



YAKIMA BASIN
FISH AND WILDLIFE
RECOVERY BOARD

Minutes of the March 23, 2022 Board of Directors Meeting

As approved by the Board on 5/22/22

Meeting held from 2 pm to 4 pm via GoToMeeting web conference

Attendees: Adam Fyall (Benton County), Troy Havens & Ron Anderson (Yakima County), Jonalee Squeochs & Shannon Adams (Yakama Nation), Richard Bloom (City of West Richland), Patricia Byers, Soneya Lund & David Brown (City of Yakima), and Nancy Lillquist (City of Ellensburg).

Staff present: Alex Conley, Michael Horner, Kayla Gallentine

The business meeting of the Board of Directors was called to order at 2:00 pm following confirmation of a quorum.

1) Welcome, Introductions, Agenda and Review of Minutes* Following welcomes and introductions of new participants, the Board reviewed the agenda and adjusted the order of topics. Minutes of the January 19 Board Meeting were approved with the consent of all present.

2) Board Announcements, Updates and Correspondence.

Dave Brown noted that the Nelson Dam removal project is on target. Alex noted that Army Corps of Engineers funding of the Gap-to-gap project is moving towards constructions; like Nelson Dam this project has been over fifteen years in development.

Correspondence

The Board of Directors reviewed the send correspondence on the Little Naches Levee Project and City of Union Gap representation on the Board.

The Board of Directors reviewed and approved the Chair to sign all of the letters for below, pending minor typographic corrections provided by Troy Havens:

- 1) A comment letter on the US Forest Service Naches Upland Restoration Project EA;
- 2) Support letters for Fish Barrier Removal Board proposals for fish passage projects on Crystal Creek and Whiskey Creek;
- 3) A support letter for the Kittitas Conservation Trust's Cle Elum Floodplain Design proposal to the Floodplain by Design grant program, and;
- 4) A letter to Congress members expressing support for state and tribal comanagers request for funding to full implement and evaluate the pinniped predation management program for the Columbia River.

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The Board also discussed proposed collaboration with WSU on an NSF research grant and expressed support for a letter of collaboration to be submitted by Alex.

3) Legislative Update and Outcomes

Alex provided the Board of Directors with an update on the outcomes of the 2022 State Legislative Session, which ended March 10th. The biggest news is the approval of \$75 million for SRFB salmon projects in the state operating budget. \$25 million is allocated for projects under \$5 million each, and \$50 million for projects over \$5 million each. These funds were placed in the Salmon Recovery Account, giving the SRFB discretion on which budget cycle to fund. We are working with partners to understand how and when funding may be allocated and are telling sponsors to prepare for the possibility that additional funds may be available this year and next. For more details, please refer to the document Washington State 2022 Supplemental Legislative Session Outcomes from the meeting packet.

4) Lead Entity Program

Updates on the 2022 Grant Round: Preapplications for the 2022 grant were due on March 16th. We received 25 pre-applications. This large number can be attributed to communication around the possibility of a larger grant round due to possible funding from Infrastructure funding, the Build Back Better Bill, and increases in the State operating budget. We are working with project sponsors to identify if any of the submitted projects are good candidates for the SRFB's new Targeted Investment program for large projects, which has up to \$8.7 million allocated to it.

Filling committee vacancies: For the Citizen Committee (CC) we have confirmed the participation of all members, including some that were not active during the 2021 grant round. There is a full roster for Benton and Kittitas Counties, while there is 1 vacant position for the Yakama Nation, and 2 vacant positions for Yakima County. Michael Horner reached out to Yakima County Board members, Yakima County staff, as well as elected officials and city managers to help identify potential candidates, and Jonalee Squeochs is working with her supervisors to identify potential nominees. The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) is now at 12 members, with four new participants this year. Our bylaws specify that the TAG should consist of 12 to 15 members. The Board approved TAG and CC membership as presented, and committed to continue to work to fill remaining CC vacancies.

Fish Barrier Board Focal Watershed Strategy Update: This year, the Fish Barrier Removal Board received four preapplications from the Yakima Basin, all of which have been invited to submit full applications. Board staff are supporting applicants in this process. Three of the four applications are in the Board's FBRB focal watershed (Wilson/Naneum/Cherry Watershed). The Board reviewed and approved a letter to the Fish Barrier Removal Board highlighting priority projects in the Board's focal watershed for the Barrier Board program.

5) Recovery Program

Alex briefly presented the draft fish passage barrier priority maps being developed with Aspect consulting and discussed next steps for that project. He also noted Yakama Nation Progress on recovery plan updates for on-reservation populations and gave an update on recent Bull Trout Working Group Activities. He noted that budget analysis had shown we are not in a position to hire a full-time recovery coordinator now, and that finding funding to allow that should be a Board priority for the next year.

6) Strategic Planning Work Plan

The Board of Directors discussed work tasks and schedule details to be incorporated into an RFP for consultant support for strategic planning and directed staff to incorporate results of the discussion into a draft RFP to be reviewed via email.

7) Outreach Program Updates

Kayla Gallentine, the Board's Operations and Outreach Manager gave an update on Outreach activities since she joined the Board staff in January. Highlights include:

- Logistics and facilitation support with the 2022 Eastern Washington Riparian Planting Symposium (April 7th);
- Management of board website, social media, and mailing lists (including legislative);
- Planning for YBFWRB participation in Benton Conservation District's educational salmon event in late April;
- Completion of two presentations by Alex (one a public evening event hosted by Mid-Columbia Fisheries, and the other a presentation on the Mid-C region to the States' Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) at their quarterly meeting in March.

8) Board Logistics

a. Proposed bylaw changes: The Board of Directors reviewed proposed language to respond to the January meeting discussion of updating the membership criteria in the bylaws to eliminate ambiguities and noted that the proposed edits appear to address the concerns. Bylaw changes will be considered at the August Annual Meeting.

b. COVID policy updates: The Board of Directors reviewed the proposed COVID protocols for holding in-person meetings in the office. The group supported the policies as proposed and agreed that it was important to maintain a remote option for all meetings and that N-95 masks should be available at the office entry. Members gave recommendations on contacts to talk to about hybrid meeting technology and recommended use of closed captioning if possible.

c. Library ILA updates: Alex noted that we are working with the Library to update the agreement for maintenance of a digital archive but will need to review plans with new leadership at the library.

d. May Board of Directors meeting: The group discussed the agenda and format for the May 18 Board of Directors meeting. The Board looks forward to having up a pre-meeting workshop with RCO and GSRO leadership.

e. August 10 Annual Meeting and Tour in Tri-Cities: The group briefly discussed planning for the August 10th annual meeting and approved moving forward with renting a meeting space at The Reach Museum. Members expressed interest in seeing the new star grass harvester in action.

9) Public Comment: No public comment was received.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:05 pm.