconnect. We all know this will be a tough budget year, and the legislature understands multi-benefit projects. They have continuously funded programs like flood plains by design and support seems to be growing for this new flood hazard management plan that takes a multi-benefit approach to flood plain management throughout the state. The more that we can do to show how this strategy is accomplishing multiple things with limited resources and broad support from local interests, the more competitive we will be with state funding. Similarly, the federal government have begun to embrace this approach as well. They have new policies funning programs, like BRIC, opening up \$50 million annually to support projects that reduce flood risk but also improve natural function. This is a large amount of money that could be coming into the state and the Chehalis Basin. There are real opportunities

out there to better align these programs and if we do that and communicate that in an effective way, than we will be more competitive with this funding all the way around. We know that no action is not an option for us, so the Board has big decisions coming up this spring and there are major things right now and into the New Year. We see these opportunities and encourage the Board to look at where they might exist and look to how we may be able to integrate these efforts moving forward. American River and all the partners believes in the success and are honored to be part of this process and are committed to support any of the things mentioned.”