



## WRIA 6 Salmon Recovery Technical & Citizen Committee Meeting

March 15, 2023

**Member Participants:** Jessica Côté (Blue Coast Engineering), Tom Vos (SWS), Doug Kelly (Citizen), Todd Zackey (Tulalip, Co-Chair), Eric Mickelson, Barbara Brock (Citizen, Co-Chair), Fred Kiga, Scott Chaplin, Lee Chavez, Ashley Kees (WDFW), Matthew Lander (ICPW), Renee Zavas Silva (ICCAO), Tom Vos, James Watson (WICD) **Others:** Clea Barenburg (LE Coordinator), Jessica Reed (Watershed Planner IC DNR), Michala Milewski (ICDNR), Kurt Schlimme (WCLT), Public commentor

### Introductions & Presentations

2:03PM – Meeting is called to order and introductions begin

Scott Chaplin motions to approve minutes, Lee Chavez seconds, committee votes to pass minutes

-Clea reports that prescore meeting will be on April 24<sup>th</sup>, Salmon Recovery conference will be the week before. Other projects from last year check – in – Keystone is still on track and up to date; Culvert proposals for Race Lagoon are in process, Recent site visit with engineers designing culvert, extra funding for Camano tidegate proposal subcommittee meeting time proposed and look for invitation.

-Eric Mickelson agrees to go first on project presentation – Eric introduces Middle Crescent Harbor Creek Feasibility

- Goal of the project is to restore fish access, a natural sinuous alignment, and instream structure to more than 5,000 LF of stream channel upstream of recently completed pocket estuary and stream restoration projects
- Project starts at Crescent Harbor Rd, conceptual design to final design often does not require much change
- Crescent Harbor Salt Marsh – completed in 2009 w/ SRFB and Navy Funding; restored tidal inundation to 206 acres pocket estuary and reporting now of juvenile salmon use.
- Lower Crescent Harbor Creek – completed in 2021 w/ SRFB and Navy Funding; restored a natural sinuous alignment and instream complexity, juvenile salmon use up to culvert reported.
- Middle Crescent Harbor Creek – WRIA 6 Salmon Priority Area 2; property acquired in 2022 by WCLT (156 acres total), numerous drainage ditches from surrounding properties, ponded wetlands, barrier culvert at W Crescent Harbor Rd, part of one of the larger watersheds on Whidbey, removal of barrier would allow fish passage. Stream fed by wetland and does go dry seasonally.
- Scope- surveys and topo Focus on landowner outreach and owner is supportive of the project, Eric's team plans to reach out to neighbors about questions and concerns surrounding the project, habitat survey, alternatives analysis, hydro analysis, and BE.
- Deliverables include; wetland delineation, preliminary channel design, conceptual culvert design, and design report.
- Total project budget is 258,538 and RCO Request is 213,538
- James Watson relates that a project in Crescent Creek is being worked on by WICD, James has clipped all of the parcels for outreach looking at water quality, James relates that exchanging info would be beneficial. Clea relates that area has frequently been sampled by water quality

team, data may be of use to Eric and his team and WICD. Matthew Lander relates that if the property is acquired, it may be helpful to evaluate surrounding properties.

- Clea relates that cognito form is open to submit comments and concerns for all projects and can be used for sending ranking.

-Matthew introduces Deer Creek Mouth presentation – Deer Creek Mouth project is located south of Clinton ferry dock on private property

- Problem – private system is fish barrier, water surface drop bulkhead, stream pinch point due to house foundation, modified stream gradient, hydraulically undersized
- Proposed solution – remove water surface drop at the bulkhead, widen the mouth stream at the bulkhead, regrade the vertical alignment of the stream to a more natural slope, increase access for juvenile coho and sea-run cutthroat into the Deer Creek Watershed, do not increase flood risk at properties
- Alternative not proposed – purchase parcel and install a full restoration project including riparian vegetation and improvement to the stream buffer
- Proposed phase grant request – feasibility study to determine whether a fish barrier can be removed without removing homes or septic systems: preliminary design phase and construction phase only
- Project challenges – site is developed, project will require compromise between stakeholders and property owners, project will likely require walls to protect existing homes, project is within a FEMA coastal flood zone
- Upstream habitat analysis – section between Humphrey road and Columbia beach drive – priority area 2 – habitat will only be gained if another culvert is improved
  - Frederick asks if there is a public easement between the two houses – Matthew relates that it is private property
  - Todd Zackey asks if outreach has been done to home owners – Matthew hopes to present the project as a flood resilience project, Todd relates that buy-in from owners is very important to RCO; cooperation early on is very important. Example of projects that failed without owner agreements.
  - Eric asks if outlet elevation would be reduced by 2 feet – Matthew relates that there was a hydraulic report done. Eric asks what impact the slope would have on fish passage; Matthew relates that once bulkhead is opened up, stream will reroute
  - Matthew relates this is not a full restoration and that there must be a discussion with all stakeholders to create a successful project; there is risk with any project but we can't require home removal.
  - Tom Vos reminds of a bridge/box culvert – Matthew relates that construction easement will be needed, culvert will be expanded.

-Matthew introduces Humphrey Road culvert 281 presentation – Fish passage culvert 3<sup>rd</sup> most downstream barrier on this Deer/Orr creek just up from the Mouth project

- Problem – 12-15 foot drop from culvert to plunge pool with till material at the base. Replace the barrier with a passable structure to allow stream to transition to natural gradient.

- Two concepts to be evaluated 19 foot culvert or larger bridge structure. Steep ravine and slope are challenges as well as material at base.
- Proposed solution –to a more natural slope, increase access for coho and sea-run cutthroat into the Deer Creek Watershed in priority area 2. The previous culvert closest to the mouth is planned for replacement using clean water utility funding.
- Conceptual design phase: Survey, Geo tech investigation and report, Cultural resources report, Environmental site conditions assessment, and a design/feasibility report. Ask 150, 000 for project.
- Related projects downstream barrier downstream followed by private barrier which is previous proposal. Upstream culvert on transportation plan at Anderson Rd. There are 7 upstream barriers in this watershed. Starts at Deer Lake and out to Mouth proposal. WDFW reports cutthroat, bass and rainbow trout in Deer Lake.
- Barbara asks about planting of fish in Deer lake. Annual planning of trout confirmed by Ashley. James said last planting April 2022 with Rainbow trout.
- Eric asked about pipe in photos and Matt said this culvert is not a priority for PW replacement in near future. Anderson culvert is a priority. Eric asks about gradient. Matt can research this information. Matt reports dynamic ravine with slides and changes in drops yearly. Rearing and spawning habitat and stream but gradient restricting. Juvenile salmon found south of the creek. The other creek to the South was named Zook creek in some reports and small fish reported there.
- Todd Zackey says too steep for juvenile Chinook. 2 to 3 percent gradient for small 1-2 inch fish. Won't make it if too steep or too fast.

-Matthew introduces N Penn Cove Passage Culvert 3345 design presentation – Deer Creek Mouth project is located south of Clinton ferry dock on private property

- Proposal – presented last year by SFEG and this site a priority in Area 2.
- Problem – culvert partial barrier to fish passage and not on a plan for replacement by ICPW. This is the most downstream culvert in this watershed. The basin is large and 564 acres.
- Proposed Solution- replace culvert with up to 19' culvert. No slope culvert design project. The parcel to the North is owned by WDFW and hope to do restoration work and remove invasive species. Hope to coordinate with WDFW.
- Design only project- survey, Geotech report, cultural resource, ESA, supporting permit documents, conceptual plan and basis for design and create a permit ready plan set.
- Project in a FEMA flood zone, more expensive, speed of road 35 mph extra road safety expenses. Elevation of the road surface if design for MHHW plus 2 feet would require modifying the road. Don't know if they need to raise the intersection yet.
- Upstream habitat from priority area 2 report. Some naming issues, some upstream barriers. One county barrier upstream.

- Ask for design only is 290,000. Asked Herrera Consulting to put together proposal costs.
- Todd asked Herrera work and they will not be doing the Geotech work. They can come in to help with final touches on grant application if needed. There is no capital budget approved for this site.
- Matt would have to get the match. Todd says limited access with all the wood. Todd said need for upstream culvert and comment or propose plan for upstream beneficial. Doing restoration with climate change levels may be a good way to argue the point of the project. Project was not approved last year. Matt said this was reported as a priority and does not this this is connected to Hasty Lake.
- Scott as a citizen asked questions on why there is not more interest in the other culvert that drains wetland/swamp draining into Penn Cove that would connect the wetland stream to the estuary. Why is the stream not on the map that would be good for salmon? Matt shared his screen to identify stream. Barbara confirms culvert 3346 as the culvert and she has had interest in that stream as well. Scott reports the stream can have a lot of water at different times of the year. Before the road fish could use the stream. Matt reports that the wetlands are so large and tidally influenced and would require a very large structure to connect. Barbara asks about what kind of fish habitat. SFEG prioritizes this stream in report too. Todd thinks it would be good chinook or coho habitat if connected and thinks something could be done to private crossing. Matt said probably more habitat. Todd said look at this as a next year project and review SFEG report.
- Matt wants to know what to design to. Does it need to be MHHW +2. He does not want to design twice. The 15' wide culvert could go to 18 or 19 if the group supports that. He does not want stakeholders to ask for something different after they do the design and he wants feedback now. Todd said bigger if not overly cost prohibitive. He will always say go bigger for fish and flow and more natural situations.
- Clea talks about feedback from last year shared with Public Works and this area prioritized in fish passage report and shared snapshot for report again.
- Scott wants public works to provide more funding to fix the culvert and make it better for fish and it should be moved up the list for culvert priority replacements. Cost efficient to do work in the same area at the same time and he would suggest looking at the work at the same time as this project and bridges are more expensive. Matt reports that the road needs to be realigned and move more inland farther to the west. Clea will suggest SWQ team look at the site for water quality. Scott thanks committee for time.

-Next steps for ranking and timeline discussed. Prescores due mid-April and then the 24th we will discuss Pre scores. Chance for open floor discussion and all the final details. Final closed meeting from sponsors in May 17th with final ranking for WRIA6. If POC projects if they have SRTCC support or not needs to be discussed. March 31st RCO comments will be reported. Total allocation around 800,000 leftover and around 200,000 for this year. Clea started the conversation with Whidbey Basin group for possible sharing of funds if we do not move forward with all of our projects. Numbers are not set and changes may come with Large cap. Clea

learning history of funding and distribution. Clea requests input on past experiences from group and has asked previous LE's. Question if we will lose funding. Money may need to go to Whidbey basin and river projects and could be a shared project. Matt said they would have asked for more, like Anderson, but feedback was not positive. Phase two projects were not presented in this round, as this is usually a smaller funding year. Barbara hopes sharing can be reciprocated at some point. Mathew reports to culverts for AOV grant and the Habitat SIL grants. Habitat SIL Swantown and we looked at this before but limited options. Matt reports shovel ready projects would be Chapman Creek/Upper culvert project.

-Mathew and Eric request input and questions from group as soon as possible. Todd said we will bring information to the group on funding as we know more. Clea reports mini grants are giving her a new challenge where she has had meetings and gathering information on next steps and it looks like she will have to re-write contracts as management has changed. All project links are listed in emails and agendas to get information needed for ranking.

-Barbara has concerns with Kristopherson Creek. She wants ICPW to know that there is undercutting happening and both ends of the box culvert are showing erosion. Matt reports this was a learning project. Mathew says they will look at it again after looking last time Barbara mentioned a concern. Turtles found there nonnative.

Meeting adjourned a little after 4pm

### **.Information and updates**

- Camano Country Club update from meeting March 30th

If you would like to review documents associated with this project, or watch the presentation that was done for the subcommittee group on then please use this link to the snapshot- Snapshot of Camano CC Tidegate Feasibility and Preliminary Design <https://secure.rco.wa.gov/prism/search/projectsnapshot.aspx?ProjectNumber=18-1382>