



YAKIMA BASIN
FISH AND WILDLIFE
RECOVERY BOARD

MINUTES

9/3/08 Board of Directors Meeting

As approved by the Board of Directors on 11/12/08

Those present:

Board: Paul Ward (Yakama Nation), Nancy Lillquist (City of Ellensburg), Mike Leita, Don Gatchalian & Terry Keenhan (Yakima County), Neil McClure (City of Yakima), Dan Valoff (Kittitas County).

Staff: Angie Begosh, Alex Conley,

Partners: Phil Miller (GSRO, by phone), Derek Sandison (Ecology), Heather Simmons-Rigdon (RC&D), Nick Gayeski (Wild Fish Conservancy), Jim Milton (YBWRA)

Paul Ward called the meeting to order at 5:36. Following introductions and confirmation of a quorum, the Board reviewed the July 30th minutes. Neil McClure moved to accept the minutes as written, Mike Leita seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. The agenda was adjusted to move guest speakers to the top of the agenda.

Department of Ecology Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement

Derek Sandison, regional director for the Department of Ecology, updated the Board on the development of a Supplemental EIS for the Yakima Basin Water Storage Study. Alex has been working with Ecology to help coordinate these efforts and ensure that the board is involved when appropriate. The primary focus of the Board's involvement would be on clearly identifying options for fish habitat improvement. Mike Leita wanted to know how much staff time would be dedicated to this process. Alex wasn't certain, but indicated possibly 10 – 20 % of time in October and less once a draft document is released. Nancy asked if the resulting document would be useful beyond initial intent. Mike Leita pointed out that it is an important step is to clearly identify the problems facing the basin and possible solutions. Mike indicated that he supports the process. Paul stated that he is okay with Alex's involvement and supports his efforts. All other board members present concurred.

South-Central Washington RC&D

Heather Simmons-Rigdon gave a presentation on the Resource Conservation & Development program and the South Central Washington RC & D. She spoke about the national program and gave a general overview of the local program's focus on natural resources and economic and rural development. She listed many of the local projects RC&D is involved in and noted that a large % the RC&D's work is coordinating the YTAHP program, which is focused on salmon recovery. She also noted that the Board was exploring some ideas for salmon and watershed-related education and outreach, and that Frank Sweet of the City of Selah and Bob Tuck of YBEEP were starting up an Environmental Education Committee.

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SRFB/Lead Entity Update

Angie gave the Board an overview of this year's SRFB process to the Board, and presented our proposed Lead Entity list. Mike Leita moved to approve the Lead Entity List as presented and submit it to the SRFB. Neil McClure seconded the motion and it passed. Alex updated the Board about the allocation of funding between the Yakima and Klickitat basins.

Steelhead Recovery Plan Update:

Alex updated the Board on the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan and NOAA's plans to release it in September as part of the Mid-Columbia Steelhead Recovery Plan. A copy of the webpage and a draft list of meetings are included in the board packet. Angie and Alex will be dedicating a significant portion of their time in October to planning these meetings. Neil moved for Paul to sign a letter requesting that NOAA and the GSRO recognize the 8-18-2008 version of the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan as the interim recovery plan for the Yakima Basin. Nancy seconded the motion, and it passed. A copy of the letter was included in the board packet.

Monitoring Update

Alex provided an update on the status of the Washington Monitoring Forum and the Board's proposed research, monitoring and evaluation plan for steelhead in the Yakima Basin.

GSRO Input on State Agency Budget Proposals

Phil updated the board on the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office report that he is preparing for submission to the State Office of Financial Management. Alex asked the Board to approve providing Phil Miller with the completed Regional Salmon Recovery Plan Implementation Template for his use in discussions of the state budget. A copy of the template was included in the packet. The Board indicated they were comfortable providing the document to Phil.

Other Board Business

Alex updated the Board on the progress of acquiring office space; he is still confirming that the landlord will construct the bathroom to ADA standards. Alex noted that he and Angie are working with Bob Villbrandt to secure 501c3 status. The Board reviewed the financial reports

Alex and Angie presented their preferred option for a retirement plan for Board staff (a summary was included in the Board packet). Mike Leita expressed that this was an Executive Committee decision, and all present concurred.

Alex asked the Board to review the job description for the Recovery Program Coordinator. Phil Miller indicated that it looks acceptable to him. There is a good potential candidate pool and we have money in the budget to support this position. Board members expressed support for proceeding with the hiring process pending approval by the Executive Committee. Alex noted that once this position and the proposed office manager position are hired, the Board would be at full staffing levels.

Paul reported that the Yakama Nation is increasing its focus on lamprey conservation in agreement with BPA. They will be hiring a full time lamprey biologist and technician.

Alex will send out an email to confirm the date for the next meeting which will be the Annual Meeting (tentatively October 22). All agreed to adjourn meeting at 7:45 pm.