



Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board – June Meeting Notes

Date: June 21, 2022

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Location: Virtual Meeting

Summary: Formal Actions/Decisions

Item	Formal Action
Meeting notes from May 17, 2022	Approved
Cost Increase Requests for King Creek and Caribou Creek	Approved

Summary: Follow-up Actions

Item	Follow-up
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for NOAA Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal Grant Program	Triangle will work with the Board to schedule a subcommittee to discuss support opportunities or a possible submittal package to the grant program.

Welcome/Introductions/Agenda Review: Triangle Facilitator, Joy Juelson, called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. Alex Sweetser, Triangle Associates, facilitated introductions with FBRB members and staff. A quorum was present.

Public Comment: No public comments were received.

Old Business: The meeting notes for the FBRB May 2022 meeting were reviewed by the facilitator. A motion was made to approve May 2022 the meeting summary. The motion was approved and there were no objections.

Decision: Board approved the Board May 2022 Meeting Notes.

General Updates:

Board staffing update

Chair Tom Jameson, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) explained that Matt Curtis is now the acting Protection Division Manager at WDFW and will no longer attend Board meetings. Christy Rains, WDFW, accepted the offer to be the acting Scoping Manager. In this role, she will manage the Technical Review Team (TRT) and WDFW's scoping biologists and will serve as the WDFW alternate for the Board. She has been a section manager for the last five years and has been working with the Board since the start of its grant program.

Introduce Fish Passage Strategist

Chair Jameson announced that Dr. Jane Atha was hired by WDFW to be the Fish Passage Strategist and she introduced herself to the Board. Before accepting the position, she worked in the WDFW Science Division. There, she led the effort to develop a climate tool for designers to determine the width of barrier corrections, led studies assessing how well installers are implementing projects and meeting permit requirements, and led culvert effectiveness monitoring studies.

Chair Jameson explained that the supplemental budget to hire the Strategist included funds for contract support to develop the strategy. The Request for Proposals (RFP) was originally written in March 2022 and is being updated to better match the support Dr. Atha needs. The RFP is anticipated to be released in this summer.

Wild Salmon Center (WSC): Overview of potential salmon recovery funding opportunities from Infrastructure Act

Chair Jameson explained the WSC drafted an *Overview of potential salmon recovery funding opportunities from Infrastructure Act* (see meeting materials), which summarizes each of the funding opportunities included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL).

The contact lead for this document is Jess Helsley, WSC, and she can be reached at jhelsley@wildsalmoncenter.org.

Review FBRB Bylaws

Joy Juelson, facilitator, explained this review topic was postponed giving Board members more time to review the FBRB Bylaws. It will be brought to a future Board meeting for potential updates.

Funding Solutions for Anticipated Construction Cost Increase Requests

Report out on Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) retreat

Marc Duboiski, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) explained that each year the SRFB allocates \$500k for cost increases. Anticipating an increase in cost increase requests, the SRFB added \$250k to this amount in March and an additional \$250k in June for a total of \$1m. Similar to the Board, additional funds can be provided for increases under \$100k. Any request above this amount goes through the next grant round.

In the last legislative session, SRFB received \$75m of supplemental funds, which must be obligated by December 1, 2022. These funds were put into a regional allocation system where each Region received approximately \$5m except for the Columbia and Puget Sound, which got \$9.5m and \$14.3m respectively.

Board Questions and Discussion

- In response to a question from Jeannie Abbott, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO), Marc explained cost increase requests to SRFB from LE Ranked Lists are eligible for cost increase funds if the project received SRFB money.
- In response to a question from Casey Baldwin, Colville Tribes, on if the FBRB could have funds set aside for cost increase requests, Dave Caudill, RCO, explained there are discussions within RCO about flexibility in how funds get managed.
- John Foltz, Council of Regions, expressed support in finding operational flexibility for the Board for cost increase requests.

- Chair Jameson explained the Board is funded through a capital budget process, which means the State takes out loans for the amount needed, which makes it more difficult to provide funds for cost increase requests.
- Chair Jameson explained there were 34 cost increase requests in the last biennium with 13 over \$100k. The Board funds these requests through returned funds from projects that were under budget. Any remaining funds goes to alternates.

Project and Policy Issues / Opportunities

National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program updates

Joy Juelson, facilitator, gave an overview of the FBRB outreach letter on the *National Culvert Removal, Replacement, and Restoration Grant Program*, which the Board reviewed and agreed to distribute through the FBRB distribution list at the May 2022 FBRB meeting. This letter contains a high-level summary and bill language for the grant program. Chair Jameson explained the intent of this letter was to provide the Board's partners the known information on the grant program to prepare them for the release of the RFP later this year.

Joy Juelson reviewed a separate letter sent to United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) by state agencies and the Governor. Chair Jameson explained the intention of this letter was to request the option to bundle projects since it can be costly and time intensive to apply to federal programs. Bundling projects would ease the burden on potential applicants among other benefits.

Highway Grant Programs: Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for Federal Funds for Fish Passage

Chair Jameson noted this funding opportunity was released on June 14, 2022 with a submittal deadline of August 15, 2022. A synopsis of the funding opportunity and instructions for applicants was provided to the Board, which were included in the meeting materials.

Chair Jameson expressed concern about the short turnaround for applications given agencies do not have dedicated grant writers and have limited funds to hire one. He requested a subgroup meet to consider if the Board should submit an application with a bundle of FBRB projects. He noted there could be less competition this year given the short notice. However, the Board would need to coordinate with sponsors to make sure projects are not submitted twice.

Board Questions and Discussion

- Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities, expressed support for a subgroup meeting even if the Board does not apply this year.
- Erik Neatherlin, GSRO, requested state agencies use their resources to provide support for applications from cities and counties given the short timeline. He noted Washington is well positioned to receive funds from this grant program because Washington Congressional members helped to write the bill language.
- Casey Baldwin, Colville Tribes, noted that federal funds for projects on the 2023-2025 list could free up legislative funding for the Board to move down the list or to aid with cost overruns from rising construction prices.
- John Foltz, Council of Regions, requested to be on the NOFO subgroup. He said if the State is going to support grant writing, they will also need to support project implementation. He

suggested exploring the option to receive Operational funding from the state legislature to leverage federal funds and support project implementation.

- Paul Wagner, WSDOT, expressed support for the meeting and recommended the NOFO subgroup focus on projects from the FBRB Project List that should apply for federal funding. He also expressed support in the option of the Board submitting an application for a project bundle.

Action Item: Triangle will work with the Board to schedule a subcommittee to discuss support opportunities or a possible submittal package to the grant program.

Cost Increase Request: King Creek (Graves)

The Cost Increase Subcommittee reviewed the cost increase request for King Creek (see meeting materials) and presented their recommendation to fund the request.

- John Foltz explained the request maintained the same design and would be straight forward to implement.
- Chair Jameson noted the percentage of the request is high, but the overall project costs for this removal are far below the average of similar projects from cities and counties.
- Dave Collins, WDFW, explained there was significant work done on the ground to get landowner support for this project.

A motion was made to approve King Creek cost increase request. The motion was approved and there were no objections.

Decision: Board approved King Creek cost increase request.

Cost Increase Request: Caribou Creek (Two Barriers)

The subgroup reviewed the cost increase request for Caribou Creek (see meeting materials) and presented their recommendation to fund the request.

- Chair Jameson explained this project is in a priority watershed and supports the delisting of steelhead by increasing their available spawning and rearing habitat within the watershed. He noted there is \$1.2m left for 2019-2021 cost increase requests with about \$1.1m remaining after the Board approved the King Creek cost increase request.
- John Foltz explained the subcommittee went through the cost increase criteria, which this request met. He appreciated the due diligence of the sponsor for their communication and attempts to sequence due to rising costs of construction materials.
- Dave Caudill, RCO, noted there would be about \$885,000 of unobligated funds remaining for the 2019-2021 biennium if this request is approved.
- Dave Collins noted this project consists of two removals and there is a great working relationship between WDFW and the landowners. In addition to fish benefits, this project would provide irrigation benefits.

A motion was made to approve Caribou Creek cost increase request. The motion was approved and there were no objections.

Decision: Board approved Caribou Creek cost increase request.

Update on FBRB 2023-2025 Grant Round

2021-2023 FBRB project updates

Dave Caudill, RCO, explained the sponsors for 2021-2023 are preparing for construction in the coming months. There were a couple of cost increase requests, but no funds were available, and the sponsors are seeking funds elsewhere.

Status update for the FBRB 2023-2025 grant round

Christy Rains, WDFW, shared that the TRT is still scoring projects. They anticipate concluding their scoring by the end of July so that a ranked list can be presented to the Board at the August 2022 meeting. In total, there are 104 applications for 160 barriers. The total is approximately \$80m, which is the largest funding request the Board has received.

Discuss Upcoming Opportunities for Engagement

Next steps for planning in-person Board meeting this fall

Joy Juelson, facilitator, noted the in-person and field tour Board meeting will be held between September 28–29, 2022. The first day will likely be an all-day hybrid Board meeting facilitated by Triangle and the second day will be dedicated to a half day tour. John Foltz stated the tour will likely be focused on Mill Creek in Walla Walla, which is a priority watershed.

Washington Fish Barrier Removal: Culvert Optimization Workshop on June 22

Chair Jameson noted economists from the University of Washington will be holding an online workshop on a culvert optimization tool on June 22, 2022. A registration link was provided to meeting attendees.

Inventory and Assessment and Habitat Survey and Prioritization Trainings from June 22-23

Chair Jameson and Christy Rains shared there is an Inventory and Assessment training on June 22, 2022 and a Habitat Survey and Prioritization training on June 23, 2022. Those interested in attending future trainings can email FishPassageTraining@dfw.wa.gov.

Adjourn: The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, July 19, 2022 – online meeting

ATTENDANCE

Board Members/Alternates:

Axel Swanson, Washington State Association of Counties	Jeannie Abbott, GSRO
Carl Schroeder, Association of Washington Cities	John Foltz, Council of Regions, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (SRSRB)
Casey Baldwin, The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	Paul Wagner, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)
Chair Thomas Jameson, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)	Susan Kanzler, WSDOT
Christy Rains, WDFW	Terra Rentz, Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
Erik Neatherlin, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO)	

WDFW, RCO Staff and Triangle Facilitation Team:

Casey Costello, WDFW	Julie Groebelny, WDFW
Cassandra Weekes, WDFW	Laura Till, WDFW
Daniel Barrett, WDFW	Dave Caudill, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)
David Collins, WDFW	Marc Duboiski, RCO
Gabrielle Stilwater, WDFW	Alex Sweetser, Facilitation Support
Gina Piazza, WDFW	Joy Juelson, Facilitation Support
Jane Atha, WDFW	

Others observing:

Bryan Maloney	Don Gourlie	Jim Heytvelt
Cheryl Baumann	Evan Lewis	Kevin Long
David Varner	Harvey Coffman	Steve Helvey
Damiano Seghetti	Jamie Sloan	Tracy Gilson
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