

Working to restore viable and sustainable populations of salmon, steelhead and other at-risk species through collaborative, economically sensitive efforts, combined resources, and wise resource management of the Upper Columbia Region.



## UPPER COLUMBIA LEAD ENTITY JOINT CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Chelan Fire Station, Chelan WA  
Tuesday, June 20, 2023 ~ 6:30 to 8:00 PM

- Chelan CAC: Keith Truscott (Chair), Alan Schmidt, Leah Hemberry, Jim Johnson, Mike Deason (remote)
- Okanogan CAC: Bob Monetta (Chair), Louis Sukovaty, Will Keller, Larry Hill, Sam Israel, Craig Nelson
- UCSRB Staff: Dave Hecker, Amanda Ward, Tracy Bowerman, Ryan Niemeyer

### Agenda Review and Background

The meeting was held directly after the individual CAC ranking meetings, which occurred in separate rooms. All committee members in attendance had participated in the ranking for their respective county. Dave Hecker and CAC Chairs convened the meeting at 6:52 pm.

UCSRB staff and CACs from each county introduced themselves. Dave provided an overview of the agenda for the joint county CAC meeting. Tracy Bowerman displayed the combined county ranked list and explained the 'zipper' approach to combining the ranked projects from both lists that integrates the Okanogan and Chelan County projects.

The Joint CAC observed the ranked list and compared the ranking to RTT scores.

Related to the Mission Creek Protection proposal, a CAC member sought clarification on the method for protection. A member stated that a conservation easement is the tool for protection.

Prior to deliberations, the group reviewed the decision-making ground rules used to finalize the project list:

1. *A Citizen Advisory Committee member may, at any time, make a motion to move a particular project up or down on the list.*
2. *The Citizen Advisory Committee member making such a request must include rationale based on the citizens' review criteria.*
3. *The Joint Citizen Advisory Committee will then engage in discussion regarding the motion to move a project on the list.*
4. *After discussion, the Joint Citizen Advisory Committee will vote – approve, oppose, abstain – on the motion to move the project on the list.*

*The motion will carry upon unanimous approval by all Joint Citizen Advisory Committee Members (excluding “abstain” votes).*

The joint committee discussed whether it’s necessary to motion for each individual move or if multiple proposals could be lumped into a motion. After discussion, the committee determined it’s best to focus on moving one project up or down the list at a time.

Three CAC members stated conflicts of interest and shared their recusals.

A CAC member brought up the Fish Barrier Removal Board leveraged proposals – Mission Barriers and Eagle Creek. The CAC acknowledged that while requested funds are match only, these projects are near the bottom of ranked the list and scored low with the RTT.

Most of the discussion regarding the Nason Creek SR 207 Re-Alignment proposal occurred during the Chelan County Ranking meeting. The Chelan County CAC summarized their discussion regarding the Nason Creek SR 207 proposal: Chelan CAC members collectively like the project. However, given the amount requested and the fact that it would use nearly all the money in this grant round, the committee’s perspective is that the total biological benefit is less than the accumulative benefit of all proposals currently ranked higher.

Peshastin RM 2.5 and Mission Creek Protection were compared given the similarity between the funding requests and location at the bottom of the funding line. CACs members noted how quickly the Peshastin RM 2.5 proposal was developed and that there are uncertainties in how the landowners intend to develop the land. The CAC believes another year of project development and further input from the landowners would provide more certainty regarding the outcome of this proposal.

CACs discussed the Mission Creek Protection project and the perspective that the landowners want to do the right thing by protecting the land. Increasing public access is always beneficial. A question of whether the landowners had submitted a formal letter of commitment to provide public access arose, and it was confirmed that public access is required by the grantor. Members discussed that landowners are often pressured to sell, and orchardists are increasingly selling for residential development. Given these factors, committee members agreed there is a greater urgency to fund Mission Creek Protection than Peshastin RM 2.5.

*Alan Schmidt made a motion to move the Mission Creek Protection proposal to the 11<sup>th</sup> ranked position on the joint CAC list based on prior discussion regarding the ability to secure a conservation easement for timely protection of floodplain habitat.*

*Keith Truscott Seconded the motion.*

*Chair Truscott asked for any additional discussion, none. The Chair called for a vote. Two members abstained. All other members approved; motion passed.*

*Craig Nelson made a motion to approve the amended joint committee list.*

*Louie Sukovaty seconded the motion. Chair Truscott asked for any discussion on the motion, none. Chair Truscott called for a vote, all approved; motion passed.*

The final approved list combined from both counties was as follows (blue shading indicating projects located in Okanogan County, those without shading are in Chelan County):

Final Rank	Category	UC Regional Projects	CAC Rank	RTT Score	SRFB Request	Running (SRFB) Total
1	Assessment	Lower Wenatchee and Peshastin Thermal Refuge Assessment	1	85	\$82,968	\$82,968
2	Protection	Chewuch Acquisition RM 2.8-3.1	1	80	\$390,951	\$473,919
3	Restoration	Upper Wenatchee Floodplain Reconnection (RM 37-38) - Implementation	2	78	\$500,569	\$974,488
4	Design	Goat Creek Fan Restoration	2	75	\$50,093	\$1,024,581
5	Restoration	Lower Chiwaukum Creek Restoration	3	77	\$580,000	\$1,604,581
6	Assessment	Upper Columbia Fish Distribution Assessment	3	73	\$40,836	\$1,645,417
7	Restoration	Icicle Creek Instream Flow Restoration - COIC	4	71	\$750,000	\$2,395,417
8	Design	Upper Methow Design Rm 61.75-62.75	4	71	\$240,042	\$2,635,459
9	Design	Nason Creek RM12 Floodplain Reconnection	5	75	\$211,900	\$2,847,359
10	Design	Fulton Ditch Irrigation Efficiency Project - Phase 1	5	68	\$237,417	\$3,084,776
11	Protection	Mission Creek Protection	7	68	\$720,000	\$3,804,776
<b>FUNDING LINE</b>						
12	Restoration	Peshastin RM 2.5	6	73	\$754,599	\$4,559,375
13	Restoration	Nason Creek and SR 207 Re-Alignment Fish Habitat Enhancement Project	8	75	\$3,499,914	\$8,059,289

14	Restoration	Fish Passage Restoration at Six Barrier Corrections within Lower Chiwawa Tributaries	10	64	\$500,000	\$8,559,289
15	Design	Nason Creek Floodplain Restoration: PUD Transmission Line Relocation	11	61	\$212,499	\$8,771,788
16	Design	Mission Creek Barriers	12	56	\$62,152	\$8,833,940
17	Design	CMZ 12 Side Channel Adaptive Management	13	61	\$187,543	\$9,021,483
18	Design	Peshastin Creek RM 8.8 Conceptual Design	14	67	\$206,675	\$9,228,158
19	Restoration	Beaver Creek Barrier Correction Implementation	15	51	\$36,121	\$9,264,279
20	Restoration	Eagle Creek Lowest Four Barrier Corrections	16	50	\$213,859	\$9,478,138

*N/A	Monitoring	Floodplain Restoration Effectiveness Monitoring on Fish Populations in the Upper Columbia	N/A	24*	\$61,636	N/A
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*\*Monitoring funds are including in the ranked list, though funded by separate pool of money*  
*\*RTT scores monitoring projects on a different point scale (1-30)*

2023 Available funding: **\$3,816,399**  
Funding allocated: **\$3,804,776**

**Amendment Process Discussion:**

Prior to convening, the Joint CAC held a discussion regarding proposed changes to the Upper Columbia Amendment process. Dave described the current amendment process consisting of “level 1” and “level 2” evaluations depending on various qualifiers. Cost increase requests exceeding 25% of the original project cost qualify as a “level 2” review, requiring subcommittee review from the respective county CAC and RTT.

Due to inflation, heightened permitting expectations, etc., “level 2” cost increases are becoming more common. UCSRB staff proposed a modified cost increase review process. Proposed changes would not alter the RTT and CAC current role when amendments request a significant change in scope (level 2). Additionally, Dave explained that RCO has a \$100k cap on amendment requests, therefore sponsors seeking cost increases beyond \$100k would need to re-apply during the next SRFB grant round.

CAC members asked if any reasons other than inflation triggered this process. Cultural resource processes were described as another source of increasing project costs.

UCSRB staff confirmed the RTT adopted a modified review process that allows the chair to review and approve cost increases under \$100k. The RTT Chair could request a sub-group review if not comfortable making the call.

*Craig Nelson made a motion to approve the amendment process as follows: "Cost increase amendments no longer require a level 2 review. Cost increase amendments less than \$100,000 can be approved by the RTT chair and respective county CAC chair. The chairs may request a subgroup review of the amendment if they desire additional feedback from their respective committees to make a final decision."*

*Sam Israel seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. Chair Truscott called for a vote. All members approved.*

The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 pm.