



YAKIMA BASIN
FISH AND WILDLIFE
RECOVERY BOARD

DRAFT MINUTES

11/30/09 Board of Directors Meeting

Those present:

Members: Leo Bowman & Adam Fyall (Benton County), Mike Leita (Yakima County), Maureen Atkinson & Dave Brown (City of Yakima), Nancy Lillquist (City of Ellensburg), Paul Ward (Yakima Nation), Dan Olson (City of Union Gap)

Guests: Jeff Tayer (WDFW), Jim Milton (YBWRA), David Child (YBJB)

Staff: Alex Conley, Yuki Reiss, Angie Begosh

1) Welcome, Introductions & Announcements

Chairman Paul Ward confirmed the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 2:03 pm. Leo Bowman moved to approve the agenda as presented; motion seconded by Nancy Lillquist and approved by consensus. Nancy Lillquist moved to approve the minutes as submitted; motion seconded by Maureen Atkinson and approved by consensus.

2) Board Correspondence and Announcements

Alex reviewed the updates that were provided in the meeting packet. Highlights included:

- a) completion of the Bruton Dam removal project,
- b) channel relocation and fish salvage at the Nile landslide,
- c) Record-setting steelhead and coho numbers entering the Yakima basin,
- d) Promising results from 2009 bull trout redd surveys,
- e) The planned upriver shift in recreational spring Chinook fisheries.

The Board reviewed support letters for the Taneum Canal Co. fish passage proposal and the RC&D water quality proposal. Alex asked the Board to contact him if they had any questions or concerns regarding letters such as these that are written and sent out at a staff level.

Jeff Tayer updated the Board on the state budget situation and its implications for WDFW staffing. The Board discussed sending a letter to the WDFW director highlighting the need to fill the current watershed steward vacancy and continue to support recovery plan implementation in the Yakima Basin. The Board also encouraged Alex to talk to other regional organizations about developing a joint letter emphasizing the need for ongoing support from WDFW. Leo Bowman moved to submit a letter from the Board and also pursue development of a joint letter, motion seconded by Dan Olson and approved by consensus.

3) Lead Entity Program Business

Angie gave an overview of the 2009 SRFB process. She has been working with the state review panel and project sponsors to finalize the project list (see meeting materials) for approval by the SRFB in December. No issues are anticipated, and Angie's focus is shifting to follow up on existing funded projects and preparation for the 2010 grant round. Angie asked Board members how they wanted to participate in the update of the Lead Entity strategy. Members present indicated that staff should develop a draft for review by the technical and citizen's committees, and then bring the revised draft to the Board for approval.

Alex noted that the SRFB was planning to meet in Yakima or Ellensburg in October 2010. The Board encouraged him to work with RCO staff to develop a tour of SRFB projects for meeting attendees. Alex also updated the Board on the prospects of a cut to the state general fund portion of the lead entity budget. The Board agreed that the possible 5% cut be accepted without issue if proposed, and that statewide discussions should focus on ensuring that each region and associated lead entities address shortfalls within their regional areas.

4) Recovery Planning Update

In response to questions, Paul Ward gave a brief update on the status of the Columbia River Power System Biological Opinion. Alex congratulated the Board on the completion of the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan and distributed hard copies of the final plan and associated materials.

Yuki Reiss gave an update on the development of the Steelhead Research, Monitoring & Evaluation plan, and presented the proposed outline and high-level questions to the Board. The Board discussed the clarity of the questions and their links to delisting criteria for steelhead.

Yuki also gave an update on the proposal for a Bull Trout Task Force that she is writing. The Board discussed the project and the Board's role. Members noted that while it fits within our role to facilitate recovery actions and help create project opportunities for sponsors, the Board has not put itself in the role of being primary sponsor of on-the-ground projects, and that that should be taken into account in development of the Task Force proposal.

5) PCSRF support letters

The Board noted and expressed support for the letters sent to the Washington congressional designation in support of funding for the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Funding Board.

6) YRBWEP Workgroup

The Board reviewed the status of the YRBWEP workgroup's discussions. Members expressed support for the staff participation in the process, but registered concern with the Board participating in formal decision making given that many members are participating at the same table on their own behalf, while other members are outside of the process and are not in a position to commit their organizations to a formal stance in the YRBWEP process. Alex was asked to recuse the Board from the voting at the next workgroup meeting, while noting that the habitat components of the current proposal make significant progress towards the goals of the Yakima Subbasin & Steelhead Recovery plans.

7) Board Logistics

The Board reviewed and approved the outreach/operations position job description and discussed scheduling for 2009. Chairman Ward adjourned the meeting at 4:04 pm.