



Minutes of the January 23, 2019 Board of Directors Meeting

DRAFT

Meeting held from 1 pm to 4 pm at the YBFWRB Office

Members Present:

Adam Fyall (Benton County), Jonalee Squeoch and Dave Fast (Yakama Nation), Richard Bloom (City of West Richland), David Brown (City of Yakima), Julie Schilling (City of Union Gap), Cory Wright (Kittitas County) and Nancy Lillquist (City of Ellensburg).

Staff Present: Alex Conley (Executive Director), Tricia Snyder (Lead Entity Program Coordinator)

Others Present: Lance Hoyt (City of Toppenish); Elizabeth Torrey, Perry Harvester and Darren Friedel (WDFW); Rachel Voss (Mule Deer Foundation)

The business meeting of the Board was called to order at 1:13 pm.

1) Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Chair Adam Fyall opened the meeting and all present introduced themselves. The Board reviewed the meeting agenda and the draft minutes for the 10/10/2018 Board Meeting. Alex noted that the planned pre-meeting work session with NOAA had been cancelled due to the federal shutdown, but would be rescheduled for a later date. Alex proposed revising the agenda to address accounting proposals at the same time as the Financial Statement and 990 Form. A motion to approve the October minutes and the revised agenda was approved with consent of all present.

2) Announcements and Correspondence

Alex announced that:

- a. The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office just released the 2018 State of Salmon Report, which is available at <https://stateofsalmon.wa.gov/>
- b. [A recent editorial by the Yakima Herald](#) on the need to support floodplain restoration was, in part, in response to our floodplain panel event in November.
- c. The [Sea Lion Predation Bill](#) which the Board sent in a support letter in October was passed and signed into law by the President.
- d. The Governor has appointed Chris Endresen Scott to the SRFB.
- e. The new [Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Highlights](#) document is now available.
- f. Both the new Eastslope Cascade Recreation Forum and a Little Naches Collaborative series of workshops are getting underway.

- g. There is a new [video by Reclamation highlighting the work of the Yakima Bull Trout Task Force](#).
- h. Last week, Alex gave an overview of fish passage work in the Yakima Basin to the state's Fish Barrier Removal Board in Olympia.

Adam announced that the Governor's Orca Task Force's proposal for a new evaluation of the future of the Snake River Dams was met with significant opposition by local governments in the Tri-Cities area. While the issue is outside the Board's geography, he wanted members to be aware the Benton County would be weighing in to note their opposition to reopening a discussion of dam breaching.

The Board briefly reviewed the correspondence sent since the last Board meeting, including:

1. Adam's email submitting our approved State Budget Priorities document to the Governor and the response from OFM.
2. A support letter signed by Alex for Kittitas County's application to Ecology's new Streamflow Restoration Grant Program.
3. A support letter signed by Alex for the US Forest Service Land and Water Conservation Fund grant for acquisition of Forest Service inholdings in the Yakima Basin.
4. A letter from the Council of Regions to the Governor encouraging him to include proposed funding for a 20 year update of the Statewide Strategy to Recovery Salmon that Alex signed onto on behalf of the Board.
5. A letter in support of the Floodplain by Design budget request that Adam approved our signing on to based on the budget priorities document approved at the October meeting.

The Board discussed the responses from the Corps of Engineers to letters previously sent by the Board; the Bateman Island Project is moving forward as a Corps 1135 Project, but the availability of funding for the Gap to Gap project is still being determined.

3) Lead Entity Program

2018 SRFB Grant Round: Tricia gave a brief recap of the final outcome of the 2018 SRFB grant round and discussed feedback received from the review committees as part of the annual off-season meetings.

2019 SRFB Grant Round: Tricia presented the proposed schedule for the 2019 grant round, which was approved by the Board with the support of all present. She then reviewed the minor updates proposed for the review process during the off-season committee meetings. She update the Board on current committee vacancies, and encouraged Board members to work with her to identify nominees for Citizen Committee members prior to the March meeting.

LEAN Study: Tricia and Alex briefly discussed next steps RCO is taking to implement the recommendations made by the SRFB Grant Round LEAN Report issued in December.

4) BLM Grant Program

Tricia reviewed the work completed by partners on Cowiche Creek and Swauk Creek with funding the Board provided from the now-closed 2013-2018 BLM Contract.

Tricia provided an update on the work now being completed with the new 5 year contract signed in 2017. She asked the Board to approve an amendment to the MOA with Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group for vegetation project development and implementation in the Ringer Road area that is funded by the new BLM agreement. The Board approved the proposed amendment for the Chair's signature with the support of all present.

5) Approval of the FY2018 Fincial Statement and IRS 990 Form

The Board discussed the Draft FY2018 Financial Statement and Audit prepared by Abby Sanders, CPA. Adam asked if there are any findings or recommendations. Alex noted that there are no findings, and that Abby's recommendations remain the same as in previous years- that we continue to broaden our funding base, and that we maintain an accounting system that ensures multiple people review all transactions. Julie motioned to approve the FY 2018 Financial Statement as presented. The motion was seconded by Nancy, and approved with the support of all present.

The Board requested to defer approval of the draft IRS 990 form until the March meeting, in order to give members adequate time to review the draft. Alex confirmed that this was still within the time limit of our IRS filing extension.

Alex discussed some of the challenges of acting as the go-between between the two accountants, who use different software systems, and recommended that we consolidate preparation of the Financial Statement and 990 with a single preparer next year.

Alex reviewed the options he is evaluating for outsourcing basic bookkeeping and accounting, including use of an independent bookkeeper, contracting with our accountant's office, and using bookkeeping services offered by a partner organization. Richard noted that it is typically challenging to have in-house staff complete bookkeeping work when it is not their primary job duty or skill set. The group recommended reviewing options to work with the Yakima Valley Council of Governments and the Washington RC&D, and members also committed to providing recommendations for independent bookkeepers. The Board expressed support for outsourcing basic financial tasks, and directed Alex to consult with the Executive Committee when identifying the preferred option.

The Board asked how this would change the duties of the proposed new hire, and Alex reviewed how reducing basic operational tasks would allow us to hire someone with the skills and time to help manage recovery planning efforts. The Board expressed support for the proposed approach and encouraged Alex to act quickly on hiring.

6) July SRFB Meeting Tour and Event

The Board discussed the July 10 to 11 SRFB meeting to be held in Yakima, and directed staff to work with RCO to set up a project tour and an evening event. The group discussed local invitees, format and venues for the evening event, and agreed to propose to RCO that we co-host a no-host bar and

simple dinner. Venues to explore include the Arboretum, Spring Creek Homestead, Mighty Tieton, Cowiche Creek Brewery and Bale Breaker Brewing. The group also reviewed possible tour sites in the Yakima area, and emphasized choosing sites that show the intersection of SRFB, Floodplain by Design and YBIP funding.

7) Council of Regions Support

Alex reviewed the role of the Council of Regions in coordinating statewide actions by the seven regional recovery regions, and noted that he has been nominated to serve as the next chair, after a long period acting as vice chair. The Board expressed support for Alex serving as chair, and asked him to track the time dedicated to COR tasks and provide updates on that in the future. Alex also reviewed the proposal to have all seven regions contribute two to three thousand dollars to cover the cost of having out new hire spend up to 20% of their time on support tasks for the Council of Regions (primarily organizing calls and meetings and compiling group documents). Richard made a motion to have Alex work with the other regions to develop a proposal agreement for review at the March Board meeting, and Nancy seconded the motion. Dave noted that the agreement should not commit the Board to providing support when Alex steps down as chair. The Board approved the motion with the support of all present.

8) Recovery Program Topics

Alex briefly updated the Board of Directors on plans for Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan Updates, and the proposal to develop a strategic funding plan for Mid-C steelhead for use by the Board in developing a 2020 budget proposal. He noted that the July SRFB meeting would be a good opportunity to highlight the proposed strategic investment plan.

Alex then reviewed the recent and upcoming meetings of the Yakima Bull Trout Working Group. Dave Fast noted that the Yakama Nation has hired its first ever Bull Trout Biologist, and is excited to start rearing bull trout in a hatchery to support recovery efforts.

Alex presented the draft contract with the Department of Ecology for funding to convene the BTWG from January through December 2019. The Board approved the proposed contract and directed Alex and Adam to sign on behalf of the Board. The Board then reviewed the proposed MOA with Mid-Columbia Fisheries through which they would provide staff time to help support convening the BTWG; Nancy moved to approve the proposed MOA, and Julie seconded the motion. The Board agreed to amend the motion to reflect that the MOA should only be signed once the Ecology contract is in place. The amended motion passed with the support of all present.

9) Communications

Tricia gave a presentation highlighting recent and proposed outreach and communication actions, including: an update on the successful Yakima public forum on floodplains, the planned Eastern WA Riparian Planting Symposium, the planned Ellensburg public forum on large wood in rivers, and additional presentations given by Alex. She handed out the new Board Introduction booklet and led a discussion with the Board regarding messaging and logistics for the upcoming legislative outreach trip to Olympia.

10) WDFW Budget Presentation and Budget

Elizabeth Torrey, Perry Harvester, Darren Friedel and Rachel Voss gave a presentation to the Board about the 2019 to 2021 WDFW proposed budget currently being considered by the legislature. After the presentation and related discussion, the Board directed Alex to update the Board Budget priorities document to a) endorse the overall process and direction WDFW has taken to develop their proposed budget, b) support reauthorization of the Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement, c) highlight the value of proposed WDFW funding for Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group support, and d) support proposed Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funds to be provided directly to local governments.

11) State Budget and Policy Priorities

Following the WDFW presentation, Alex reviewed how specific agency salmon recovery funding proposals were incorporated into the Governor's proposed budget. He noted that the Orca Task Force recommendations had generally called for supporting existing programs, and that the governor's request for capital funding for the statewide SRFB grant program would represent an approximately 35% increase over current funding if paired federal funding holds constant. Nancy asked Alex to confirm the level of funding for the Floodplain by Design program that would fully fund the City of Ellensburg's proposed project. The Board reviewed the statement of Board Budget Priorities adopted in October, and directed Alex to:

- i) Adjust recommended amounts to those requested by the governor; except for the YBIP request, in which the Board supports the full \$42 million funding level with full discretion granted to Ecology's Office of the Columbia River to allocate funding across Integrated Plan Elements;
- ii) Add an item indicating support for the proposed update of the statewide salmon recovery strategy; and
- iii) Add the WDFW items identified in #10 above.

The Board briefly discussed Senate Bill 5136, the Washington Waters bill, which was introduced by Senators Honeyford and Warnick. It would direct up to \$500 million per biennium to a mix of water storage, flood hazard reduction, storm water and fish passage projects. The Board expressed interest in learning more about the bill and its intent, and how the new funding would intersect with existing funding programs.

12) Board Logistics and Public Comment

The Board briefly discussed the proposed changes to the travel reimbursement section of the Board's personnel manual, and directed Alex to update the proposed language to make clear that travel reimbursement is only available to volunteers and Board members with prior approval by the Executive Director and/or Board. The Board moved to approve the new language on an interim basis, with further review and discussion at the March meeting.

The Board directed Alex to work with NOAA and WDFW to set up pre-meeting work sessions for the March and May Board of Directors meetings.

No public comment was received. The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 pm