

MEETING OVERVIEW

For the March 16, 2017 YBFWRB Board of Directors Meeting

Numbers refer to agenda items. Item #s refer to Board Materials email attachment numbers.

1. We'll start the meeting with introductions, review and approval of the agenda, and review and approval of the minutes from our last 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) Hiring of a New Lead Entity Coordinator: I'm finalizing the hiring of a lead entity coordinator, who I'll introduce at the meeting.
 - b) Washington Salmon Recovery Conference: This conference will be held in Wenatchee April 25 thru 27. Cassandra will be giving a presentation on our Bull Trout Working Group and its Action Updates. Jason will present on the Board's fish passage work, and I'll be presenting on recovery organization's role providing input during NOAA's Five Year Review process. The early registration deadline is March 20 if you'd like to attend; I believe that we could cover board members' registrations so let me know if you are interested. [Click here to see the program.](#)
 - c) Presentation to AFS: We've been invited to present on our Bull Trout action planning work at the April meeting of the Washington/British Columbia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society in Spokane. I'd like to check in with the Board before accepting this opportunity.

Correspondence included in the attached packet includes:

- The final scoping comment submitted to the federal action agencies regarding the Columbia River Systems Operation EIS (item #4)

3. EASTERN WASHINGTON RIPARIAN SYMPOSIUM

Heather Simmons of the Department of Ecology will give a brief presentation on the February 16 symposium we convened with her, and will request that the Board approve a proposal to work with Ecology to cosponsor a similar event in 2018. Her proposal is attached as item #5. To learn more about the 2017 event, see <http://www.ybfwrb.org/outreach/trainings/2017ripariansymposium/>

4. LEAD ENTITY PROGRAM

- a. SRFB Allocation Review: The SRFB Allocation Committee was tasked with updating the allocation formula and data used to distribute statewide project funding. It was also charged with making recommendations about how to allocate operational funds to Lead Entity and Regional Organizations. The Committee was unable to develop specific recommendations on any of these

topics, and on March 2, the SRFB adopted an interim 2017 project allocation negotiated by the regional directors. The SRFB also asked the Council of Regions to develop a work plan for developing future project and capacity allocation recommendations. See item 6a for an overview of this process and questions I'd like to discuss with the Board. 6b shows the interim project allocation that was adopted, and 6c shows current project and capacity allocations.

- b. Lead Entity Coordinator Hiring: We'll welcome on Board our new Lead Entity Program Coordinator, who will be starting work on March 22nd, just in time to take charge of the 2017 grant round.
- c. 2017 SRFB Grant Round Schedule and Request for Proposals: See item #7 and 8 for the 2017 Yakima SRFB Grant Round Request for Proposals and Schedule. Pre-applications are highly recommended and are due March 24, so this is the time to get the RFP out to anyone interested in submitting a grant proposal! Full applications are due April 21.
- d. Committee Member Status: The current list of Citizen's Committee and Technical Advisory Board Members is attached as item #9. At the meeting we'll review the list, and discuss what needs to be done to recruit any new members prior to the May project tours. We currently have both a formal vacancy and one or more inactive members for the Benton County and Yakama Nation seats. If you have candidates from your county area that you think should be considered for the Citizen's Committee, do let us know.
- e. Funded Project Updates: In March, we completed review by our Technical and Citizen Committees of one proposed scope change to a 2011 project, the [Lower Cowiche Creek Restoration Phase 2 & 3 Project](#). The project was unable to be completed as planned due to the William O. Douglas Trail Foundation's resistance to removing the old railway bed; the scope change shifts some funding to work that can be completed and returns \$109,476 of unused funding to the state. We are also working with RCO staff and project sponsors to initiate review of two other proposed scope changes.

5. STATE AND FEDERAL POLICY UPDATES

FEDERAL POLICY

- a. Common wisdom seems to be that the federal Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund will be included in a continuing authorization for the duration of FY2017. This would give us status quo funding for this grant round. Folks fully expect to see PCSRF zeroed out in the President's budget proposal for 2018 due out late spring. Luckily it has strong bipartisan support from our delegation, so there is broad hope that it will not remain at \$0. PCSRF is also the main source of funding for Board operations, so any cuts to PCSRF will translate directly into cuts in our operating budget.

- b. EPA funding to the Department of Ecology and the Puget Sound Partnership is considered to be at extremely high risk. The EPA funding supports Ecology's 319 water quality grant program which is widely used by our project sponsors in the Yakima Basin.
- c. Board members may provide updates on the status of Yakima Basin integrated Plan legislation and federal budget requests.

STATE POLICY UPDATES

The State Legislature is in the midst of budget negotiations, with a new revenue forecast and the Senate and House budget proposals due out within the week. I will provide an update at the meeting on the status of the three main items being tracked by the Board:

- 1) The RCO Salmon Projects Capital Request (recommended at 30 million by the governor's office),
- 2) Ecology's Floodplain by Design Program (recommended at 20.34 million by the governor's office), and
- 3) Ecology's Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Funding Request (recommended at 31.1 million by the governor's office).

All indications are that competition for capital funds will be incredibly fierce.

At this time no significant policy bills that would affect are programs are under consideration.

6. COMMUNICATIONS

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office and the SRFB just adopted a new communications plan. For more information about the plan, [click here](#).

One of the Plan's recommendations is for GSRO to hire one or more communications specialists, and for the SRFB to work with the regional organizations to secure funding that would allow each of us to hire a communications and fundraising specialist. I'd like the Board to give me feedback on whether this is something we'd like to pursue.

We have a final draft of a communications plan for the Board that we worked on in 2015-2016. I'd like to work with new staff and the Executive Committee to review our draft plan to ensure that it is consistent with the SRFB's direction and our Board's current strategic vision. The goal would be to approve a final YBFWRB communications plan at our June annual meeting. Board input and feedback will most welcome in this process!

7. RECOVERY PROGRAM UPDATES

- a. Fish Passage Evaluation and Funding Request

Jason McCormick (part-time recovery program staff) will give a brief update on his work on fish passage.

b. Bull Trout Working Group and Bull Trout Action Plan Updates

Cassandra Weekes and I continue to work together to **coordinate the Yakima Bull Trout Working Group meetings and prepare the draft Bull Trout Action Plan updates** with the group. We are on track to finish the one year process of completing the Actions Updates on schedule in June.

c. Alex will provide an update on **NOAA's Middle Columbia Forum**, which is planning its annual meeting on **Monday May 22** at the Discovery Center in The Dalles. This should be a great opportunity to learn about the recovery of Mid-Columbia Steelhead and strategize about how we move forward on priorities that are shared by NOAA, the States of Washington and Oregon, and the Yakama, Warm Springs and Umatilla Nations. Board members and partners are encouraged to attend!

d. Development of Priority Projects

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

- i. *Participating in the Yakima Basin **Integrated Plan Habitat Subcommittee** and its **Wapato Reach** work group;*
- ii. *Working with partners to develop the **Little Naches Floodplain Restoration Project** and participate in the **Little Naches Collaborative Group**. Hoda Sondossi is finalizing the geomorphic atlas he has been contracted with the Board to complete, and the Little Naches Aquatics Subcommittee is using that product to identify specific projects to be implemented in 2018.*
- iii. *Working with partners to promote and develop water quality and habitat proposals for the lower Yakima River. The water quality research proposal that Benton Conservation District and the USGS developed with our participation has been recommended for \$250,000 in Ecology funding.*
- iv. Providing input and participating in technical working groups as requested by partners.

8. BOARD LOGISTICS

We will end the meeting with organizational logistics:

- a. Work Plan, budget and strategic planning: We'll review the timeline and process to develop our strategic plan, biennial work plan and budget for approval at our June 1 Annual Meeting.

- b. We'll review our anticipated spending through the end of our current contract and discuss proposed contracts and short-term positions.
- c. Financial reports are provided as Item #10.
- d. We'll discuss the location, schedule and topics for our Annual Meeting on June 1st.
- e. We are also scheduled to meet on August 3rd, so make sure that's in your calendar.