



YAKIMA BASIN
FISH AND WILDLIFE
RECOVERY BOARD

MINUTES

5/28/08 Board of Directors Meeting
As approved by the Board on July 30th, 2008

Those present:

Board: Paul Ward (Yakama Nation), Nancy Lillquist (City of Ellensburg), , Mike Leita & Terry Keenhan (Yakima County), Leo Bowman (Benton County), Dave Brown (City of Yakima), Dan Valoff (Kittitas County)

Staff: Angie Begosh, Alex Conley,

Partners: Jeff Tayer & Richard Visser (WDFW), Phil Miller (GSRO, by phone), Jim Milton (YBWRA).

Chairman Ward called the meeting to order at 5:40 pm. The agenda and minutes of the March 26th meeting were approved as presented.

SRFB/LE Update

Angie updated the Board on the SRFB pre-applications that have been received to date for the Yakima Basin (15 applications for a total of over \$2.7 million). She also noted that the Klickitat Lead Entity has received three applications that total \$869,000, and that there is a combined total of just under \$2 million available for both Lead Entities. There was discussion about the allocation of funds between the Klickitat and Yakima Lead Entities, with a tentative consensus that if Klickitat requested 40% of the funds, it wouldn't necessarily be unreasonable, but that the Board wants to keep the discussion open as projects go through technical review. Leo pointed out that the important point is to do what is best for fish; Alex noted that at this point, there isn't a tool for comparing the relative benefit for Klickitat and Yakima projects. Phil stressed the importance of evaluating how these projects relate to a recovery plan. Alex noted that there has been recent discussion between the Yakama Nation, Klickitat County, NOAA and the GSRO about developing a new approach to regional implementation in Klickitat County.

Angie updated the board on the status of the Citizen's Committee. Bill Gillespie, Onni Perala, and Don Chaplin have all agreed to participate in this year's process; Yakima County will need one more representative. The past members from Kittitas County have not yet confirmed participation. Benton County needs to identify four participants – Leo urged staff to talk with Scott Woodward and Jack Clark to identify possible participants. Paul will work on identifying Yakama Nation representatives. Angie will send an email to all Board members with their current Citizen's Committee status.

Alex updated the Board on the SRFB Allocation Task Force (ATF), which is being convened to recommend adjustments to the state-wide allocation of SRFB funds. The Board supported Alex's participation in the ATF process. Alex also noted that the federal government has awarded Washington State \$23.5 million from the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund for the

2009 grant round. Alex indicated this is relatively stable funding, but Leo pointed out that with the cost of construction rising, the value is actually decreasing. There was also some Board discussion of the status of BPA funding. Paul asked that for our next meeting, Angie and Alex prepare an update on the status of existing SRFB projects in the Yakima Basin.

Steelhead Recovery Plan Update: Alex presented a written update, and described the ongoing stakeholder review of the proposed recovery plan. The plan has been generally well received; at this point, no major problems with the plan have been mentioned. Several important issues have been highlighted for ongoing discussion. Alex included a list of individuals/organizations who have been asked for comment, and asked the board to point out if anybody had been omitted. Mike Leita asked if American Rivers had been contacted and if they had any comments. Alex noted that he had contacted them, and at this point, they do not have any significant comments. Alex suspects that they will comment on NOAA's Mid-Columbia Recovery Plan. Alex noted that the Board will conduct a broader public outreach effort in the fall following release of the draft NOAA recovery plan. The Board noted that it will work well to start the broad outreach effort in the fall, since many organizations do not meet over the summer.

Alex presented the work that Jim Milton had done to cross-walk actions from the Board's Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan to the Yakima Watershed Plan. Mike emphasized the need to build links between the two processes. Dan Valoff updated the Board on the Kittitas County Commissioners' request for him to reinitiate watershed planning for Kittitas County; he is planning to review the existing plan and the concerns raised by Kittitas County to see how they can be reconciled.

The Board reviewed a draft letter to the GSRO and NOAA asking that the current Steelhead Recovery Plan be officially accepted and endorsed by these organizations. The letter requests interim recognition of draft plan until a final version is available. There was a question as to why this is necessary. Phil explained that this process allows the current draft to replace the 2005 draft as it moves through the NOAA process. Phil noted that GSRO would be happy to receive it. Alex also briefly reviewed the written update on the current status of bull trout recovery planning.

Kennewick Irrigation District Letter of Support

Jeff Tayer asked the Board if they would be interested in writing a letter of support for the Kennewick Irrigation District's efforts to secure funding from Washington Department of Ecology for its proposed diversion move and water exchange. WDFW likes the project because it increases flows in up a large bypass reach in the Lower Yakima. Alex noted that it is identified as a key part of Lower Mainstem Action #2 in the Board's Steelhead Recovery Plan. The Board discussed some of the concerns that have been raised about the allocation of water under the Columbia River Program. Nancy moved for Alex to compose a letter outlining how the KID project is consistent with the Recovery Plan. Leo seconded Nancy's motion and it passed. WDFW will get the necessary information to Alex, who will draft a letter for email review.

Monitoring Update

Alex briefly updated the Board on monitoring issues. He noted that we, in our role as a salmon recovery regional organization, were granted a seat on the Monitoring Forum in the last legislative session, and that he had been attending on the Board's behalf. The Forum has a new

chair, Bill Wilkerson, who Alex indicated is dynamic and eager to develop the Forum's role in determining state policy on monitoring. Alex noted that Board staff would be working with partners in the basin to develop a steelhead research, monitoring and evaluation plan that will allow us to track the long-term effectiveness of recovery efforts. He noted that the Forum could play an important role in securing funding for key monitoring gaps identified in this locally-generated plan. The Board also discussed how new genetic analysis promoted by the Board may allow us to do a better job of tracking steelhead population trends.

Alex updated the Board on the funds that have been secured for an Intensively Monitored Watershed program feasibility study and a Letter of Intent for the Bonneville Environmental Foundation's model watershed program, which Alex submitted on behalf of the Board. Paul noted that we have a strong data-management capacity in the basin, and that the emphasis should be on using the existing capacity to support recovery efforts. Jeff indicated that the regional boards can play a powerful role in local and state-wide monitoring discussions. Alex noted that he will be working with the Board and partners to develop proposals for staffing and/or contracting focused on the monitoring component of the Board's work plan.

GSRO Input on State Agency Budget Proposals

The Board discussed the GSRO's efforts to work with regional recovery boards to identify salmon recovery priorities to be included in state agency budgets. They reviewed the completed spreadsheet of WDFW budget priorities prepared by Board staff and partners and approved its use by GSRO, and discussed preparation of similar spreadsheets for the Washington Department of Ecology, the Department of Transport and other state and federal agencies.

Regional Policy Summit:

Alex and Paul briefly updated the Board on the May 16th statewide Salmon Recovery Summit hosted by the GSRO and SRFB. Alex expressed that it was encouraging to see the development of a statewide coalition of policy makers supporting recovery efforts; Paul noted that he was concerned that only a handful of tribes were present.

Other Board Business

Paul expressed that recovery board staff need to be careful to balance the amount of time spent focusing on statewide issues with the need to focus on work within the basin; Alex noted that perhaps ¼ of his time was spent on such work.

Alex recruited panel members for the Yakima Basin Science and Management Conference on June 11 and encouraged Board members to attend.

The Board reviewed and approved a contract with Tiffany Bishop for her services conducting outreach activities, with the caveat that references to the term "Watershed Model" be changed to "River Restoration Model".

Alex proposed a meeting schedule of every 6 weeks, with tours/presentations to be associated with each meeting. The Board tentatively identified October 2008 and June 2009 as annual meeting dates. Alex will send out a Doodle schedule to confirm proposed meeting dates.

All agreed to adjourn meeting at 7:45 pm.