



YAKIMA BASIN
FISH AND WILDLIFE
RECOVERY BOARD

MINUTES
6/23/09 Board of Directors Meeting

APPROVED by the Board of Directors on 8/20/09

1) Welcome, Introductions & Announcements

Those present:

Board Members: Lloyd Carnahan (Benton City), Dave Brown (City of Yakima), Mike Leita & Terry Keenhan (Yakima County), Leo Bowman (Benton County), Paul Ward (Yakama Nation)

Guests: Jim Milton (YBWRA), Joel Hubble & Wendy Christiansen (BOR), Carol Ready (YTAHP)

Staff: Alex Conley, Angie Begosh

Chairman Paul Ward confirmed the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 4:35 pm. After introductions, minutes of the April 30th, 2009 meeting were approved as presented. Alex reviewed announcements and correspondence with the Board. A summary is included in the Board packet.

2) Lead Entity Program Update

Angie updated the Board on the status of existing SRFB projects and presented a list of all the proposals requesting 2009 SRFB funding. The Board reviewed the list of proposals and discussed how we can help secure other sources of funding as we have a large list this grant round, and there will not be enough SRFB funding to fund all of the good proposals. The Board also discussed how the SRFB's Mid-Columbia funding allocation should be divided between the Yakima and Klickitat Lead Entity project lists. In past years, we were easily able to divide the allocation but this year it will not be as easy as both Lead Entities will likely end up with longer project lists that exceed the total amount of funding available. Alex indicated that a 70/30 split is likely a realistic ratio based on potential and need of the basins. There was discussion about how we should determine the split and questions on what the formal decision making body is for the Klickitat Lead Entity. The Board is not willing to negotiate until the draft lists are identified and the Klickitat decision makers are determined. There was general agreement that an independent 3rd party review would be preferred over a state decision. The whole Board indicated that they would be okay with the Executive Committee handling these discussions as needed.

3) Recovery Planning Update

Alex updated the Board on efforts to complete final edits and a draft response to comments for the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan; the plan is due to be submitted to NOAA for publication in September. The Board requested that the revised draft and the response to comments be posted on the Board's webpage and be made available to interested parties prior to its submission to NOAA. Alex also updated the Board on the regional-level steelhead monitoring discussions with NOAA, CBFWA and others. Bull trout planning is on hold as it is not time critical at this moment (but will resume in September). Paul invited the Board to view the Yakama Nation's Kelt/Sturgeon program at Prosser.

4) Board Contracts with RCO/SRFB

Alex explained that for the new biennium our two base contracts (the WDFW Lead Entity contract and the SRFB Recovery Organization contract) have been combined into a single contract with the SRFB. The Board survived major budget challenges with its budget effectively intact, and is now working with the SRFB to finalize the 2009-2011 biennial contract (copies of the current draft were provided). Leo moved to allow the Board Chair and Executive Director (Paul/Alex) to approve the final RCO contract. Mike seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

5) SRFB/Lead Entity/GSRO Consolidation Update

Alex explained the RCO/Lead Entity/Governor's Salmon Recovery Office consolidation to the Board. The status of LEAG is uncertain at this point, and the board briefly discussed options. There was little enthusiasm for creating new coordinating entities, but the Board encouraged staff discussions with other Columbia Basin boards to discuss coordinated advocacy.

6) Proposal to fund WDFW Participation in Key Recovery Planning Activities

John Easterbrooks with WDFW updated the Board on the status of WDFW budget cuts and their implications for Fisheries Department participation in Board programs. The Board reviewed a proposal to provide funding to cover part of the cost of WDFW staff participation in development of Board planning products. The Board brought up several basic questions – are there other uses for this money that would be lost to our organization (opportunity cost) and what uses would best serve our mission? Alex expressed his support for using funds in this manner, as it would maintain local expertise in the basin rather than support third-party contractors. Leo expressed that if this is a good use of our money and serves our mission, we should move forward with it. Leo moved to develop a proposal to partially fund Jim Cummin's position at \$ 24,856. Mike Leita seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

7) Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Program Work Group

Wendy Christiansen of the Bureau of Reclamation gave an update on the YRBWEP workgroup. There will be a kickoff meeting at the Arboretum with the public invited. The Board is requesting funding for the workgroup process from its internal "Water for America" funding program, and noted that a support letter from the Board would be appreciated. Leo moved to compose a support letter from the Board, Dave Brown seconded and it passed. Mike Leita abstained from this vote.

8) Board Logistics

The Board identified a date for the next meeting and discussed the status of the Executive Committee and Board of Directors membership. Paul suggested a round of outreach to local governments, as in many cities, both staff and elected positions have changed, and some signatories of the ILAs may not be aware that they have a role on the Board. Carol Ready offered to write a letter of support for the Board outlining the benefit of the work the Board does.

The Board reviewed financial documents. There was concern that we had such low reserve. Alex explained that we work on a reimbursement basis and as such, don't have a reserve because it isn't permitted, and require use of a line of credit to bridge the period between when new advances can't be issued until the previous one is reconciled by RCO. The Board discussed the need to build a more diversified funding base as a long term solution.

The Board discussed land acquisition projects, with Leo Bowman asking how we can ensure that we are sensitive to the issues associated with impacts of conservation acquisitions on County tax rolls. Board members discussed how land acquired for conservation purposes and associated tax payments are handled by different organizations.

Paul adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm.