

MEETING OVERVIEW

For the March 24, 2021 YBFWRB Board of Directors Meeting

This will be an online meeting that you can join via computer and phone. We have cancelled the pre-meeting work session, so the meeting will commence at 2 pm.

Meeting link: <https://www.gotomeet.me/AlexC/ybfwrb-meetings>

You can also dial in using your phone.

United States: [+1 \(786\) 535-3211](tel:+17865353211)

Access Code: 692-652-957

NOTES ON DIGITAL MEETING:

- 1. We are using GoTo Meeting. Please join the meeting 5-10 minutes early so that you have time to set up any required plug-ins, etc.*
- 2. If you are having trouble joining the meeting, email or text Alex (509 654-0394; aconley@ybfwrb.org)*
- 3. Please do use the computer link so that you can view shared materials and use the chat bar to participate and request a chance to speak.*
- 4. Use of video is optional but recommended.*
- 5. Note that using computer audio and/or video requires a fast web connection; if your connection is struggling, call in via phone.*
- 6. We will be monitoring the chat bar during the meeting; please do use “??” if you would like us to call on you to speak. We may also use the chat function to call for Yeas and Nays on motions.*
- 7. When not talking, please mute yourself on the GoTo meeting control panel to avoid feedback and background noise.*

MEETING OVERVIEW

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

- 1. Introductions:** We'll start the meeting with introductions, review/approval of the agenda, and review/approval of the minutes from our January Board of Directors Meeting. The **agenda, draft minutes and notes of the March Executive Committee meeting** are attached (items #1,3 & 4).

2a. Announcements and Updates, to include:

- a. BLM Funding Update: Our current funding agreement with the BLM runs out this September; last Friday I submitted a proposal for a new five-year funding agreement for up to \$400,000 total. This has been a great way to fund projects on BLM lands (like the Ringer Road area revegetation projects now underway) and supplement SRFB funding for projects located in

watersheds that are priorities to BLM based on the location of their lands (eg Cowiche and Swauk Creeks). Since our first agreement in 2015 the BLM has provided \$223,059 to the Board and its local partners.

- b. Nelson Dam Video: The City of Yakima has put out a short video highlighting the Nelson Dam project that I will share on the call. Here's a link to a nice op ed in the [Yakima Herald](#). This is a great multi-benefit project and the City of Yakima has been working hard to secure the final funding needed so that construction can start this fall. The \$4.5 million Fish Passage Barrier Removal Board application for this project that we helped the City complete is ranked #1 on the funding list now before the legislature.
- c. At our January meeting, the Board approved a funding agreement with Benton County Conservation District. BCD has hired Aaorn Pelley to complete the agreed on-work, and he is doing a great job compiling information to support water star grass control pilots in the Lower Yakima and completing an inventory of existing water quality monitoring work and keep gaps.
- d. Other updates from meeting participants?

2b. Correspondence

There is no incoming correspondence for Board review. Outgoing correspondence was limited to the letter to legislators approved at the January meeting.

3. Hiring Updates

I am excited to announce that Michael Horner will be joining the Board staff on April 5th as our Lead Entity Program Coordinator. Michael has a strong background in grant administration, GIS skills, a Master of Public Administration from the Evans School, and a recently completed Masters of Science, Cultural and Environmental Resource Management from CWU. He'll be jumping right in running the Lead Entity Grant Program which starts up in full force in mid-April.

I am currently selecting candidates and scheduling interviews for the Operations/Outreach Manager position; we received 24 applications, 10 of which met qualifications. I have selected 7 of these for further review, and plan to interview the top 4-6 next week. We've got some strong candidates, so I am excited to complete interviews and make an offer!

4. 2021 Grand Round

13 SRFB preapplications were received by the March 5th deadline, with a total estimated request of between 3 and 4 million (we anticipate being able to fund 1.2 to 2 million this year, depending on the final state budget and federal Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund award amount).

Last week Alex and Elizabeth Butler (Our RCO grant manager in Olympia) met with each sponsor for a virtual preapplication conference to discuss the proposed projects, how they meet eligibility and project type criteria, and what sponsors can do to develop the best full applications possible. Michael joined us for almost all of them despite not yet formally being on staff.

Numbers will change as sponsors choose which preproposals to further develop and tighten up their budgets, but every indication is that we will have a strong suite of projects and a competitive grant round. Sponsors are now working to complete full applications, which are due April 16. Project

presentations to our review committees will be on April 22, and the (likely virtual) site tours will occur on May 11, 12 and/or 13.

5. Committee Membership Vacancies

a. Nomination of Kat Thompson to fill the Benton County Citizen Committee Vacancy*

Our Benton County members will be nominating Kat Thompson for the Board to approve as a Citizen Committee member. Here's her personal statement:

I have a degree in Environmental Science from Oklahoma State University with an emphasis on water resources. I spent three years working with a professor in OSU's Department of Geology studying geophysics; mainly working with electrical resistivity imaging of contaminated sites. We did research in western Nebraska Sandhills, the Oklahoma's Arbuckle-Simpson aquifer, the Nueces Delta preserve in Texas, and other DEQ sites within Oklahoma.

While in Oklahoma, I was a volunteer with the Oklahoma Conversation Commission's Water Quality Division, Blue Thumb Program. I participated in the monitoring efforts by participating in the biological collection of benthic macroinvertebrates and physical/chemical monitoring of water quality of local streams. I also worked for a summer assisting a Ph.D. candidate categorizing macroinvertebrates to determine water quality.

Currently, I am working at Hanford in environmental compliance. I am the environmental manager for the characterization, deactivation, and demolition of buildings and structures in the 200 West area of the site. Much of my work is reviewing documentation to ensure compliance with state and federal regulations and ensuring proper implementation in the field. I don't have a lot of background fish habit protection and restoration projects, but I would love the opportunity to learn more about it and participate in the YBFWRB program.

b. Remaining Citizen Committee Vacancies:

With the nomination of Kat, we have 11 of 16 Citizen Committee seats filled for the 2021 grant round. Each County has 4 seats, with members nominated by consensus of the City and County Board of Directors members from that County; the Yakama Nation also has 4 seats.

- With the resignation of Onni Perala, who had been a member since 1999, we have one vacancy to fill in Yakima County.
- Last week, David Bowen, founding Board member and subsequent Citizen Committee member for Kittitas County recently let me know that with his new job heading up Ecology's Hanford office in the Tri-Cities, he will no longer be able to be on the committee, leaving us with 1 vacancy for Kittitas County members to fill. The other three Kittitas County members are committed to participating this year.
- We have three vacant Yakama Nation Citizen Committee seats.

In order to facilitate filling seats prior to the citizen committee engagement in the 2021 Grant Round (which starts on April 22), I would propose that the Board delegate formal approval of citizen committee members nominated via email by consensus of the Board of Directors members from

that area to the Executive Committee. Nominations can also be considered at the May 19 Board of Directors meeting.

c. Technical Advisory Group Vacancies:

This month, Joel Freudenthal of Yakima County stepped down from the TAG due to competing workloads and Ashton Bunce announced that she is taking a job in Montana. This leaves the TAG with 10 members; our bylaws call for 12 to 15 members. Staff is reaching out to potential candidates; suggestions are welcome. Current active members are:

Sean Gross	NOAA Fisheries
Anna Lael	Kittitas County Conservation District
Jennifer Nelson	WA Department of Fish & Wildlife
Danielle Squeochs	Yakama Nation
Arden Thomas	Kittitas County
Jason Romine	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Rebecca Wassell	Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group
Robert Parrish	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Darren Friedel	WA Department of Fish & Wildlife
Pat Monk	US Bureau of Reclamation

6. Legislative Outreach

Board members will update the group on virtual meeting held with Yakima Basin legislators since the last Board meeting, which we accompanied with the letter on Board recommendations finalized in January (sample attached as Item #5). We will also review the status of state budget and policy proposals that impact our work that are currently before the State Legislature.

Alex will give a brief update on the kickoff meeting of the Columbia Basin Collaborative being proposed by the Governors of Idaho, Washington, Montana and Oregon.

7. Recovery Program Updates and Contracts

- a) In October, the Board delegated authority to the Executive Committee to approve a **proposed partnership with the Yakama Nation to update the Satus and Toppenish Steelhead Population information and actions** from the 2009 Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan. Alex will provide an update on the development of this proposal, which is in final review by Yakama Nation’s contracting specialists. If the final version is available, we ask for a motion to approve it; if not, the delegation to the Exec will remain in effect.
- b) At the January meeting, the Board delegated final approval of the **proposed fish passage contract with Aspect Consulting** to the Executive Committee, however since it is ready now,

I am proposing that the Board of Directors approve it at this meeting. The contract is ready for signature and attached (Item #6). The contract is for a joint effort to build a GIS model and prioritize fish passage barriers in both the Yakima and the area covered by the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board (Walla Walla, Tucannon, etc) using a method piloted by Aspect Consulting and the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board. The estimated not-to-exceed cost of the contract is \$52,800, and the Snake River Board has committed \$20,000 to the project (which is roughly proportional to the area and number of barriers to be reviewed). We have worked out with RCO that we would fund and hold the agreement, with the Snake River Board then leaving \$20,000 unspent in their RCO contract so that a like amount can be added to our new contract when we renew our RCO contract in September (this allows us to spend old money now and be paid in new biennium \$s after July).

- c) Staff are proposing that the Board buy a fish-finder sonar that can be used to measure bathymetry and the amount of aquatic vegetation in a water body, for use by Board partners in water stargrass surveys and control pilots. This is a promising new mapping technology with a lot of potential for many types of habitat projects. It would allow us to map the amount and location of stargrass and compare that over time and before and after treatments. Benton Conservation District, Mid-Columbia Fisheries and the Yakama Nation have all expressed interest in its use. A flyer describing the associated mapping technology is included in the meeting packet (Item #7). The non-profit/government cost for a single unit with required accessories is \$1629.55 before tax. Here's a link: [HDS-9 LIVE with Active Imaging 3-in-1 | Lowrance USA](#)); we would develop a sign-out policy for making it available for use by partners. Alex has cleared the purchase using our regional operations grant with RCO. **At the meeting we will ask the Board to review and approve the purchase.**
- d) We will review other Recovery Program activities, current and proposed, as time allows.

8. Outreach

- a) Ashton Bunce will share the just completed Habitat Restoration Outreach Booklet, development of which has been a great team effort by the Board, the Yakama Nation and the Kittitas Conservation Trust, with input from most of our project sponsors. We look forward to being able to provide both digital and hard copy versions to land owners, project sponsors and our local government members.
- b) Heather Simmons will update the Board on the Eastern Washington Riparian Planting Symposium held February 24-25 and other activities of the riparian consortium she and Tricia established (now titled "Populus: The Columbia Basin Riparian Planting Partnership").

9. Board Logistics

- a) We are working with the BLM to use funds they have provided to us to move the large trees blown over in a windstorm at Big Pines Campground in the Yakima Canyon to the Ringer Road restoration project that we have been working with them to develop, where they will be stockpiled until project construction in 2022. These trees with attached root wads are too large to be moved by a log truck with a self-loader. We have received informal quotes from 4

contractors (all of whom have done large wood work on habitat projects in the Yakima); one came in high, one was low but not available until after the time window BLM wants the trees moved by, and the final two are similar in price. All of our costs will be fully covered via our existing cooperative agreement with BLM and BLM staff will oversee the work on the ground. While moving the trees is expensive, it is far cheaper than purchasing and transporting similar high-quality habitat logs from elsewhere. I am asking the Board to authorize staff to complete final negotiations with the two promising bidders and finalize a contract not to exceed \$14,000.

- b) There are no financial reports for this meeting; quarterly reports for Oct-Dec 2021 were reviewed in January and reports for Jan through March will be reviewed in May. All billings are up to date; spending has been low since Tricia's departure, but will be back up to what was budget when current hiring is completed.
- c) We touch base on topics and format for the May 19 Board of Directors Meeting and discuss logistics of the August 4 Annual meeting to be held in the Tri-Cities.