

## MEETING OVERVIEW

*For the March 10 YBFWRB Board of Directors Meeting*

Numbers refer to agenda items.

1. We'll start the meeting with introductions, review and approval of the agenda, and review and approval of the minutes from our Board meeting in January. The **agenda** and **draft minutes** are attached (items #1 & 3).
2. Bring any **announcements** you want to make. We'll highlight:
  - a. The Governor's Office is soliciting applications for a vacancy on the state's Recreation and Conservation Board. For more information, see our [Facebook post](#). Applications are due March 18, 2016.
  - b. The 2016 Yakima Basin Science and Management Conference will be held June 15 and 16 at Central Washington University in Ellensburg.
  - c. Adam sent us a great Seattle Times web site on the Elwha Dam removal that he thought Board members might enjoy: <http://projects.seattletimes.com/2016/elwha/>. It's a nice example of using the web to tell a restoration story. It'd be fun to do something similar for the Yakima!
  - d. As of March 1<sup>st</sup>, 3,584 steelhead have passed Prosser- not as many as some recent years, but still far more than all but one year between 1985 and 2009. We should see more fish come in between now and June.

We'll also review any recent Board correspondence.

### 3. LEAD ENTITY PROGRAM

We'll review the status of **the 2016 Grant Round**, which is just beginning, and we will consider approving the 2016 Lead Entity Manual and Grant Round Schedule (both attached; items #4 & 5). I've also attached the 2016 Request for Proposals (item #6). **Pre-proposals are due March 15**, so this is the time to get the RFP out to potential applicants!

The SRFB will meet on March 16, when it will discuss how much funding to make available for the 2016 grant round. Since 2009, \$18 million has been made available for the annual project grant round. This year, RCO is proposing that only \$13.09 million be allocated to the statewide project round. This would reduce the Mid-Columbia allocation (which we share with Klickitat) from 1.776 million to 1.29 million. If we receive 70% of that (our recent average), the Yakima list would total \$904,000, or ~\$400,000 less than last year.

This funding shortfall is primarily due to a reduction in returned funds that the Board can reallocate, and the increasing allocation of funds to items outside of the grant round (including \$2 million a

year for three years to projects in Intensively Monitored Watersheds (which we do not have here), communications and facilitation contracts, etc). For more detail see memos 5 & 6 in the [SRFB meeting materials](#).

I have prepared a draft letter for the Board to consider that asks the SRFB to prioritize support for the statewide grant program (attached as Item #7). If approved, we would submit this letter to the Board for review at their March 16 meeting.

#### 4. RECOVERY PROGRAM UPDATES

##### Bull Trout Action Plan and Working Group

The Board has an MOA with the Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group (MCFEG) for staff support for **Bull Trout Action Planning**. Cassandra Weekes has been doing a great job in that capacity. Since our January meeting, Cassandra organized a February Meeting of the Yakima Bull Trout Working Group. The group has committed to working together in bimonthly meetings to update the actions in the Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan (BTAP) and identify priority next steps and leads. Cassandra and I worked with the group to develop a preliminary list of priority actions that are ready to fund that it provided to the YBIP Habitat Subcommittee for consideration. I've been encouraged by the energy and collaborative spirit in the BTWG, and am excited to see the group make progress moving recovery actions for bull trout from plans into action.

##### Habitat and Threats Evaluation

Jason McCormick continues to work with the Board as temporary half-time **Recovery Program Technical Staff**. He is currently finalizing the **fish passage evaluation report**. He and I are now working together to review the data and conclusions with partners in the basin.

##### Development of Priority Projects

I continue to be active helping **support the development of priority projects** that implement our recovery plans, by:

- a) Participating in the Yakima Integrated Plan Habitat Subcommittee, where we are finalizing award of current biennium YBIP habitat funding and beginning the process of developing state budget requests for projects for the next biennium;
- b) Working with partners to develop the Little Naches Floodplain Restoration Project and participate in the Little Naches Collaborative Group;
- c) Working with partners to promote and develop water quality and habitat proposals for the lower Yakima River;
- d) Providing input and participating in technical working groups as requested by project partners.

**5. PROPOSED ILA WITH YAKIMA COUNTY**

I am working with Yakima County to draft an Interlocal Agreement (ILA) that would let us utilize staff from their Surface Water Program to complete projects for the Board. This would allow us to pay the County for Hoda Sondossi's time completing the Little Naches geomorphic assessment he started when employed by the Board, and for us to use Hoda's skills to support development of priority projects highlighted in our recovery plans. I hope to have the draft back from Yakima County in time to share with you prior to the meeting.

**6. YAKIMA DELTA PROJECT LETTER**

I have participated in the Technical Working Group for the Yakima Delta Project. The Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group has used SRFB and YBIP funding to evaluate and design alternatives that would allow flow through the causeway connecting Bateman Island to the mainland where the Yakima flows into the Columbia (we visited this site as part of our annual meeting last year). They have asked us to sign on to a letter of support for the project (attached as Item #8). I'd like the Board to consider authorizing either the chair or me to sign. If you would like more detail about the project, see the [PRISM SUMMARY](#).

**7. COMMUNICATION PLAN REVIEW**

We contracted with Cascadia Consulting to help us update and begin implementing our **strategic communications plan**. At our last meeting, members committed to providing feedback on the draft plan prepared by Cascadia following our November workshop. I received 3 sets of comments, which I compiled into the attached Communications Plan w/ edits (Item #9). At this time I am recommending finalizing the plan once new staff are on Board, for review at the annual meeting.

**8. POLICY UPDATES:**

Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF)

The recently passed Omnibus spending bill includes stable funding for PCSRF, which covers the majority of the SRFB grants and our own organizational expenses. The state is currently completing its application to NOAA requesting its portion of FY 2016 PCSRF funds. The President's Budget included \$65 million for FY 2017 PCSRF funding (the first time the White House has not sought to reduce funding for PCSRF) and the Washington delegation has been calling for increasing funding to \$80 million.

State Legislation

The current short legislative session is coming to a close without any significant actions that affect our programs. The new Salmon Recovery Network is working to develop a **2017 funding request** for capital funding and organizational capacity for Lead Entities, Regions, RFEs and state agencies active in salmon recovery. Alex is one of two regional organization representatives on SRNet, and Paul Ward is participating as a tribal representative.

Regional Organization Coordination with State Agencies

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office is working with the state's seven regional organizations to identify regional organization goals for coordinating with state agencies and communicate these to

state agencies as they develop their budget proposals for next biennium. I have attached a summary I prepared for GSRO for your review (item #10).

#### Proposed Legislative Outreach Tour

The last few years, Darcy has put together a great day on the Capital campus for us to meeting with legislators from our basin. At our last meeting, we discussed conducting an off-season tour for legislators and staff instead. I'd like feedback from the Board on how and when to set up such a tour.

#### NOAA Partnership

At this time we have not actively participated in NOAA's new **Columbia Basin Partnership**, a new collaborative forum for developing a long-term strategy for salmon recovery. I'd like to know if the Board wants to be more actively engaged.

### 9. BOARD LOGISTICS

We'll end with Board Logistics.

#### a. **Officer Succession**

At our last meeting, Obie expressed his desire to step down as chair, due to new commitments that he has taken on for Kittitas County. He noted that he intends to continue to be active as a board member but does not have time to act as chair. Dan Olson is our Vice Chair/Treasurer and would serve as chair upon Obie's resignation. At our meeting we can make this change official and appoint someone to serve as Vice Chair/Treasurer until our annual meeting. Since this is an even numbered year, we are due to hold officer elections at our annual meeting, for the next two year term.

#### b. **Update Policy for Line of Credit Use**

At our last meeting, the Board asked that we update our policy manual to clearly indicate that the Board's Line of Credit should only be used for short-term cash flow management. Please review this proposed change to Section 4.6.1 on p. 26 of our operations manual:

*The Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board will strive to maintain a minimum of ten percent (10%) of the operating budget between its operating and savings bank accounts. Given that the Board works on a reimbursement basis, there may be periods during which this is not possible, in which case the Board ~~will~~ may rely on its line of credit to maintain a positive cash flow. Any Line of Credit shall only be used to cover short-term cash flow needs. Any outstanding Line of Credit balances must be paid off in full within two months of when funds are used. The Line of Credit shall only be used to cover expenses for which the Board will be fully reimbursed by secured grants or contracts. In the event that the line of credit balance remains negative for longer than 30 days, the Executive Committee should be notified immediately.*

We can review and approve this or alternate language at the Board meeting, or hold approval until our May annual meeting, when it could be considered along with any other changes to our operations and personnel manuals.

- c. We'll review the **Operations and Outreach position job description** and hiring process, **possible changes to Darcy's job description and title**, and **budget changes that accommodate proposed hiring and contracts for staff support**. I'll send material for this discussion out soon.
- d. We'll briefly review **Board Membership**. We have an ongoing Benton County Large City vacancy. The City of Yakima seat is represented by alternate Dave Brown; the City will be considering appointment of a new council level representative this spring. For the full list, see <http://www.ybfwrp.org/about-the-board/board-membership/>
- e. In July, we will enter the second year of our two year budget cycle. Any changes to our work plan should be circulated to all member governments prior to our annual meeting. Click here to view our [current work plan and budget](#). I do not have any changes to the work plan to propose but welcome suggestions from the Board. We will want to adjust our budget to reflect carry-over due to vacancies and potential changes in staff and contract budgets (see item c). I'd like to ask the Board to delegate approval of a proposed revised budget to the Exec Committee so that we can adjust the budget in late March, prior to circulation to all our members.
- f. Our next meeting is our **annual meeting on May 26**. A draft agenda is attached for our review (item #11). Note that this will be the 10 year anniversary of the Board's founding! I'd like **feedback on meeting location and format, tour focus and keynote speaker**; Darcy and I have talked about a meeting in Naches or the Nile, with a morning field trip to sites in the Naches and/or Tieton watersheds. At the annual meeting, we will consider any updates to Board bylaws and policies, confirm Board and committee memberships, approve any work plan or budget changes and elect officers for the next two year term. Please **consider whether you have any changes to policies and bylaws you'd like us to consider**, so that we can prepare them for consideration in May.
- g. If you have not already, do update your calendars to include our **meeting on August 4, 2016** to approve the annual SRFB Project List. The meeting schedule for the rest of the next fiscal year will be set at our annual meeting.