

KLICKITAT COUNTY LEAD ENTITY CITIZENS REVIEW COMMITTEE
Online Meeting via Zoom Conferencing
April 15, 2021
Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Meeting was called to order via Zoom at 7:05 PM. A quorum was established. Introductions were made.

Roll Call & Introductions

Present: Brian Beaulaurier, Will Bowdish, Kelly Clothier, Marc Harvey, John Jorgenson, Don Starkin, and Tim Thompson

Absent: Todd Collins, and Jay Letto,

Technical

Committee: Joe Zendt, Tova Tillinghast, Nate Ulrich, and Margaret Neuman

Staff: Coordinator Whitney Reynier

Guests: David Lindley (Yakama Nation Fisheries)

Handouts

- Agenda
- Meeting Minutes from 7/18/19, 4/30/20, 6/18/20, and 3/18/21
- 2021 Klickitat Lead Entity Strategy
- Summary of Strategy Updates

Agenda Review and Approval

There were no corrections or additions to the agenda.

Meeting Minutes Review and Approval

John Jorgenson made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from 7/18/19, 4/30/20, 6/18/20, and 3/18/21. The motion was seconded by Don Starkin. The motion passed. Coordinator Reynier asked for volunteers to electronically sign minutes. Brian Beaulaurier agreed to sign the minutes for 3/18/21. Marc Harvey agreed to sign the minutes for 7/18/19, 4/30/20, and 6/18/20.

Old Business

Committee Appointment Updates

Coordinator Reynier stated that all committee appointments have been finalized. All members should have received a letter of confirmation and a copy of the Resolution from the County. She has also sent out committee membership lists for both the Citizens Review Committee (CRC) and the Technical Committee (TC). There will potentially be two more CRC members--one representing the Eastern Klickitat Conservation District and one to fill the environmental interests seat, as Dan Lichtenwald has resigned.

Review Updates to Lead Entity Strategy

Coordinator Reynier explained that new updates were made since the last version was published in 2018. This is the guiding document for the Lead Entity and the two committees. It is a living document that is updated over time as we learn more information and we implement projects. It summarizes priorities for salmon recovery in our area and is a key reference for grant applications. Coordinator Reynier spent time with TC members to review lingering edits from years past and to bring this document up to a more completed state. All revisions have been reviewed and approved by the TC.

Coordinator Reynier reviewed the various changes and invited feedback. Pertaining to the Editorial section, Marc Harvey noticed that Margaret Neuman (TC) had made several changes and asked if those would be included on the final draft. Reynier explained that some edits that remain will be addressed later when more information is available.

In the Klickitat Watershed Matrix section, Tim Thompson had concerns regarding Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) funding eligibility on tribal lands. Coordinator Reynier responded that SRFB covers a broader geography than just Klickitat County and includes portions of Benton and Yakima counties, and part of the Yakama Reservation. Joe Zendt responded that several past projects have used SRFB funding to complete tasks on tribal land.

Regarding the Rock-Glade Watershed Matrix section, Tim Thompson asked if this pertained to the Rock Creek associated with the John Day pool. Joe Zendt confirmed that it was the same. Tim shared that he grew up in that area and he recalled as a child the creek flowed year-round, and now it dries up during warm months. He asked if there had been any studies as to why this is happening. Joe responded that it may be a combination of upper watershed changes in the meadows and impacts to lower watershed riparian areas. He acknowledged that the change of flow has affected the steelhead and native sucker runs, and recommended contacting Elaine Harvey at the Goldendale Yakama Nation office for more information.

Coordinator Reynier asked for feedback regarding the Quartz Creek conservation/habitat section and the TC's stance that headwater restoration should be prioritized. Joe Zendt agreed that although SRFB is reluctant to fund this type of project, from a technical point of view these actions are beneficial.

Community Support and Limitations

Coordinator Reynier asked for additional feedback on community support and limitations for different actions. Regarding conservation easements, acquisitions, and other actions to prevent future habitat degradation, Will Bowdish stated that these types of approaches seem to have high support, particularly easements.

Regarding large woody debris (LWD) in the White Salmon River, Tim Thompson questioned impact on rafters in the river. Reynier responded that coordination with rafters and rafting companies was included as a recommendation in the strategy.

Pertaining to developing off-channel watering sites for cattle to protect riparian habitat in the Rock-Glade Watershed, Will Bowdish replied that procuring help developing springs would garner a lot of community support in all affected areas, not just the Rock-Glade Watershed. Tim Thompson commented that cattle damage creeks and streams and asked if fencing would be utilized to protect riparian areas. Reynier replied that this would be determined on a project-by-project basis and Joe Zendt concurred.

Will Bowdish suggested that one method to protect water quality could be to develop a spring for livestock and run the overflow back to the stream. Joe Zendt indicated that this would also be a project-by-project situation. Tova Tillinghast commented that situational circumstances dictate what best options

are in each setting. Sometimes protecting a spring is really needed and sometimes developing and using a spring to protect riparian habitat is needed.

Pertaining to protecting groundwater inputs in the Rock-Glade Watershed, Don Starkin inquired if Joe Zendt knew of any assessments regarding groundwater usage in the Rock Creek Watershed. Joe replied that a previous assessment had been conducted and included an increase in the number of wells impacting the Northwest Rock Creek Watershed. Don Starkin asked if Department of Ecology was limiting wells there and Joe said they were aware of the actions in the area.

Future Strategy Updates

Coordinator Reynier shared that as SFRB provides new funding and priorities change, we may need to update the LE strategy. The Lead Entity may convene a meeting in late 2021 (to be announced) and all are welcome to participate.

New Business

2021 Project Presentations

Coordinator Reynier reviewed the SFRB grant round process. Today's presentations will be followed by a virtual site tour in May and a final project presentation and ranking process in June. Five total projects were presented to the CRC.

Upper Rattlesnake Creek Acquisition

Presented by: Nate Ulrich with Columbia Land Trust

Waterbody: Upper Rattlesnake Creek

Species: Primary Benefit – Summer and Winter Steelhead

Secondary Benefit – Coho

Possible/Low Benefit – Chinook

Cost: \$345,000

Project Summary: This project seeks to conserve salmon habitat along Rattlesnake Creek through property acquisition. SFRB funds would cover acquisition of 1.15 miles of shoreline and 83 acres of riparian habitat. Match funding would help pay for the rest of the parcel outside of the stream/riparian area. The total parcel acreage is around 480,000 acres, but they are considering not including one parcel upstream of the large falls (impassable to fish) in the SFRB request. These parcels are owned by SDS Lumber and located within larger Department of Natural Resources (DNR) ownership. Given the pending sale of SDS lands, this acquisition would likely be from future owners.

Discussion: John Jorgenson asked if pool rebuilding is part of habitat restoration. Answer: There would be no habitat restoration at this time. This funding request is for acquisition only. We are conserving the opportunity to do that in the future. Kelly Clothier wanted clarification about who the property was to be purchased from. Answer: The land is currently owned by SDS Lumber, however they have intent to sell, so there is uncertainty about who may own it in the future. Kelly Clothier commented that normally acquisition is to protect or preserve and this property needs habitat restoration, so are you coming back to SFRB for more funding in the future? Answer: It is very likely, however there is already quality habitat that we think we can improve because of land connectivity. We are focused primarily on acquisition. Kelly Clothier asked what the acreage was on the acquisition. Answer: Approximated 750 acres.

White Salmon River Conservation Assessment

Presented by: Tova Tillinghast with Underwood Conservation District

Waterbody: White Salmon River from the former Condit Dam Site upstream to Buck Creek

Species: Primary Benefit – Lower Columbia River Chinook, spring
Lower Columbia River Chinook, tule fall chinook
Lower Columbia River Chinook, bright fall chinook
Middle Columbia River Steelhead, summer run
Middle Columbia River Steelhead, winter run
Lower Columbia River Coho Salmon
Columbia River Chum Salmon
Columbia River Bull Trout
Secondary Benefit – Searun Cutthroat Trout
Mountain Whitefish
Rainbow Trout
Pacific and Brook Lamprey

Cost: \$75,249

Project Summary: This project was submitted as an alternate last year but was not funded. The purpose of the project is to explore acquisition/easement options and develop a conservation strategy to facilitate long-term protection and conservation of 200 acres of land owned by PacifiCorp along the White Salmon River upstream of Condit Dam. This planning phase is a necessary step before pursuing acquisition. The project area would include 5.4 miles of shoreline, including 2.2 miles along the White Salmon River and 0.5 miles along tributaries Mill and Buck Creeks. These lands face an uncertain future as PacifiCorp could divest, as they have done on land near Mill Creek.

Discussion: No discussion.

Lower Snyder Creek Restoration Design

Presented by: Margaret Neuman with Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group in partnership with David Lindley of Yakama Nation Fisheries

Waterbody: Snyder Creek at the confluence of the Klickitat River in the town of Klickitat

Species: Primary Benefit – Steelhead and Rainbow Trout

Cost: \$160,000

Project Summary: This project would develop a conceptual restoration design for the lower 1.1 miles of Snyder Creek, including the Klickitat Mill area and former log yard. There was a SRFB project in the early 2000's that provided fish passage through the site, but the creek is in a cement-lined channel with minimal riparian function. Even in its current state, Snyder Creek supports a higher percentage of outmigrating *O.mykiss* than any other Klickitat River tributary. Snyder Creek is a perennial stream; 93% of it stays wetted throughout the year. This is an opportunity to plan for restoration concurrent with other plans by the County to develop and revitalize the mill site, which is currently fenced off to the public. Involved landowners include Klickitat County, private landowners, and State Parks.

Discussion: Tim Thompson asked what type of contamination in the mill yard would need to be removed. Answer: Dave Lindley explain it could include any fuel or petro-chemical soil contamination. Department

of Ecology is supportive of this project and getting this site cleaned up. Kelly Clothier asked about removal of the fish ladder. Answer: Margaret responded that there are design alternatives that would call for less concrete around the creek and the creek could provide fish habitat rather than just fish passage. There would be at least three alternatives identified through the process and that process would be iterative with the community, landowners and the county. Will Bowdish asked for clarification regarding whether the project could focus just on the upstream private land and leave the existing weirs in place. Answer: The project area would include from the Klickitat River up 1.3 miles including the mill site, the former log-sort yard, and above. There are two different areas within the project site. One fairly large section has very little infrastructure; it needs some restoration but not intensive restoration. The second area involves 3,000 feet of stream in a concrete flume with adjacent asphalt that we will consider removing so we could reconfigure the channel. The design will include both approaches. Marc Harvey asked where the sponsors anticipate getting restoration funding. Answer: SRFB could be one source, and DOE and NOAA Restoration Funding are also potential sources. For this design phase the Yakama Nation is providing fiscal match via BPA funding and they will review this design too, which will keep that option open for potential funding.

Rattlesnake Gulch Restoration

Presented by: Margaret Neuman with Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group in partnership with David Lindley of Yakama Nation Fisheries

Waterbody: Rattlesnake Gulch, tributary to the Swale Creek Watershed in the Lower Klickitat Basin

Species: Primary Benefit -- Middle Columbia River Steelhead

Cost: \$110,720

Project Summary: This restoration project would remove three passage barriers on Rattlesnake Gulch, including two culverts and a small dam. The project would also improve floodplain connectivity by removing a small berm and improve habitat by adding wood. This project would support other Swale Creek restoration projects underway by Yakama Nation by connecting additional off-channel tributary habitat. The project was submitted for funding last year for design but was not funded. Since last year, Yakama Nation has worked with a firm to develop a conceptual level design. The most cost-effective design is to install two single span, pre-cast bridges, remove the dam, remove the berm, and add wood.

Discussion: Kelly Clothier asked if this project would be ahead of the Yakama Nation work on the mainstream Swale Creek. Answer: It could potentially be at the same time. Tim Thompson asked besides steelhead what other types of fish will benefit from this project. Answer: Primarily steelhead but Coho also may venture up into this territory. Tim Thompson suggested that removal of the railroad ties would be beneficial because they are treated with some kind of damaging chemicals that affect fish and wildlife. Answer: There would be residual creosote and those human additions could be removed, and excavation of the bank would be beneficial. Tim asked if removal of the berm would also affect the flow of the stream. Answer: It would reduce the constriction on it where there is actually flood plain on the right bank making it a little bit wider and enhancing pools. Kelly Clothier asked about possible trestle removal. Answer: State Parks has stated they would remove trestle next year. It is not a passage barrier although abutments are constricting the creek. The State has funds for removal and plans to work on the trail in that area, however the timeline keeps changing.

Pine Creek Fish Passage

Presented by: Whitney Reynier for Loren Meagher with Eastern Klickitat Conservation District

Waterbody: Pine Creek at the confluence of the Columbia River

Species: Primary Benefit – Chinook Salmon
Coho Salmon
Steelhead
Rainbow Trout

Cost: \$166,000

Project Summary: The project intends to update a conceptual design to provide fish passage at the Pine Creek mouth, which currently blocks 4.5 miles of critical habitat. There is interest from the community and from the Washington State Department of Transportation. The project will review previous conceptual design work, conduct a site assessment including subsurface analysis, and develop a conceptual design and alternatives analysis. They would then seek funding for additional design development and construction.

Discussion: Marc Harvey asked Joe Zendt if there had been any discussion about clearing blockage from existing culverts. Answer: Indefinite. Tim Thompson asked if there was a date set for the beginning of this project. Answer: It would not start until this Fall. No timeline available yet.

Coordinator Reynier thanked all project sponsors for their presentations. CRC members were asked to provide any additional thoughts or comments on a Googlesheet within the next week.

Funding

Preliminary SFRB requests from all projects total \$857,000. We currently believe the Lead Entity will have \$500,000 from Mid-Columbia and \$97,500 from Lower Columbia for a total of \$597,500. However, there are stimulus funds circulating down from the federal and state level. We will not know the final budget until the June SFRB meeting. We might get more funding than expected this year, as there could be as much as \$5-\$15 million extra available for SFRB for the next biennium.

Committee Member Roundtable

Tim Thompson asked for clarification on how project applications were approved and if this committee makes the final decisions on project approval. Reynier explained sponsors will present their final projects at the next meeting, and the committee will evaluate and rank each project based on a variety of criteria. Based on that ranking and opinion, you will decide which projects will advance and which will be designated alternates. It is encouraged for sponsors to submit alternate projects in the event additional funding becomes available and they would be eligible from prior approval by the committee.

Public Comment

Tova Tillinghast expressed her thanks for all the time volunteered by the committee members and extended a welcome to the new members.

Next Meetings

- Virtual Site Tour: May 10th, 2021 via Zoom – 8:00 AM (optional)
- Final Project Presentations and Ranking: June 17th, 2021 via Zoom – 6:00 PM* (Note early start time)

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Adjournment

Brian Beaulaurier made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Marc Harvey. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 9:18 PM.



CRC Member



Date