



# 2018 Communications Plan

for the Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board

Approved by the Board in January 2018



YAKIMA BASIN  
FISH & WILDLIFE  
RECOVERY BOARD

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# Communications Plan Overview

YBFWRB staff developed a Communications Plan in early 2015 to help the YBFWRB more effectively share its story and successes, and explain in a clear, unified way why fish and wildlife recovery in the Yakima Basin matters to its many target audiences. YBFWRB hired Cascadia Consulting Group (Cascadia) in August 2015 to update the Communications Plan. As part of this update, Cascadia conducted phone interviews with Board members, conducted a ½ day Board workshop, and reviewed existing YBFWRB communications materials.

This updated communications plan consists of the following:

- A broad vision.
- Two year goals.
- Roles and responsibilities with regards to communications for YBFWRB staff, Board members, and committee members.
- A value proposition.
- Target audiences and communications guidelines for each.
- Strategies for monitoring and measuring progress towards near-term goals.
- Detailed work plan.

The key elements of this communications plan will:

- Provide general messages about the YBFWRB's work in the Yakima Basin.
- Identify target audiences that are most relevant to the work of the YBFWRB.
- Provide guidelines for key messaging and metrics for each audience.
- Identify target audiences for YBFWRB channels of communications.
- Provide near term, mid-range, and long-range communications priorities.



## What is a communications plan?

A communications plan describes the who, what, and how of an organization's strategy to present information. It highlights who the key audiences are, what they need or want to know, and how to most effectively reach them.

## What is the difference between communication and outreach?

Communication can be thought of the building blocks of outreach. Where outreach is the act of engaging audiences, communication is the step before where each message is carefully crafted. Having a communications plan in place ensures YBFWRB's ability to best engage key audiences.

# Background

## Mission

The Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board's (YBFWRB) mission is to restore sustainable and harvestable populations of salmon, steelhead, bull trout, and other at-risk fish and wildlife species through collaborative, economically sensitive efforts, combined resources, and wise resource management of the Yakima River Basin.

## Organizational Structure

The YBFWRB is a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation led by a 10-member Board of Directors. Board members are selected from representatives of 22 member governments, which include three counties, the Yakama Nation, and 18 cities in the Yakima Basin. The YBFWRB works with project partners such as non-profit organizations, local governments, conservation districts and state and tribal fisheries programs to advance the organization's mission.

## Roles

The work of the YBFWRB serves five primary roles in the Yakima Basin. The YBFWRB:

- Coordinates funding for fish and wildlife restoration projects in the Yakima Basin.
- Develops strategic plans to guide fish and wildlife recovery efforts in the Yakima Basin.
- Supports efforts to implement priorities identified in its strategic plans.
- Evaluates progress towards the goals set out in its strategic plans.
- Fosters public awareness and engagement in fish and wildlife recovery issues.



## Collaborative Model

Collaboration is one of the key values of the YBFWRB – the YBFWRB brings together three counties, 18 cities, and tribal government to support fish and wildlife recovery in the Yakima Basin.

This approach gives local and regional recovery efforts a more unified voice while ensuring that multiple and diverse stakeholders are represented in planning processes, project funding, and engagement with state and federal decision-makers.

Through its partnerships, the YBFWRB is uniquely positioned to bring together technical experts, policy makers and local community representatives to build consensus around long-term solutions to fish and wildlife management issues in the Yakima Basin.



## Value Proposition

The YBFWRB has been supporting fish and wildlife recovery efforts in the Yakima Basin since 2006. To date, the organization has cultivated numerous local, statewide, and federal partnerships and allocated over \$17 million in funding to over 100 local salmon recovery projects. The organization excels:



### As a connector.

The YBFWRB brings varied stakeholders together to find opportunities for collaboration, secure project funding, and minimize duplication of work in the field.



### As a facilitator.

The YBFWRB is uniquely positioned to bring together and build consensus among technical experts, policy makers and local community representatives on long-term solutions to fish and wildlife management issues in the Yakima Basin.



### As an evaluator.

The YBFWRB process for reviewing projects and allocating funding is transparent, accountable, and community-driven. It supports local action and combines a rigorous technical review with a public participation process that engages community representatives.



### As a storyteller.

The YBFWRB tells the story of salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin to share best practices among partners, build support for implementing its recovery plans, engage diverse community stakeholders, and help the general public make the link between fish and wildlife recovery and their own quality of life.

# Vision

## **Create visibility for fish and wildlife recovery efforts in the Yakima Basin.**

Increase awareness and understanding in the community of what the YBFWRB and its partners do and how we are working collaboratively to implement the priorities identified in the Board's recovery plans. Highlight the broad benefits fish and wildlife recovery can bring to the Basin.

## **Inspire change and motivate action for fish and wildlife recovery efforts.**

Through storytelling, illustrate the substantial, positive impacts of fish and wildlife recovery in the Basin, create a sense of public ownership over local watersheds and motivate action among community members.

## **Build on YBFWRB's unique role and collaborative model to connect, support, and partner with others working on fish and wildlife recovery in the Basin and beyond.**

Leverage the YBFWRB's partnerships and its experience with planning, project advocacy and grant management to foster dialogue on key recovery issues and best practices in the Yakima Basin and with state and national organizations.

# Goals

1. **Key stakeholders** understand the collaborative efforts of YBFWRB and how YBFWRB convenes partners to develop and evaluate recovery plans and allocate funding that is successfully restoring fish in the Yakima Basin.
2. **Key stakeholders** understand what the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) Grant Program is, what it can fund, how to apply, and why the intensive YBFWRB review process benefits them.
3. **Elected officials** understand the multiple benefits provided by recovery projects and advocate for and support both beneficial policies and funding for fish recovery efforts.
4. **Private landowners** in the Yakima Basin embrace and participate in voluntary land stewardship and habitat recovery efforts.
5. **Residents** of the Yakima Basin understand the benefits of salmon recovery and the link between fish and quality of life for people in the Basin.
6. **The YBFWRB and Yakama Nation** work collaboratively and effectively in a way that respects the unique role of the Yakama Nation.
7. Regular and effective internal communication among **Board members, staff and committee members** supports effective Board operations and allows participants to actively engage on behalf of the Board in their peer networks.





## Who are key stakeholders?

An important part of YBFWRB's work is collaborative work with other entities within the Yakima Basin. Key stakeholders are those individuals and groups who have an interest in and influence over fish and wildlife recovery and habitat restoration efforts within the Yakima Basin. They include:

- The Yakama Nation
- County and City Governments
- Conservation Districts
- Irrigation Districts
- State and federal legislators
- Private Landowners
- Anglers and other river users

State and Federal Agencies, including:

- WDFW, Ecology & DNR
- US Forest Service
- NOAA Fisheries
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Bureau of Reclamation

- The Mid-Columbia Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group
- Kittitas Conservation Trust
- Washington Water Trust
- Trout Unlimited

...and many more!

The YBFWRB works to foster shared understanding and good working relationships among all key stakeholders.



# Roles and Responsibilities

Major communication roles and responsibilities of YBFWRB staff, board members, and key partners are listed below.

## YBFWRB Staff

**Manage communication among internal members** including staff, Board and committee members. Internal communication should enable smooth Board operations and ensure all participants share a solid understanding of Board goals, program and activities.

**Conduct external communications activities** identified by the Board, and represent the Board in public forums. Examples include:

1. Maintaining an informative website and active social media presence;
2. Developing outreach materials such as newsletters and annual reports;
3. Giving presentations on behalf of the Board, etc.

**Facilitate Board and committee meetings.** As part of this, YBFWRB staff are responsible for:

1. Preparing the agenda in consultation with the chair.
2. Managing the proposed schedule.
3. Distributing meeting minutes within two weeks of meetings.

## Board Members

**Serve as liaisons** between the YBFWRB and community members and elected officials.

**Leverage their networks** to support YBFWRB access to local government and other target audience members (chambers of commerce, other boards and committees, etc.)

**Oversee and guide work** undertaken by the YBFWRB.

**Review external communications materials** developed by YBFWRB staff as needed.

**Share knowledge of and input from local communities and constituents** that are affected by recovery efforts with the YBFWRB.

**Conduct formal and informal outreach** among their peer networks on behalf of the Board and its goals.

## YBFWRB Key Partners

The YBFWRB can only be effective when it is part of a strong and supportive network of project partners. YBFWRB will work together with key partners to develop a collaborative approach to:

**Share information on key initiatives, projects and outcomes** so that we can work together effectively to tell the story of salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin. YBFWRB staff will attend strategically identified meetings, to be determined by the Board and Executive Director, to ensure that YBFWRB is up to date on partner project activities and outcomes and able to report on progress towards recovery goals in a consistent way.

**Promote a culture of cooperation** that encourages sharing knowledge on the latest in recovery work, best practices, and lessons learned in the field.

**Build a repository of technical information** that can be used by partners in the basin.

**Provide partners with the necessary information** to allow them to communicate with their networks about YBFWRB programs and opportunities and develop strong project proposals.

# General Messages

Our communications efforts will focus on relaying the following general messages to diverse audiences. More detail on specific messages for specific audiences is provided in later sections.

## Importance of Fish and Wildlife Recovery

- Healthy ecosystems and the fish and wildlife they support contribute to our quality of life, but have been highly impacted by our land use decisions over the last 150 years;
- Investing in recovery actions increases fish and wildlife populations, restores natural ecosystems, improves fishing and hunting opportunities and lays the groundwork for removing species from the Endangered Species Lists;
- Well-managed rivers and watersheds also provide a clean, reliable water supply, reduce flood risks to local communities, provide quality outdoor recreation opportunities and support local agricultural and natural resource economies;
- Locally-managed fish and wildlife recovery programs bring diverse stakeholders together to use state and federal resources in ways that are supported by local communities and contribute positively to local economies.

## Fish Recovery Investments are Working

- Salmon and steelhead were almost eliminated from the Yakima Basin by the mid-1990s, but are making a strong comeback today.
- The millions of dollars of public funding spent on salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin have been well spent and are playing a major part in bringing salmon and steelhead back to the Yakima Basin.
- Partners are working together collaboratively to forge innovative solutions that address challenges like climate change and habitat loss while also supporting local communities and economies.
- Continuing to support state and federal policies and funding programs is essential if we are to continue to reach recovery goals in ways that are supported by local communities.
- We are working hard to make sure that programs and regulations are implemented effectively and efficiently in ways that support- not limit- local communities.
- Tribal leadership is an essential part of our successes in the Yakima Basin, and supporting tribal treaty rights is bringing broad benefits to local communities.

## YBFWRB Accomplishments

- 22 Tribal, County and City governments came together to create the YBFWRB in 2006;
- Since 1999, the YBFWRB has partnered on over 100 habitat projects and provided more than \$17 million in funding to fish and habitat recovery projects in the Yakima Basin.
- These projects, in conjunction with the Klickitat Lead Entity in the large Middle Columbia Region, have successfully protected nearly 3,000 acres of salmon habitat, removed 245 barriers to fish migration which opens approximately 200 miles of habitat to salmon, and protected and restored nearly 135 miles of streams.
- The YBFWRB and partners completed the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan in 2008; this plan was adopted by NOAA Fisheries as part of the 2009 Middle Columbia Steelhead Recovery Plan. This locally-written plan helps partners identify and implement priority actions that are bringing back steelhead in the Yakima Basin.
- The YBFWRB convenes the Yakima Bull Trout Working Group, which pulls together state, federal, tribal and local experts to draft and implement the Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan. While bull trout are struggling, partners are collaborating to turn things around for this threatened species.
- The YBFWRB collaborates with partners to monitor and track recovery actions, so that we can tell the story of salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin and ensure that we are using resources as effectively as possible.
- The YBFWRB serves as a backbone organization, fostering collaboration and dialogue that helps partners implement effective salmon recovery programs that are both scientifically sound and locally supported.
- The YBFWRB process for soliciting and reviewing project proposals and allocating funding is transparent, accountable, and community-driven. This approach combines a rigorous technical review with a public participation process that engages community representatives.

## Opportunities to Engage

- YBFWRB and its partners are eager to work with interested landowners and managers to identify and implement recovery actions on their lands; these projects can benefit both landowners and fish and wildlife;
- Community members are encouraged to support recovery programs and partners, and to participate in YBFWRB committees and events;
- Local governments play a key role in supporting and directing recovery actions.




# Target Audience: Government

## Elected Officials and Policymakers

Effective communication with elected officials and policymakers at all levels supports development and implementation of policy that supports fish and wildlife recovery and helps to ensure a continuation of public funding for this work. It is important to clearly communicate with elected officials and policymakers about the multiple human benefits from fish recovery and how other government actions (such as growth management and shoreline planning) impact fish. Similarly, clearly communicating current work and effective tools in the regions they serve empowers government officials to advocate for targeted, cost-effective programs and policies. The YBFWRB has an opportunity to be a liaison between local and regional governments and a trusted advisor on fish and wildlife recovery efforts.

The YBFWRB's work touches all level of government including cities and counties, the Yakama Nation, multiple state and federal agencies, and state and federal legislative bodies. In communicating with elected officials and policymakers, it is key to draw a link between fish and wildlife recovery and the interests of their constituents.

### Key Messages

-  **The role of government in successful fish and wildlife recovery is critical.** The support of elected officials and policymakers drives funding and public involvement in fish and wildlife recovery efforts.
-  **Fish recovery is not just about fish – it supports people, too.** Recovery actions in the region provide:
  - Safe and healthy fish for harvest.
  - Improved recreational opportunities.
  - Improved water quality for all uses.
  - Jobs and economic activity as local communities undertake habitat restoration work.
-  **The YBFWRB process is a well-respected process and includes public participation** – no project is funded without support of the Citizens Advisory Committee, ensuring a base of local community buy-in and support. The community based restoration model espoused by lead entities puts more control in the hands of residents to ensure that funding goes to projects that simultaneously benefit fish and people.



## How to reach this audience

Specific messengers are the best way to reach this audience. Elected officials are most likely to listen to three groups: other elected officials, influential constituents, and groups that generate significant economic activity within their districts. In general, personal contact tends to be the best way to reach this audience. Best messengers for this audience include

- YBFWRB Board members, particularly those who are elected officials themselves
- Agricultural businesses or groups
- Constituents

## Metrics

- ✓ Completion of work plan elements related to elected officials and policy makers.
- ✓ Percentage of relevant elected officials representing the Yakima Basin that YBFWRB representatives meet with at least once a year.
- ✓ Percentage of key policymaking agencies active in the Yakima Basin that YBFWRB representatives meet with at least once a year.
- ✓ Number of materials developed with a target audience of elected officials (e.g., fact sheets, project success booklets, etc.)



# Target Audience: Landowners

Effective communication with landowners helps them make the link between fish, wildlife and habitat restoration and human benefits. The goal is to have landowners actively support voluntary stewardship projects and view the YBFWRB as an organization with shared interests and common goals.

In communicating with landowners, it is key to not only promote the environmental benefits of fish and wildlife recovery, but also appeal to preservation of the economic value (such as jobs, clean water and recreational access) of the land.

## Key Messages

- 🗨️ **We recognize the importance of property rights and economic interests.**
- 🗨️ **Our communities are made stronger and our lives enriched by our investments in salmon recovery.** Benefits include cleaner water, reduced flood impacts, improved fishing and recreation, and opportunities to support tourism businesses.
- 🗨️ **Fish and wildlife recovery efforts are about protecting and restoring land, and they are working.** We have strategic plans to guide our investments, and are seeing fish populations returning to levels that support fishing.
- 🗨️ **There are diverse sources of funding and technical support available** that can assist landowners and managers as they identify and implement habitat restoration projects that can also directly benefit their interests as landowners. Agriculture and conservation can thrive together.

## How to reach this audience

Rural landowners can be a difficult audience to reach. The most effective messengers tend to be those who understand rural and agricultural interests. Best messengers for this audience include:

- Conservation districts
- Irrigation districts
- Other landowners who have participated in habitat restoration projects

## Metrics

- ✓ Completion of work plan elements related to landowners.
- ✓ Number of outreach efforts specific to this audience (e.g., presentations at Irrigation Districts, personal contact with specific landowners, outreach material developed specifically for landowners, etc.)



# Target Audience: Internal

## Staff, Board Members, and Committee Members

Targeted internal communications enable the board and committee members to tell the story about the YBFWRB and salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin in a clear, accurate, and consistent manner. All internal members are able to articulate the general what and why of the YBFWRB (General Messages, above). The goal is to keep board and committee members informed of the work the YBFWRB is doing so that board and committee members can, in turn, clearly and accurately communicate with other stakeholders about the YBFWRB story.

### Key Messages

- 🗨️ **The YBFWRB could not do its work without internal members;** individual contributions are directly tied to organizational success.
- 🗨️ **One of the YBFWRB's greatest assets is its ability to collaborate and develop partnerships** – internal members play a critical role in supporting and developing new partnerships and can help promote the YBFWRB in their respective networks.
- 🗨️ **The YBFWRB approach is unique and effective.**

### Metrics

- ✓ Completion of work plan elements related to Staff, Board members, and Committee members.
- ✓ Attendance levels at Board, Technical Committee, and Citizens Committee meetings.
- ✓ Percentage of members who review materials before meetings (informal assessment tracked by staff when recording attendance).
- ✓ Results of an annual survey of Board and Committee members. This survey can be conducted using an online survey tool, such as SurveyMonkey. Questions should address:
  - Self-assessed level of understanding of salmon recovery efforts.
  - Self-assessed level of understanding of YBFWRB work.
  - Level of sharing YBFWRB work with their networks.
  - Level of support for YBFWRB overall and for its initiatives.
- ✓ Assessment of the value and effectiveness of meetings.
- ✓ Recommendations for improving meetings and YBFWRB in general the following year.
- ✓ Length of time Board and Committee seats remain vacant.



# Target Audience: Funders

## Current and Potential Funders for the Yakima Basin

Successful fisheries recovery work in the Yakima Basin is sustained by funding from local, regional, state, and federal agencies. In order to maintain or increase funding for recovery work in the Yakima Basin, the YBFWRB and its partners need to maintain a strong reputation in the eyes of current and prospective funders; To maintain its own funding the YBFWRB needs to be seen as a knowledgeable and reliable organization that leads a strong project review process, develops well-supported and technically sound strategic plans, and convenes diverse partners in a constructive manner. Because of our role as a connector and facilitator, many of our partners look to us to assist in identifying and assisting in bringing new funding into the Basin.

Effective communication with both public and private funding agencies will emphasize the robust project vetting process used by the YBFWRB and show how the on-the-ground fish and wildlife achievements by our partners are achieving important recovery plan goals. Frequent communications with funding entities will increase YBFWRB's ability to engage and bring on new donors and project sponsors; maintain strong relationships with existing funders; and enable funders to understand, have confidence in, and advocate for the YBFWRB's project review process and recovery planning work.

Members of this audience include:

- Local, regional, state, and federal agencies, some of which include:
  - U.S. Bureau of Fish and Wildlife
  - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries
  - Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)
  - Washington State Department of Ecology
- Private philanthropic foundations.
- Corporations and corporate-sponsored grant programs.

See the companion document on Funding Sources for a more detailed list of agencies and grant opportunities for non-profits working on fish and wildlife recovery.

In communicating with project funders, it is key to draw a link between the work the YBFWRB is doing and successes in fish and wildlife recovery. It is equally important for funders to understand that, although YBFWRB and its partners have had many successes, there is much work that still needs to be done.

## Key Messages

- 
**Fish recovery investments and efforts are working; fish counts in the region are improving.** However, there is still much work to be done, and targeted new funding can advance key priorities.
- 
**The YBFWRB process is unique** in that it involves both a scientific and a citizens' review, ensuring both scientific grounding and local community support for projects.
- 
**The YBFWRB's recommendations for habitat project funding have been trusted and highly valued** by the SRFB and others since 2006 through its work as Washington SRFB local Lead Entity in the Yakima Basin.
- 
**The YBFWRB is a trusted organization in the Yakima Basin.** It is knowledgeable about the diverse recovery efforts in the region, is able to effectively collaborate with various local groups, and can connect individuals and organizations to best take advantage of existing strengths, minimize duplication of efforts, and maximize efficacy of each dollar spent.

## Metrics

Funding metrics are affected by factors far beyond YBFWRB control, including overall state and federal budgets and priorities. As a result, they should be used primarily to indicate when the YBFWRB should adjust its activities to reflect new funding levels or increase outreach to potential funders and elected officials. They should not be used to judge the effectiveness of the YBFWRB.

- ✓ Completion of work plan elements related to funders.
- ✓ Annual funding from state and federal agencies.
- ✓ Number or dollar value of projects funded using the YBFWRB process (excluding SRF Board funds).
- ✓ Number of non-state/federal contracts/grants pursued and received.th their networks.



## Target Audience: Project Partners

Effective communication with project partners positions the YBFWRB to be a valuable resource that effectively implements recovery actions on the ground. Targeted partner communication that describes the YBFWRB work and role in a compelling way can help the YBFWRB secure new partnerships and maintain or grow a pool of high-quality project applicants each year. Project partners enable the YBFWRB to reach a more diverse audience and access otherwise hard-to-reach target audiences. The YBFWRB's is in a unique position to coordinate funding and help partners develop projects and programs that address recovery plan priorities. The SRFB grant process assists project partners in honing project details such that even those that are below the funding line are often provided funding through other sources. It is important that YBFWRB encourages and develops this role as a connector and facilitator. The YBFWRB should celebrate the successes of and communicate the work of its project partners, and its partners should likewise champion the YBFWRB through their respective channels.

Examples of YBFWRB partners include, but are not limited to:

- Local conservation districts
- Public land managers
- Land and water trusts
- Fisheries managers
- Tribes
- Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups
- Counties & municipalities
- Irrigation districts

In communicating with project partners, the YBFWRB should emphasize its key value proposition in the fish and wildlife recovery arena, particularly as a connector, storyteller, and unbiased expert evaluator.

## Key Messages

- 🗨️ **The YBFWRB has been a trusted collaborator and partner** of organizations in the Yakima Basin since 1999.
- 🗨️ **The YBFWRB is collaborative and transparent;** the project review process offers an objective, scientifically-sound, and locally supported evaluation.
- 🗨️ **The YBFWRB supports project partners in a number of ways;** its key strengths are project coordination, project review and assessment, and information sharing.
- 🗨️ **YBFWRB is knowledgeable and connected**—assisting projects partners in finding the right funding for projects.

## Metrics

- ✓ Completion of work plan elements related to partners.
- ✓ Number of partners worked with during the year.
- ✓ Number of projects identified by partners, potentially measured by number of applications received through partner recruitment.
- ✓ Number of projects funded by others that YBFWRB substantially supports in non-funding ways during the year.
- ✓ Number of grants and updates listed in other sources of funding page on YBFWRB website.
- ✓ Results of an annual survey of partners.





# Target Audience: Recreation Groups

Recreation groups may include fishers, boaters, and other outdoors people. Effective communication with these groups helps them make the link between wildlife and habitat restoration and human benefits.

In communicating with recreation groups, it is key to draw a link from fish and wildlife recovery efforts to increased fishing opportunities, cleaner water, and greater long-term access to recreation activities.

## Key Messages

### **The YBFWRB and recreation group goals are aligned –**

both groups are working to improve fishing activities within the Yakima Basin through cleaner water, improved water passage, and larger fish populations, all of which contribute to better outdoor opportunities for people in the Yakima Basin.

### **Habitat projects support sustainable management efforts**

that ultimately improve fish, wildlife and habitat conditions to benefit all.

## Metrics

- ✓ Completion of work plan elements related to recreation groups.
- ✓ Number of outreach activities specific to recreation groups.










# Target Audience: Local Tribes

The YBFWRB prides itself on its strong relationships with the Yakama Nation, one of its founding Board members. Collaboration with the Tribe enables effective fish and wildlife restoration in the Yakima Basin.

## Key Messages

-  **The YBFWRB and Tribes share a common goal** – increasing fish and wildlife populations in the Yakima Basin.
-  **The YBFWRB recovery planning efforts should be aligned with Tribal priorities.**
-  **The YBFWRB and Tribes have a number of complementary strengths** and can utilize them to support one another.
-  **The YBFWRB understands and respects the important role of Tribes in the Yakima Basin.**
-  **Past collaboration between the YBFWRB and Tribes has been valuable and successful.**

## Metrics

- ✓ Completion of work plan elements related to local tribes.
- ✓ Number of projects the YBFWRB partners on with local tribes.
- ✓ Results of an annual discussion between YBFWRB staff and key tribal partners on successes and opportunities for improvement based on the past year.





## Target Audience: General Public

In this case, the general public refers to residents of the Yakima Basin who do not fit into an audience previous listed. Though this audience does not directly affect the SRFB process or recovery planning, the YBFWRB depends on community buy-in and local support both for project funding approval (through the Citizens Advisory Board) and as advocates to policymakers and other interest groups. Constituents are also effective messengers to elected officials. Effective communication with the general public can improve understanding of salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin and its benefits to the community at large, help secure local government support for recovery work, and support a potential donor and/or volunteer base for organizations working on fish and habitat recovery.

In communicating with the general public, it is key to draw a link between fish and wildlife recovery and human benefits and, where available, present simple, concrete actions individuals can take to help.



## Key Messages

- Fish recovery is not just about fish – it supports people, too.** Recovery actions in the region provide:
  - Safe and healthy fish for harvest.
  - Improved recreational opportunities.
  - Reduced flood risks.
  - Improved water quality for all uses.
  - Jobs and economic activity as local communities undertake habitat restoration work see more recreation activity.
  
- See similar messaging** under “Elected Officials and Policymakers,” “Landowners” and “Recreation Groups” for more.
  
- There are a number of ways to get involved** in fish and wildlife recovery efforts. You can:
  - Contact your elected officials and the local media.
  - Donate to and volunteer for fish recovery projects and recovery organizations.

## Metrics

- ✓ Completion of work plan elements related to the general public.
- ✓ Number of self-generated media (e.g., letters to the editor, op-eds, etc.)
- ✓ Number of constituents willing to serve as messengers to government audience.
- ✓ Proxy metrics for public engagement, such as Facebook followers, newsletter subscribers, unique website visitors, and material downloads from the YBFWRB website.






# Target Audience: Media Representatives

Effective communication and engagement with media representatives can help the YBFWRB reach a broader audience and access otherwise hard-to-reach target audience members. Media, in particular, can help reach the general public to build support for new projects and build engagement and enthusiasm for recovery topics. Media representatives can be used to support the work of the YBFWRB and its partners throughout the region. Some of the media channels that the YBFWRB may engage include:

- Newspaper
- Radio
- TV
- Social Media

## Key Messages

-  **What's good for fish is good for us.** See similar messaging under "Elected Officials and Policymakers", "Recreation Groups", and the "General Public"
-  **General what and why of the YBFWRB** (from General Messages, above).
-  **Salmon is a culturally important symbol** in the Yakima Basin and the state; stories about salmon capture public interest.
-  **The Yakima Basin is a hotbed of salmon and other fish recovery efforts** and there are many success stories. Not only is there a human interest piece due to the shared value of the salmon as a symbol of regional health, the story covers a broad community groups (government, residents, landowners and recreationalists, technical experts, Tribes).

## Metrics

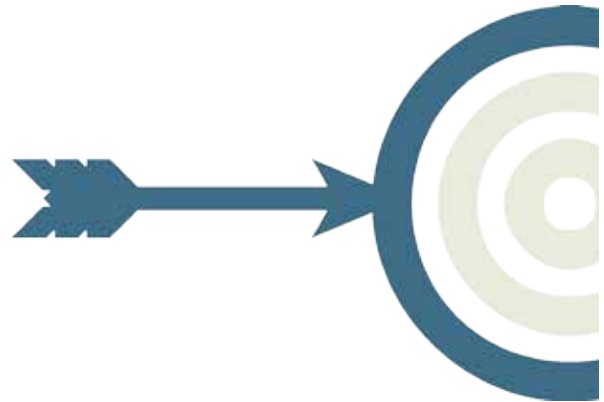
- ✓ Completion of work plan elements related to media.
- ✓ Number of times the YBFWRB press kit and press releases are downloaded.
- ✓ Number of stories mentioning YBFWRB, measured using free tools such as Google News (for online media) and informal tracking by YBFWRB staff.
- ✓ Number of stories mentioning fish recovery in the Yakima Basin or Yakima River, measured using free tools such as Google News.
- ✓ Number of press inquiries.
- ✓ Number of major stories that receive widespread media traction (such as publication in major newspapers outside the Yakima Basin).

# Priorities and Proposed Work Plan

In order to bring this Communication Plan to life, we have identified near-term, mid-range, and long-term priorities. They are used to inform development of an annual communications work plan that identifies specific tasks and responsibilities for a given year. The end of this section provides detail on specific communication channels to maintain to reach targeted audiences.

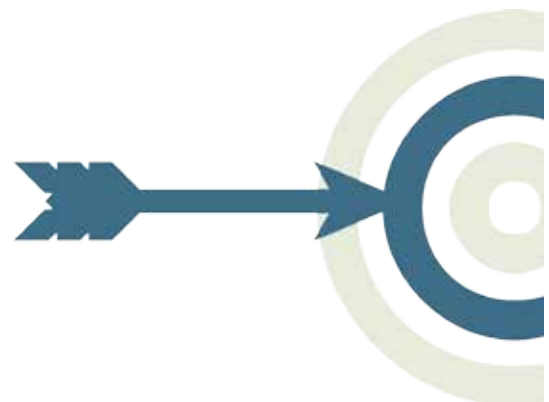
## Near-term priorities

1. To support internal communications, review and agree upon communications expectations among YBFWRB staff and board members for the coming year. Include agreed upon roles and expectations in new staff and board member training and consider producing an onboarding packet and process for new members.
2. Identify case studies that can strengthen target audience messaging. For each target audience, identify an example or case study that is representative of what the YBFWRB and the target audience can accomplish or has accomplished together. These case studies can also be used to illustrate how YBFWRB's work impacts key audiences. Include compelling photos and graphics.
3. Develop a half page briefing document for Board members and project partners to talk about the YBFWRB role and salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin and highlight 1-2 key accomplishments. The briefing document will better enable the Board members and project partners to talk about the YBFWRB's role and salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin. With talking points in hand, YBFWRB advocates can more easily speak about the organization and do so in a clearer, more consistent, and unified way.



## Mid-range priorities

1. Prepare new communication materials with input from partners and Board members for target external audiences, including
2. Publish and promote new communications materials. Encourage project partners and Board members to share materials with their own networks as well, particularly to target audiences that are harder for the YBFWRB to directly reach.

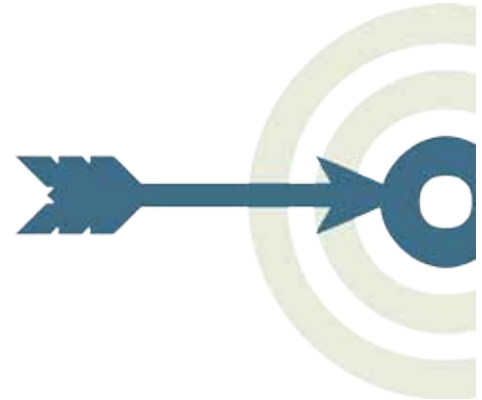


# PRIORITIES AND PROPOSED WORK PLAN

3. Obtain and track communications engagement data (such as Facebook engagement, newsletter metrics, material downloads from website) where available. Use this data to identify what materials are most read and what communications channels have the largest audiences.












## Long-range priorities

1. Compile project information from grant recipients into a database to support tracking, monitoring, and reporting of project work. This will improve the YBFWRB's ability to report on on-the-ground success and support data-driven storytelling efforts. It can also help engage and attract existing and new funding opportunities through improved accountability and ability to report on funding impacts.
2. Compile funding information for project partners into a database that is dynamic and searchable. This supports YBFWRB's role in the Basin as a connector and promotes YBFWRB's mission by providing funding opportunities to more projects than is possible through the SRFB.
3. Engage members of the general public and encourage them to conduct broader outreach. For example, general public members who are interested and excited about salmon recovery efforts can potentially serve as "fish recovery stewards" or YBFWRB ambassadors to educate other community members and provide presentations (using materials that have already been developed) to community organizations on behalf of YBFWRB.
4. Provide forums at the appropriate level of formality and scale for partners, Tribes, government, and other stakeholders to share recovery project work, existing opportunities, best practices, and lessons learned. These may be more specific working groups, such as that previously convened for bull trout, or for broader fish and wildlife recovery efforts in the Yakima Basin.



## Communications Strategies / Channels

The YBFWRB maintains ongoing communications channels. Below, target audiences for each communication channel and the purpose of the communication are reviewed. This framework can be used to help decide what information should be published where and help the YBFWRB assess which audiences it is currently best able to reach, informing future strategic communications.

Channel	Purpose	Target audience(s)
<b>Facebook</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage Yakima Basin community members and generate interest about fish recovery efforts locally and beyond.</li> <li>Promote opportunities for community involvement, where available, such as through solicitation of stories from the public about their experiences with fish and the river. For example, ask Facebook followers to share stories such as “the biggest fish I ever caught” or “my favorite part in the Yakima Basin.”</li> </ul>	
<b>Monthly Update Newsletter</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a regular and easy-to-access source of information about YBFWRB current work, industry news, and upcoming events.</li> <li>Promote YBFWRB and project partner latest work and accomplishments</li> </ul>	
<b>Website</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide information to those interested in applying for grants about past projects, project eligibility, and the process.</li> <li>For funders, provide information about past projects, where money was spent, and how effective the work was.</li> </ul>	
<b>Quarterly Report</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highlight recent and past YBFWRB work and major industry news.</li> <li>Support unified communication among YBFWRB stakeholders by providing key messaging and brief talking points for highlighted projects.</li> </ul>	
<b>State of the Yakima (presentation)</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide broad overview about recovery work in the region</li> <li>Presents accomplishments of the YBFWRB and its partners in a concise, easily digestible way</li> <li>Supports dialogue among project implementers and elected officials on recovery work.</li> </ul>	
<b>State of the Yakima (report)</b> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enables broader distribution of information from the State of the Yakima presentation.</li> </ul>	