ASRP Progress and Planning Workshop

October 16, 2025

Contents

Executive Summary

The ASRP Progress and Planning Workshop is an annual forum for discussing and reviewing the program's achievements and future plans. This report documents the discussion and outcomes from the workshop held on 10/16/2025 at the Chehalis Tribal Community Center, which builds on themes also discussed at the 2024 workshop. The 2025 workshop was attended by 60 people representing over 20 organizations working in the Chehalis basin, including the ASRP's Regional Implementation Team (RIT) members, Technical Advisory Group (TAG) members, Chehalis Basin restoration and research partners, and other supporting staff.

Most of the workshop consisted of focused breakout discussions on four types of project "clusters" with 8-15 people participating in each group:

- Upper Basin and Chinook
- Wetlands, Oregon Spotted Frog, and the Black River
- Olympic Mountains and Cloquallum
- The Grays Harbor Estuary

There were two primary goals for this workshop:

- **Goal 1:** Identify new ways and reinforce existing ways that ASRP funded research informs project prioritization and design.
- **Goal 2:** Identify or outline which project development and design projects are likely to request implementation funding by the end of this biennium (June 30, 2027).

A post-workshop feedback form found that workshop participants generally felt that the breakout groups and presentations were useful for making progress towards both these goals. **Between $15 million and $25 million** worth of projects were identified that would potentially seek ASRP funding before the end of biennium. This is in addition to funding already received or sought by project sponsors this biennium (about $8.8 million at the time of this report, January 2026). Additionally, a potential need of **$6 million to $26 million for other projects was identified for the 2027-29 biennium**. These project lists will help focus future conversations on ASRP priority areas, increase the scientific basis of project design, and increase the likelihood of future restoration project success. These numbers largely imply that the ASRP is likely to fully obligate their restoration and grant funding, while being able to support the vast majority of proposed eligible projects.

A common comment from the workshop feedback forms was a desire for more frequent discussion within these same groups, which has since resulted in a proposed change to the structures of the practitioner-led Regional Implementation Team meeting series.

This report summarizes the discussion from each project cluster. A tabulated version of project opportunities identified by ASRP project sponsors can be found here: ASRP Project Planning Dashboard. These discussions could result in future actions, but do not currently represent any official ASRP decisions or policy.

Upper Basin and Chinook

Participants and Content

Name	Org	Role
Mara Zimmerman	WDFW	Facilitator
Nat Kale	OCB/Ecology	Note Taker
Nikki Atkins	Lewis CD	Sponsor
Kelly Verd	Lewis CD	Sponsor
Jesse McMahan	Chehalis Tribe	Technical Expert
Ben Amidon	Chehalis Tribe	Practitioner
Lea Ronne	WDFW	Study Lead
Marisa Litz	WDFW	Study Lead
Paul Ramsey	WDFW	Study Lead
John Winkowski	WDFW	Study Lead
Paul Cereghino	Thurston CD	Sponsor
Joey Burgess	Thurston CD	Sponsor
Alex Papiez	Thurston CD	Sponsor
Scott Collyard	Ecology	Study Lead
Jeffrey Robbins	Ecology	Technical Expert
Chad Larson	Ecology	Technical Expert
Sasha Medlen	RCO	Grant Manager

Study Posters:

- Skookumchuck and Newaukum Fry Trapping (WDFW- Marisa Litz)
- Skookumchuck River Early Action Reach Monitoring 2019-2024 (ECY- Scott Collyard)
- Cascades and MS Chehalis Non-Native Fish (predation and climate change) (WDFW- John Winkowski)
- Newaukum Fish in, Fish Out (WDFW- Lea Ronne)
- A Strategic Framework for Prioritization in the Chehalis Basin (Ecology)

Project Posters:

- Spring Chinook and Cascades Overview (ASRP Staff)
- Skookumchuck River Restoration (Thurston CD)
- Mainstem Newaukum Project Highlights (Lewis CD)
- North Fork Newaukum Project Highlights (Lewis CD)
- Lower South Fork Newaukum Project Highlights (Lewis CD)

- Upper Newaukum Restoration (Trout Unlimited)
- ASRP Water Use Strategy (Washington Water Trust)

Goal 1 – Science & Implementation Interface

Fish-in, Fish-out & Fry Trapping

- 2025 data show a slight uptick, compared to 2023 and 2024, in the amount of Spring Chinook fry relative to Fall Chinook in the Skookumchuck system, potentially pointing to an impact from the flow manipulation effort of the dam. However, discussion in this group notes that this result is still uncertain.
- The Newaukum has been shown to produce relatively more spring chinook smolts than the Skookumchuck, while the Skookumchuck produces far more total Chinook fry than the Newaukum. There have been some preliminary hypotheses to explain this observation, and future discussion could clarify how this might impact restoration actions.
- Monitoring in the Newaukum shows a continual decline of Chinook since 2018.
- Strong negative density dependence for Coho (and weak for Steelhead) in the Newaukum. Restoration projects that target Coho rearing capacity would be particularly beneficial.
- ASRP projects sponsored by Lewis CD are located along identified spawning reaches for Spring Chinook in the South Fork Newaukum.

Bass + predation:

- Smallmouth bass are present in basin and prey on chinook salmon- which is predicted to become more severe with climate change, as bass prefer warmer waters. Bass were also found to heavily prey on native sculpin, which are important host fish for freshwater mussels. This could mean that bass expansion is contributing towards freshwater mussel declines, and native sculpin as a prey fish are helping to buffer against additional non-native fish predation on Chinook.
- Sponsors were encouraged by the TAG to consider the presence of predator species when developing projects. Developing projects in certain areas could result in increased predation on spring Chinook. This should be considered during initial site identification and with the discussion included in project application materials.
- The ASRP is sponsoring a Bass Suppression study, which should provide more specific guidance to the program as early as next year.

Goal 2 – Project Identification and Development

2023-25 ASRP projects

- The June 2024 Progress and Planning workshop had identified about $6-8 million worth of near-term priority projects which were anticipated to seek funding before the end of the

2023-25 biennium. Since that previous workshop, about $4.2 million of that anticipated need has now been received for implementing projects in this region with the remainder still awaiting project applications.

- The largest funded project in the 2023-25 biennium was the NF Newaukum Lawson Reach Design and construction project ($3.5M), which was partially constructed in summer 2025.
- Smaller projects funded in this biennium include design efforts along the lower mainstem Newaukum, knotweed control throughout the upper basin, wood placement assessment in the upper Newaukum, and some planting projects.
- There were no new projects in either the Skookumchuck, the upper Chehalis, nor the South Fork Chehalis funded through the ASRP in this biennium.

2025-27 ASRP projects

- Between $7.7M and $8.1M of projects ready for funding this biennium were discussed at this workshop. This is a large increase over the $1 million worth of (anticipated) 2025-27 projects which had been identified at the June 2024 workshop.
- The largest of these potential projects are the implementation phases of reach scale projects on the Newaukum River sponsored by Lewis CD and in the Upper Newaukum watershed by Trout Unlimited.
- The ASRP funded a new project development for reach scale along the Lower Skookumchuck. This could become a construction project by the 2027-29 biennium.
- The ASRP funded project development for a potential acquisition opportunity along the lower Newaukum. Outside of this project, no new acquisition projects have been proposed in this cluster.

Potential future opportunities and project developments

- North Fork Newaukum flow assessment
- Skookumchuck Tributaries Project Development
- South Fork Newaukum project development (already funded) could result in requests for final design and construction.
- Potential to incorporate more community outreach and education into projects.
- Water rights acquisitions and water use improvements were identified as long-term benefits for addressing limiting factors related to stream flow and temperature. The Washington Water Trust analysis and project development could result in more project opportunities to promote more in-stream water in increasingly hot and low-flow summers. There have not yet been any additional funding requests for this type of work since this project development was funded in the 2023-25 biennium.

Implementation Capacity

- The June 2024 workshop identified sponsor capacity as a key limiting factor slowing the rate of implementation in this cluster. This remains a key issue for the region.
- Since 2024, there has not been an increase in the number of sponsors implementing projects in this region.
- Low sponsor capacity was discussed as contributing towards landowner fatigue, which can result in landowners backing out of projects.
- Needs and opportunities to help overcome capacity issues:
  - Increasing the number of project managers in this region
  - Training opportunities, for both project managers and for field crews. Additional discussion is needed to specify which types of trainings would be beneficial to sponsors.
  - Crews with specialized knowledge for the type of restoration work in this region (e.g., hand-built wood structures).
  - Crews with longer-term/ year-round hiring commitments rather than interns or seasonal staff.
  - An effective incentive program to facilitate landowner participation. To date, the ASRP has not reached consensus on whether to develop an incentive program beyond what already exists through the restoration grant program.

Key Takeaways and Near-Term Action Items

- Similar to 2024, the Upper Basin and Chinook cluster had the largest number of participants and potential future projects out of the four clusters discussed at this workshop. This is an area of high interest for both the Regional Implementation Team and the Technical Advisory Group.
- Similar to other clusters, this group expressed interest in focusing future conversations on exploring how restoration project outcomes relate to progress towards programmatic goals for this basin. However, there is still a need to designate "who" will take the lead on each of these action items. In the Upper Basin and Chinook cluster, this could involve:
  - Creating a process to monitor the pools created by implemented projects- are these cold and deep, as intended? Are they used by spring Chinook? How does the quantity of pools created through the ASRP compare to the need identified by our assessment of existing thermal refugia?
  - Providing guidance on how to (or whether to) systematically deploy MTTI (Macroinvertebrate Thermal Index) across the region and how the results can inform restoration design and siting.

    - Creating a process to better ensure that salmonid projects don't have negative impacts on other native aquatic species such as freshwater mussels.
    - Providing guidance on when (and how) to perform surveys during project development, and how to balance short-term negative impacts from restoration construction with long term anticipated benefits.
- As in the 2024 workshop, there remains a need to identify additional sponsor and contractor capacity to make progress on:
    - Mainstem Newaukum River
    - Protection Projects
    - Coastal Tailed Frog Protection
    - Resident Outreach

Wetlands, Oregon Spotted Frog (OSF), and the Black River

Participants and Content

Name	Org	Role
Cynthia Carlstad	NHC	Facilitator
Karl Veggerby	Anchor QEA	Notes
Kirsten Harma	CBCfSH	Steering Committee/ Sponsor
Julie Tyson	WDFW	Sponsor/ study lead
Anthony Novak	WDFW	Sponsor
Katrinka Hibler	Thurston CD	Sponsor
Kiana Sinner	Thurston CD	Sponsor
Sofia Sherman	Chehalis Tribe	Sponsor
Bobbie Bush	Chehalis Tribe	Reporter
Philip Adams	Thurston County	Practitioner
Max Trujillo	WWT	Sponsor
Bella Padgett	DU	Sponsor
Alex James	Capitol Land Trust	Sponsor

Study Posters

- Wetlands / Black River / Oregon spotted frog (WDFW – Julie Tyson)
- Oregon Spotted Frog Translocation (WDFW and TCD)

Project Posters

- Black River, OSF, and Wetlands Cluster Overview (ASRP Staff)
- Black River Protection (Capital Land Trust)
- ASRP Water Use Strategy (Washington Water Trust)
- Scatter Creek Local Strategy (Chehalis Basin Partnership)
- Black River Local Strategy (Chehalis Basin Partnership)

Goal 1 – Science & Implementation Interface:

Black River Oregon Spotted Frog Status and Trends Monitoring

- Status and trends monitoring of three OSF populations show high amounts of interannual population size variability as well has a high degree of synchrony in population fluctuations between study sites. Populations at all sites show high sensitivity to any habitat changes, including bullfrog presence, drought conditions, and unmanaged reed canary grass.

- These results imply that OSF restoration design needs to be highly targeted and site specific, sometimes including elements such as constructed ponds with water control structures. OSF sites also need continuous, uninterrupted maintenance as these very small populations are not resilient, and options for restoring natural processes that historically supported them have proven difficult to implement in practice.
- This recommendation for highly designed & active interventions for OSF conservation contrasts with the "process based" approach which has become the standard for salmonid restoration.

Previous Workshop Study Topics

- Multiple study ideas to improve project design and siting were proposed at the June 2024 workshop. Of these ideas, two have advanced in the past year:
    - The ASRP has funded a proposal to model groundwater and surface water interactions throughout the Black River watershed. This study could help identify areas likely to stay cool and maintain flow during future climate conditions.
    - WDFW and USFWS have increased bullfrog abatement efforts throughout the Black River watershed. Bullfrog are a non-native species that prey on Oregon Spotted Frog and other native aquatic species.
- Three of these 2024 ideas have not advanced in the past year:
    - A proposal to study the impacts of transplanting sediment or other material from "healthy" systems into unhealthy systems, with the hope of kick-starting a macroinvertebrate response to restoration activities.
    - There was a proposal to either initiate a new study or perform a literature review on Oregon spotted frog studies focusing on Oregon spotted frog preferences for water depth, topography, vegetation, and benthic substrate to inform project design.
    - Proposal for a BDA-focused study to examine how reed canary grass affects water quality when water levels rise behind BDAs. Does reed canary grass inhibit water quality improvements from BDA construction?
    - These efforts have not progressed likely as a result of limited staff capacity and other identified priorities. Future discussions in this cluster should aim to either prioritize these topics or identify how to proceed without these studies.

Goal 2 – Project Identification and Development

2023-25 ASRP projects

- The June 2024 workshop had identified about $5 million worth of near-term priority projects which were anticipated to seek funding before the end of the 2023-25 biennium. Since that previous workshop, about $800 thousand of that anticipated need

has now been received for implementing projects in this region through the ASRP. Notably, the Black River Tree Farm conservation easement was fully funded through the Climate Commitment Act (roughly $8 million) and so did not seek ASRP funding.
    - The largest funded project in the 2023-25 biennium was the Black River hydrological model and associated Local Strategy, which has only recently started work with results anticipated in 2027.
- The 2023-25 biennium also saw the smaller Scatter Creek Local Strategy both funded and initiated. This watershed-scale restoration plan identified specific reaches to prioritize for restoration, with projects anticipated to request funding in the 2025-27 biennium.
    - The largest potential project discussed in the June 2024 workshop was the Cozy Valley implementation project. As of this workshop, Thurston Conservation District now anticipates seeking implementation funding (potentially $3-$5 million) in 2027. The project managers will need to coordinate with the Scatter Creek Local Strategy workgroup to ensure that the project design incorporates the latest guidance for this watershed.

2025-27 ASRP projects

- Combined project funding needs for the 2025-27 BN of between $3.5 and $5.5 million were discussed at this workshop. This is much lower than the $17 million worth of (anticipated) 2025-27 projects which had been identified at the time of the June 2024 workshop.
- This reduction is largely because one of the largest identified projects in 2024, the Black River Tree Farm Conservation Easement ($8 million), has already been funded outside of the ASRP. Additionally, the anticipated costs of the Cooke Water rights acquisition have been revised lower, from $7.5 million down to $3.5 million dollars. This project is still anticipated to progress in this biennium, though more information is needed on how/if the ASRP can provide support.
        - Additionally, Thurston CD is no longer anticipating seeking ASRP funding for the Independence Property, which is outside of ASRP priority areas.
    - Thurston CD has received about $500k in ASRP funding in 2025 to initiate project implementation in the lower Scatter Creek watershed, following recommendations from the Scatter Creek Local Strategy report. It is possible that this effort will result in project design proposals this biennium, but the bulk of construction (if deemed beneficial) would likely occur in the 2027-29 biennium. Future discussion should ensure that the outcomes of this project are incorporated into the ASRP's understanding of this watershed and are shared with other project sponsors.

- While a smaller project, WDFW also received funding for construction of ponds with a water control structure at the Mima Creek OSF property (construction anticipated 2026). This follows the ASRP's findings that OSF would benefit from very targeted interventions which provide specific habitat features despite annual variations in hydrology. This project will be monitored, and the results will be discussed in future workshops, though it could take several years to gather sufficient data.

Potential future opportunities and project developments

- The ASRP has already funded a water use assessment and strategy for this region. However, it is likely that Washington Water Trust may need additional support in order to identify and further develop specific projects to move forward.

Fish, Frogs, and Fowl

- Sponsors in this cluster noted that there can be tension between restoration strategies for different species. Investments needed to provide benefit to one set of species, such as building a pond for OSF, might not provide much benefit for other species, such as salmonids. Land and project managers largely wish to provide benefits to all native aquatic species, but this sometimes requires seeking multiple sources of funding and implementing multiple projects for a single property. While not impossible, it does exacerbate capacity issues prevalent across the basin.
- Possible future discussions could return to this topic with an eye towards seeking efficiencies for multi-species benefit projects. How can this work be more efficiently coordinated and divided between all of the technical and implementation experts? One idea was to develop an expert contact list.

Outreach and Communication

- This cluster had robust conversation on the challenges and opportunities of outreach in this region.
- In this region, many landowners want to personally work on projects but lack resources and direction. Much of the scientific research and restoration planning is still in progress, making it challenging to provide this direction in the immediate near term.
- Sponsors felt that there would be utility in developing a toolbox of resources (e.g., Conservation Benefits Agreements, mowing guidelines, contact information for community organizations such as Creekside Conservancy) to help facilitate consistent conversations with interested landowners and other partners.
- Additionally, sponsors identified the value of specific "landowner champions" who can advocate for these projects and help other landowners get started. Thurston CD has already identified some people who might fit this criteria.

Local Strategy Lessons Learned:

- Better to have more frequent, shorter workgroup meetings than longer meetings. Sponsor's identified value in securing funding to pay for capacity to participate in these planning efforts. Notably, the Scatter Creek Local Strategy used grant funding to contract with a professional facilitator for their workgroup.
- Importance of identifying immediate "no regret" action items to start implementing while developing longer term restoration strategy.
- One of the values of these watershed plans is to identify more specific priority reaches, which can help streamline future decision making.
- The Scatter Creek Local Strategy looked beyond riparian restoration and considered how impacts from current and anticipated future development could impose limiting factors for aquatic species in this region.

Key Takeaways and Near-Term Action Items

- Much work in this basin is waiting on the results of the Black River hydrologic model, anticipated in 2027. While some projects are already moving forward as a result of the Scatter Creek Local Strategy, as the work group continues to refine their restoration strategy the ASRP should anticipate more funding requests.
- Water use has a large impact in this region, which will likely be intensified by future development. Achieving ASRP goals will require not just habitat restoration but also continued coordination with land use planners such as Thurston County. This will likely involve acquisitions of water rights, which may or may not utilize ASRP funding. These conversations can happen at the existing Scatter Creek work group and the upcoming Black River work group.
- Projects in this cluster have an outsized need for continual investment in maintenance and monitoring efforts, which is difficult to support using project-based capital funding. Future discussions could focus on identifying alternative or complementary funding sources and leveraging community/volunteer led efforts.

Olympic Mountains and Cloquallum

Participants and Content

Name	Org	Role
Jane Atha	Coast Salmon Partnership	Facilitator
Julie Grobelny	WDFW	Notetaker
Jacob Murray	Mason CD	Sponsor
Brian Combs	Mason CD	Sponsor
John Stepanek	Grays Harbor CD	Sponsor
Mack Hunter	Grays Harbor CD	Sponsor
Jeff Mach	Grays Harbor CD	Sponsor
Ryan Youngquist	Mason County Noxious Weeds	Practitioner
Heidi Steinbach	Mason County Noxious Weeds	Practitioner
Vanessa LaValle	Conservation Northwest	Sponsor
Amiee McIntyre	WDFW	Study Lead/Sponsor
Tristan Weiss	WDFW	Study Lead
Reed Ojala-Barbour	WDFW	Study Lead
Megan Kernan	WDFW	ASRP Staff
Jamie Glasgow	Wild Fish Conservancy	Sponsor

Study Posters

- Olympic Mountains Studies- Status & Trends, Project Effectiveness (WDFW)

Project Posters

- Olympic Mountains and Cloquallum Overview (ASRP Staff)
- Cloquallum GSU Projects (GHCD)
- Satsop Mainstem Projects (GHCD)
- Wynoochee Projects (GHCD)
- Humptulips Projects (GHCD and TU)
- Decker Creek GSU Projects (TU and Mason CD)

Goal 1 – Science & Implementation Interface

Project Effectiveness Monitoring

- There are two sets of “experimental” projects in the Olympic Mountains region which are being monitored for project effectiveness: beaver dam analogs (BDAs) and Sediment Wedges. This monitoring will evaluate both how these projects have further

ASRP goals and also the extent to which they may or may not have short-term negative impacts.

- To date, these efforts have found that neither project type has had significant impacts to fish passage, with redds observed upstream of project locations.
- BDAs were found to have variable degrees of durability during winter storms. This could imply a need for design modification or the incorporation of sufficient quantities of BDAs to build in additional redundancy.
- Both project types will require at least one more year of additional monitoring before more definite recommendations can be made.

Status and Trends Monitoring

- Western toads, Stream Associated Amphibians, freshwater mussels, and stream temperature have all been monitored within the Olympic region as part of the ASRP's Status and Trends Monitoring program.
- This workshop's discussion highlighted the importance of upland forest protection at a landscape scale for Western Toads.
- In general, the Status and Trends monitoring results highlight the importance of consulting with technical experts to design projects which benefit non-salmonid species, as well as the need to look beyond in-stream restoration actions (such as forest protection).

Previous Workshop Science Topics:

- The June 2024 workshop featured discussion on the need to better understand near-term impacts from in-stream restoration projects (such as ELJ construction) to sensitive species and species' life stages, such as salmon redds. This has remained an important topic in the ASRP without decisive resolution. The previous workshop proposed that better data sharing of spawning locations could help better inform project managers so that construction elements could avoid these features. However, to date this strategy has not been able to resolve this issue for a variety of reasons:
  - Redd locations have not been documented for the project area
  - Redd locations have been documented, but not for enough years
  - Redd locations have been documented for multiple years, but there is too much inter-annual variability
  - There is too much uncertainty regarding the extent to which redds actually manage to produce salmon, specifically on if a significant amount of redds are being lost to scour

- There is not enough staff capacity to have discussions between technical experts and project managers to address these issues within a typical project development timeline

Goal 2 – Project Identification and Development

2023-25 ASRP projects

- The June 2024 workshop had identified about $7 million worth of near-term priority projects which were anticipated to seek funding before the end of the 2023-25 biennium. Since that previous workshop, all of the potential projects have received funding, which resulted in about $6.7 million. The largest funded project in the 2023-25 biennium was the Lower Satsop RM 0-2 project, which was constructed in summer 2025.
- Smaller projects funded in this biennium include the Humptulips RM 15-17 planting project as well as design efforts throughout the Decker Creek watershed.

2025-27 ASRP projects

- Combined project funding needs for the 2025-27 BN of between $12.5 and $23 million were discussed at this workshop. This is still within the range of the $18.5 million worth of (anticipated) 2025-27 projects which had been identified at the time of the June 2024 workshop. This large range can be attributed to uncertainty within some of the large construction projects which are still analyzing alternative options. Even on the low end of this anticipated need, the Olympic Mountains and Cloquallum Cluster is likely to receive the largest amount of ASRP funding this biennium.
- The largest project which is anticipated to receive funding this biennium is the East Fork Satsop/Schafer State Park project, which could seek funding in 2026 or 2027.
- The Dry Bed Creek (in the Decker Creek watershed, a tributary to the EF Satsop) project is similar in size to the EF Satsop project and could also seek funding in 2026 or 2027.
- The Cloquallum RM 3.8 to 6.7 project is currently seeking over $4 million for construction funding. If received, some construction could begin in 2026.
- Other potential projects include a variety of smaller instream and barrier correction projects throughout the Decker Creek watershed and multiple opportunities along the mainstem Wynoochee and mainstem Humptulips.
- As of the writing of this report, there are active ASRP projects in all of the near term priority mainstem watersheds for this region. Some of the smaller tributary near-term priority watersheds, such as Dry Run and Bingham Creek, are still lacking projects.

Potential future opportunities and project developments

- GHCD is currently working with CBCfSH (Chehalis Basin Collaborative for Salmon Habitat) and the CSP (Coast Salmon Partnership) to finalize a restoration strategy for the Cloquallum watershed. While much work is already underway in the region, this could result in additional projects, especially within the working timberlands in the headwaters.

Program Goals and Prioritization

- The Olympic Mountains and Cloquallum Cluster has made more progress toward ASRP goals (as measured by "river miles restored") compared to the other three clusters, with four of the GSUs above 80% of restoration targets. Participants in this cluster discussed the implications and remaining uncertainty of this status. Several specific issues were raised:
  - Some GSUs, like the Cloquallum GSU, include both the mainstem and tributaries within the priority area. This makes river mile-based targets less informative, as including the length of all of the tributaries greatly inflates the total river length within the watershed while the mainstem Cloquallum and the tributaries feel like they belong in different categories of restoration from each other. Sponsors request clarity on how much of tributaries and headwaters restoration the ASRP is prepared to support.
  - In other watersheds, such as the Humptulips and Wynoochee, sponsors are finding differences between on the ground conditions and priority project actions as proposed in the ASRP Prioritization and Sequencing document. This has resulted in protracted project reviews and associated delays when there is a mismatch between project proposals and reviewer expectations derived from this previous prioritization document or project actions proposed in locations with uncertainties around habitat quality.
  - Protection of wetlands and headwaters is prioritized in this region, but project sponsors have noted that there are already legal protections in place through regulations such as mandated buffer widths. Sponsors have requested clarification on how the ASRP would define "protection" in the context of coastal tailed frogs, Stream-Associated amphibians, and salmonids.

Project Effectiveness

- As this cluster now has many implemented projects and many more implementation projects proposed, there is an increased interest in evaluating project effectiveness to ensure that ASRP goals and assumptions are being met. This is key for determining

whether watersheds which have already received large amounts of restoration still require additional investment. Several ideas were discussed:

- An informal workshop to talk through observations of ecosystem response from completed projects.
- Better defined or more specific metrics to describe projects. This would involve moving from "river miles restored" to something like "relative increase in wood density" or "increase in wetted acre-days". Sponsors have requested a meeting with ASRP staff to talk through options.
- Incorporating funding for project effectiveness monitoring into ASRP grants or creating a standalone grant for effectiveness monitoring. Note that funding priorities for programmatic learning to support the ASRP outside of existing monitoring studies are still under development through 2026, and it is unclear at this time how additional project effectiveness monitoring might fit into these.
- Increased opportunities for discussion between TAG and the RIT. Note that this has been implemented since this workshop.

Key Takeaways and Near-Term Action Items

- This cluster has a large number of sponsor organizations that each have multiple projects in different stages of development and implementation. There is high confidence that this cluster will need a large amount of funding support in both the current biennium and for at least the next few years.
- Most of the difficult science-implementation-interface issues remain unresolved: construction of large-scale restoration projects and concerns regarding impacts to existing habitat; non-salmonid aquatic species which lack a defined restoration or protection strategy; and better understanding the effectiveness of process-based restoration techniques.
- Sponsors involved in this cluster are eager to better define ASRP goals and to re-test assumptions incorporated into the 2021 Prioritization and Sequencing document as they pertain to this cluster. However, besides the Cloquallum workgroup (which is nearing completion) there are limited existing venues to have cross-cutting discussions focused on this cluster. Participants in this workshop have suggested, as next step, a series of focused ad-hoc meetings, combined with bringing these topics to existing, recurring meetings such as the TAG and the RIT.

Estuary

Participants and Content

Name	Org	Role
Victoria Knorr	WDFW	Facilitator
Larissa Rohrbach	AQEA	Notetaker
Stacey Britton	ECY	OCB Staff
Lee First	Twin Harbors Waterkeeper	Technical Expert
Jacob Baker	Coastal Interpretive Center	Practitioner
Anthony Waldrop	GHCD	Sponsor
Mark Mobbs	QIN	Technical Expert
Erika Douglas	WDFW	ASRP Steering Committee
Merri Martz	AQEA	Technical Expert
Rachel Skubel	DNR	Technical Expert/Sponsor
Steve Mallock	OCB Board	Board Member
Colleen Granberg	DNR	Technical Expert/Sponsor
CK Eiden	DU	Sponsor
Paul Kraegel	Forterra	Sponsor

Study Posters

- Grays Harbor Estuary Habitat Mapping (Anchor QEA)
- Estuary Community Science (Coastal Interpretive Center)

Project Posters

- Estuary Overview (ASRP Staff)
- Chehalis RM 13-20 (Grays Harbor CD)
- Estuary Protection (Forterra)

Goal 1 – Science and Implementation

Habitat Mapping

- Anchor QEA has produced maps of habitat units within the Grays Habor Estuary based on satellite imagery. It was discussed that this should be a valuable resource for Forterra's Estuary Local Strategy project.

Community Science

- This poster displayed the first year of community-collected data in the estuary, included nitrate & chlorophyll levels as well as off-channel woody debris coverage. If continued, this could provide a pathway for both increasing the program's knowledge of the estuary while also increase the community's buy-in and support of the program.

Prior Study Topics

- At the time of the June 2024 workshop, there had been no active ASRP-supported research in the estuary. There were three proposed studies:
  - Salmon diet and prey availability in estuarine habitats of Grays Harbor
  - Spatial and genetic distribution of eelgrass in Grays Harbor and seed-based planting strategies
  - Monitoring Migration Behavior and Estimating Survival of Juvenile Salmon and Steelhead Out-migrating from the Chehalis River
- Of these three proposals, only the third (salmon survival) received funding, and has not yet begun as of Dec 2025. However, in addition to these studies, the ASRP has also supported an updated estimate of pinniped abundance in the estuary, which will begin later in this biennium.

Goal 2 – Project Identification and Development

2023-2025 ASRP Projects

- The June 2024 workshop had identified about $3 to $8 million worth of near-term priority projects which were anticipated to seek funding before the end of the 2023-25 biennium. Since that previous workshop, none of those projects have received additional funding by the time of this report. The largest of the projects discussed at the time of the June 2024 workshop were the lower main stem Chehalis projects sponsored by GHCD; these projects are now anticipated to seek funding in the 2025-27 biennium.
- There were several projects funded in this cluster in the 2023-25 biennium which were not discussed at the June 2024 workshop. The largest of these were a group of three fee-simple acquisition projects of wetlands adjacent to DNR properties, sponsored by Forterra for a combined $1 million. These acquisitions are all still in progress. Additionally, the Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force sponsored and constructed a fish passage improvement project on Camp Creek.
- Forterra received funding to initiate an Estuary Local Strategy but has not yet begun work on this effort.

2025-2027 ASRP Projects

- Combined project funding needs for the 2025-27 BN of between $4 and $16 million were discussed at this workshop. While this large range is reflective of the uncertainty characteristic of the newest ASRP focal area, this still demonstrates some progress since the June 2024 workshop which had not identified any 2025-27 projects. At the time of the October 2025 workshop, there are many potential projects identified; however, it is thought that these opportunities reflect a wide range of feasibility and also

there is likely not enough management capacity to initiate a large number of these opportunities within a single biennium.

- The largest and most tangible of these opportunities are the mainstem Chehalis projects ranging from river mile 13 to 20, all sponsored by GHCD. These projects have been in development for a number of years and have willing landowners and could receive funding (likely split into smaller phases) this biennium.
- There was discussion of an opportunity for over 200 acres of acquisition to extend DNR properties in the estuary, potentially needing over $10 million. There is still some uncertainty on who would manage this project and what the next steps are for the ASRP.

Previously Discussed Estuary Implementation Ideas

- There were many brainstormed ideas for implementing estuary protection and restoration from the June 2024 workshop, which still require further clarification and development as of 2025:
- Creosote Piling Removal Plan Project Development
  - There are multiple (both previous and ongoing) efforts to increase our understanding of creosote pilings in the Grays Harbor Estuary. Notably, DNR is undertaking an update to their creosote piling inventory. However, there has not yet been a proposal for ASRP to support this effort.
- Aberdeen and Hoquiam Shoreline Softening Project Development
  - There are multiple opportunities for increasing habitat area and fish passage in developed areas of the estuary, but there is no clear project sponsor or proposed opportunity at this time.
- Grays Harbor Mill site
  - A potential creosote piling cleanup site, with maybe 400 pilings. There has not been any proposed ASRP project.
- Support European green crab management
  - Other organizations, such as GHCD and DNR, currently manage and support green crab control efforts. It is not yet clear if there is desire for ASRP support as well.
- Cosmo fiber opportunities
  - The Cosmo Fiber Mill, which is currently not operational, was discussed in 2024 as a potential cleanup and restoration opportunity. However, this is a very complicated issue with many stakeholders and legal frameworks, so it is unlikely to seek ASRP support in the near future.

Long term vision

- This cluster, compared to the other clusters, focused more on discussion of the long term vision for this region as opposed to specific project ideas. As the newest ASRP

area of near-term priority, there is still a need to refine a restoration and protection strategy for the Estuary, and to define the ASRP's role as distinct from existing efforts in the region. These topics included:

- Water Quality
  - There are specific water quality issues in the estuary including, but not limited to, dioxins and nutrients
- Underlying values & community engagement
  - Developed areas of the estuary present both a challenge and an opportunity for community engagement. How is the estuary valued by the residents of this region? What are the main values of the estuary as it pertains to the ASRP?
- Watershed planning and partnerships
  - Working with partners such as DNR and small forest landowners, who manage a large amount of the estuary.
  - Additionally, there will need to be coordination with the cities of Aberdeen and Hoquiam, and their master plans.

- Understanding the estuary through assessments and data
  - Where is the estuary working well? How has the estuary changed over time?
  - Anchor QEA's habitat assessment maps provide an important first step towards this understanding.
  - Forterra's local strategy could refine these results and make recommendations

Key Takeaways and Near-Term Action Items

- There remains a high amount of uncertainty for implementation next steps in this cluster. This is likely because there are a small number of project managers working in this region, which features very large and complicated projects. Additionally, many of the identified restoration strategies in this region (wetland protection, creosote removal, green crab control, eelgrass restoration, community outreach) intersect with large existing efforts outside of the ASRP, further complicating the ASRP's involvement. Finally, staff turnover has stalled or otherwise delayed some of the efforts identified in the 2024 workshop.
- There are new study results now available, such as the Estuary habitat maps. Other studies, such as fish survival monitoring, could produce results over the next few years.
- Next steps for this cluster are largely the same as they were in 2024- there should be additional meetings with key sponsors (GHCD, Forterra, DNR, DU, and the CIC) to identify specific project managers to work on specific feasible projects.

Basin-wide Takeaways and Next Steps

- The number and size of projects identified for funding in the 2025-27 biennium largely imply that the ASRP will fully obligate their restoration and grant funding and will be able to support the vast majority of proposed eligible projects. This means that it will be important this biennium to work with sponsors and decision makers to avoid project delays, as there is not an overly large pool of fully developed projects ready to receive implementation funding this biennium.
- Across the basin, there was a request from project sponsors and technical experts to further clarify ASRP goals and metrics. This will likely require a series of further discussions with these groups and the ASRP Steering Committee dedicated to this topic.
- There remains disagreement over the role of "Process Based" restoration as a primary tool of the ASRP, with concern over uncertainties of project effectiveness and short term impacts to aquatic species such as salmon redds and mussel beds. Addressing these concerns may require additional assessments during the project design phase and a longer project development process. However, there is not alignment on how or whether the ASRP should support specific habitat or species assessments as a required element of restoration design, and some program participants feel that the time and cost of prolonging project implementation would outweigh the benefits. This will also likely require a series of discussions dedicated to this topic, as well as alignment and direction from the Steering Committee as to the ramifications for the ASRP budget.
- Uncertainties on how to navigate discrepancies between the ASRP Prioritization and Sequencing document and on the ground realities has resulted in project delays and creates confusion within the program. This includes areas that have been identified in the near term priority areas that arguably have functioning habitat, where the majority of the productivity is hatchery production, or where the ASRP-identified limiting factors do not line up with the project sponsor-assessed restoration needs. The Steering Committee will need to discuss and provide overarching guidance for the program, including sponsors and the TRT, related to how to navigate these differences.