

Lake Chelan Collaborative Meeting Summary

LARGE WOODY DEBRIS SUBCOMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 23, 2026, 11:30AM-12:30 PM

CHELAN FIRE STATION, 232 E WAPATO AVENUE + CALL-IN OPTION

Attendees:

In person: Kelsey Mach (Geosyntec); Elle Robinson (CCNRD); Stephen Lesky (CCNRD); Mike Kaputa (CCNRD); Audrey Cooper (City of Chelan Parks), Anna Galipeau (LCRI)

Online attendance: Rob Huddleston (Chelan County Marine Patrol); Collin Haffey (WA DNR); Laura McAloon (City of Chelan); Robin Pittman (Manson Parks); Steve Nelson (LCRI)

Notes:

Meeting Purpose

- First meeting of this new subcommittee
- Objective is to gather information needed to develop a project scope under existing grant funding.
- Current funding is anticipated to support approximately one year of work.

Stakeholder Engagement

Additional outreach is needed to engage the following stakeholders: Potential additional stakeholders identified include: U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, Chelan PUD, Chelan Shores, Lady of the Lake, Wapato Point, Shoreline Watercraft, Chelan County Planning, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Other boating and shoreline interests.

Funding Opportunities

- Supplemental funding opportunities through USFS should be explored, though timelines may not align with current grant funding.
- Chelan PUD may have some funding available for woody debris management, although applicability to lake-wide debris concerns remains uncertain.
- Research into insurance but found it was not a viable funding source.
- City of Chelan and Manson applied for FEMA funds to support removal efforts.

Past/Ongoing Efforts

- City of Chelan obtained approval from the Army Corps for hand removal of debris.
- Manson Parks reached out to WDFW regarding permitting requirements for hand removal, awaiting follow up.
- DNR completed fly over in June which included some images of main tributaries.
- City of Chelan has been collecting data on quantity of wood removed from their shores/parks.
- Removal efforts this year have consisted of hand removal and bringing wood to transfer station.
- Discussion of previous efforts by USFS to boom major tributaries after fire events, unclear that this has happened recently. Additional outreach needed.
- Understanding of some past efforts by Chelan PUD (2003-ish) but need follow up information.

Key Issues and Concerns

- Public safety and boat collisions.
- Impacts to tourism and recreation.
- Costs of debris removal and cleanup.
- Trash accumulation.
- Potential nutrient impacts.
- Impacts to public and private shoreline infrastructure.
- Uncertainty regarding agency roles and responsibilities.
- Accumulation of submerged wood and effects on fish habitat.
- Future debris inputs associated with spring runoff.
- Opportunities to improve public understanding of woody debris issues.
- Public perception/coordination.

Priorities Identified

1. Clarify roles and responsibilities among agencies and partners.
2. Develop a public communication strategy for current efforts and future events.
3. Address and understand permitting requirements and streamlined permitting options.
4. Identify funding mechanisms for management of existing wood and future events.
5. Develop options for woody debris reuse and disposal (habitat restoration, partnerships with tribes and conservation districts, chipping for orchards or erosion control, post-fire restoration use)
6. Recommend short-term (this year) and long-term management actions for:
 - Debris sources (tributary booms)
 - In-lake accumulations
 - Shoreline accumulations
7. Evaluate debris movement and residence times within the lake, including possible tagging and tracking of individual logs.

Future Meeting Topics

- Streamlined permitting through WDFW/USACE
- Chelan PUD FERC License limitations/opportunities related to in-lake woody debris management and past efforts.
- Information from USFS regarding past management efforts and emergency funding opportunities
- Discuss opportunities for use of wood (Cascadia or Foster Creek CDs, Yakama Nation, USFS, etc.)

Next meeting will be scheduled in approximately 6-8 weeks.