



Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District

Erik P. Martin, P.E., District Administrator

*351 NW North St
Chehalis, WA 98532-1900*

Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District Advisory Committee Regular Meeting Minutes

Location: Lewis County Commissioners Hearing Room, 2nd floor of the Historic Courthouse, 351 NW North St., Chehalis WA 98532
Meeting Date: Thursday, October 13, 2022
Meeting Time: 8:00 am

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Frank Corbin at 8:03 a.m., Thursday, October 13, 2022. Those in attendance were:

Erik Martin	Chehalis River Basin FCZD Administrator
Lara McRea	Interim Clerk, Board of Supervisors
Matt Dillin	Project Manager, Chehalis River Basin FCZD
Dan Maughan	Chehalis River Basin FCZD Adv Committee Member
David Fenn	Chehalis River Basin FCZD Adv Committee Member
Frank Corbin	Chehalis River Basin FDZD Adv Committee Member
Maureen Harkcom	Chehalis River Basin FCZD Adv Committee Member
Steve Grega	Chehalis River Basin FCZD Adv Committee Member
Dave Muller	Chehalis River Basin FCZD Adv Committee Member
Edna Fund	Office of the Chehalis Basin board member
J. Vander Stoep	Office of the Chehalis Basin board member

Absent:

Jason Humphrey	Chehalis River Basin FCZD Adv Committee Member
John Henriksen	Chehalis River Basin FCZD Adv Committee Member
Charles Coddington	Chehalis River Basin FCZD Adv Committee Member

Approval of Minutes for September 10, 2022

Dan made a motion to approve the minutes of September 10, 2022. Steve seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Project update

Matt reported that the district is investigating minimization alignments because the original project alignment was impacting a very sensitive cultural resource. The district is looking at upstream and downstream locations that would minimize the impact to this cultural resource. The new alignments have more space which provides the opportunity to look at improving the fish passage during the construction phase of the



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project. Matt said the district has had a couple of meetings with Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) about the open channel fish passage during construction and are getting good feedback from them on the concepts that the district is laying out.

He also said the district is working through the section 106 process, talking with the tribes and understanding the minimization efforts that are meaningful to them. He said one concern is the visual impact of the structure.

Matt discussed three important pieces of information that are being looked at for the minimization alignments: geotechnical, tribal input and construction phase open channel fish passage. He said those three elements are starting to come together. November is the target date to really get that information in and analyzed to see which one of the minimization alignments is going to be more appropriate to move forward with. Once one is picked, the district will update all of the documents that were completed for the draft EIS. March will be the target date to re-submit, and then the final EIS process will start. He also said the new alignments are roughly within 1000 feet of the old site, upstream and downstream and that there are limitations to how far the water retention facility can be moved due to topographic and hydrologic constraints.

Matt said the next biennium will be starting in July of 2023, and that the budget discussions have started at the Office of Chehalis Basin (OCB) board level. All of the different groups in the overall Chehalis Basin Strategy are putting together their budget needs for the next two years. All the groups are starting to grow and the budget needs have grown. Therefore, the funding requests are much larger than the initial projected budget so there will be a lot of discussion and negotiation at the board level over funding amounts.

Matt said the Army Corps has told the district before they finished their FEIS, they will require that the Endangered Species Act (ESA) consultation be completed with Nation Marine Fisheries Services (NMFS) and US Fish and Wildlife. The ESA consultation will require more detail than what has been needed for the SEPA and NEPA so far. For instance NMFS will want more detail regarding the function of the fish passage structure which will require additional hydraulic modeling and further design.

Matt said he is anticipating that conversation with NMFS will progress over the next two years and that the largest part of the district's biennium budget will be advancing the design to answering questions for the ESA consultation. Matt said the other thing the district is anticipating is that when the EIS's come out, there's going to be a decision point for the district supervisors and the OCB board whether to move this project into permitting. In order to make an informed decision in the next biennium, decision makers will need a more detailed cost estimate and schedule for the project. To support the development of a more detailed cost estimate and project schedule, more geotechnical data is needed to advance the foundation design.

Matt said for the mitigation portion of the project, the district is reaching out to landowners and refining the mitigation plan. Kleinschmidt has done a great job of highlighting what the mitigation needs are and the opportunities for mitigation in the basin. Their next step is to go into more detail at specific sites. Developing up to 30% level of design at each site. To accomplish this, the district needs to be more active in reaching out to landowners and getting their permission to go on their properties to access the river and take measurements.

As part of the mitigation plan, Kleinschmidt has identified fish passage culverts located on county roads that could be replaced to open up habitat that is current inaccessible to fish. Matt said the next step is making phone calls to key landowners whose property is upstream or downstream of these culverts. In order to advance the design on these projects, the district would need permission to be on the landowner's property to survey the stream slope roughly 300 feet upstream and downstream of the culvert. He further discussed the importance of demonstrating good community support for these types of projects to the review agencies.



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Dave noted that a group stopped on Ceres Hill Rd which is on his property and said the discussion with them was disappointing. The group had been looking at a number of properties, including one of his properties where they were finding cold water seeps coming into the river. He also noted there is a problem with the oxygen levels in those seeps.

Matt said that it was actually the ASRP group that came up to Dave's property and that the discussion was led by Kleinschmidt. The district was hoping the hyporheic demonstration project would be another tool that could be used for restoration or mitigation for the project. The hyporheic project would create a cold water refuge for fish in the summer but Kleinschmidt found that the cold water seeps that were identified have low dissolved oxygen (DO). Therefore, a pocket created using that cold water seep would also be low in DO pocket, which wouldn't be good fish habitat.

Matt said the good thing is that the hyporheic project was not in the mitigation plan that was developed and submitted.

Dan said he had heard the land committee was asking for a lot of money and couldn't see why or where they would spend it as the work they are doing was supposed to be done by now.

J. noted that OCB doesn't have a budget figure yet from the land committee.

J. discussed the proposed Mellon St. bypass project and said it is estimated to be a \$400 million plan. He noted it would lower the Chehalis River by about two feet near Centralia, which is about what the water retention facility does. Except the water retention facility lowers the flood waters all the way from Pe Ell down to Cosmopolis.

J. discussed the budget more and said the Quinault Indian Nation supports all of the funding requests.

Edna discussed the recent online survey that the OCB sponsored recently that was developed by the land committee. She noted the results were not as good as they had hoped for. Lewis and Grays Harbor Counties have approximately 160,000 people combined and 248 people responded to all the questions and about 600 people answered at least one question. When it came to percentages, the focus was a lot less about protecting property and homes.

Office of the Chehalis Basin update

Edna Fund noted that OCB has a lot of budget requests and big decisions have to be made. She discussed the Hoquiam project as being a potential separate category. If that project is funded there wouldn't be enough money left to fund the other flood projects.

J. shared the statement that Supervisor Grose made in a meeting a few weeks prior:

Quote from Supervisor Grose at the September 28, 2022 Chehalis River Basin Flood Control Zone District meeting:

Our communities and families in this area have been subjected to terrible flooding. The flood damage has gotten worse and, in the last few decades the flood levels have gotten higher and the damages have gotten worse. We've had a century of failed efforts to solve this issue until this process. The current Chehalis Basin Process including the work of the Flood Control Zone District is the farthest anyone has gone down this road. The work by the district has paved the way. The progress has happened by a team effort involving a really positive combination of players including the Army Corps, the Governor, local legislators,



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state agencies, tribal and local leaders and others. We've taken a huge step to try and make this project happen and it is important to keep going. It's hard for people to understand the vastness of the project. It is a project that involves many facets and a large number of organizations, agencies, tribes, and government processes. But the benefits of reducing catastrophic flood damage far outweigh the costs and justify the time to get this done.

Announcements

No announcements.

Adjournment

Dave made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Steve seconded the motion. Meeting ended at 8:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lara McRea
Interim Clerk, Board of Supervisors