



YAKIMA BASIN
FISH AND WILDLIFE
RECOVERY BOARD

MINUTES
for the
January 24th, 2007 Board of Directors Meeting

As approved by the Board of Directors on March 28th, 2007

Time & Location:

5:30 to 7:30 pm, at the Yakima County First St. Conference Room, Yakima

Attendance:

Board: David Bowen (Kittitas County), Paul Ward (Yakama Nation), Matt Bleich (City of West Richland), Phil Mees (Benton County), Terry Keenhan (Yakama County), Dave Brown (City of Yakima), & Nancy Lillquist (City of Ellensburg).

Staff: Alex Conley.

Other Participants:

Lynn Hatcher (NOAA Fisheries), Joel Freudenthal (Yakima County Public Works), Richard Visser (WDFW), Mike Tobin (North Yakima Conservation District), Jim Milton (Water Resources Advisory Committee), and Phil Miller (GSRO, by speaker phone).

Chair David Bowen convened the meeting. Roll was taken and the presence of a quorum confirmed. The agenda was approved as presented. Minutes for the Nov. 8th, 2006 Board of Directors Meeting were approved as presented by a motion of the Board.

Review of Community Salmon Fund Grants

Richard Visser gave a slide presentation highlighting the four Yakima Basin Community Salmon Fund Grants that were selected for funding in December. The projects are the Kittitas Conservation Trust's Holmes Side Channel Phase II Project, the North Yakima Conservation District's Cowiche Creek Riparian Restoration Project, the Mid-Columbia Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group's Spring Creek Restoration and the Benton County Conservation District's Crowding Aquatic Plant Reduction Project.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Issues

The Board reviewed the final project list approved by the SRFB in December and received a review of the 2006 Lead Entity process from Alex Conley and Richard Visser. The Board approved going before the SRFB to support continuing the current regional percentage allocation of SRFB project funds for the 2007 project funding cycle.

Alex explained his draft budget proposal for the IAC/SRFB contract for general regional organization operating expenses; it reflects a 5% increase over the current contract's funding level, and is sufficient to pay for 2.5 staff and basic Board operating expenses. The Board expressed support for the draft budget

and agreed to delegate finalization of the budget request to Alex and the Executive Committee with the understanding that it would be submitted to the Council of Regions in February and then presented by the Council of Regions to the SRFB on March 8th.

David Bowen expressed the desire to have a Board work planning session to start development of a strategic plan for the Board. Board members agreed that this would be useful, and proposed holding a full-day workshop in April or May, with any preparatory work to be coordinated by the Executive Committee.

Alex announced that a Lead Entity day would be held at the State Capital in Olympia on March 23rd, and encouraged anyone interested to talk to him about participating.

Governor's Budget and Related Legislation

The Board discussed the Governor's proposal to continue the functions of the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office through the creation of a Statewide Salmon Recovery Office located within IAC. Board expressed their sense that the office's link to the Governor and its independence from other agencies was key to the credibility that the GSRO has had with both federal and local partners. Board members expressed unanimous support for continuing the GSRO as part of the Governor's Office.

The Board also discussed the Governor's Proposed Budget for the SRFB, noting that while significant amounts of funding were proposed for new programs in Puget Sound, the funding for the SRFB's statewide programs was proposed for \$18 million- considerably less than the \$42 million originally requested by the SRFB to the Governor. The Board agreed to express its support for seeing SRFB's project funding increased, and noted that the emphasis should be on funding on-the-ground projects.

Update on Salmon Recovery Plan Edits

Alex presented a slide show updating the Board on efforts to revise the draft Yakima Subbasin Salmon Recovery Plan and work with NOAA on the Mid-Columbia Steelhead Recovery Plan. The Board discussed the planning process with Lynn Hatcher of NOAA, and reviewed current uncertainties regarding steelhead recovery criteria and the timeline for finalizing the current plan revisions.

Miscellaneous Business

Alex gave a brief update on current discussions about steelhead monitoring, including 1) the initiation of discussions aimed at coordinating existing monitoring resources to improve our knowledge about steelhead population status, and 2) the tentative approval of a \$50,000 grant from NOAA via the IAC to support exploring development of an Intensively Monitored Watershed Program in the Yakima Basin.

Alex and Phil Miller also updated the Board on the current status of the Federal Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion and its relation to fisheries restoration in the Yakima Basin.

Alex also noted that Tiffany Bishop had started working with the Board as part of her Americorps service, and gave an update on the status of the Coordinator hiring process. Financial reports were provided to the Board

The Board agreed to set meetings for the 4th Wednesday in 2007, starting in March, pending approval by absent members. A March 7th meeting date was also discussed, but not confirmed.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m..