



YAKIMA BASIN
FISH AND WILDLIFE
RECOVERY BOARD

Minutes of the 8/19/2010 Board of Directors Meeting

As approved by the Board on 10/27/10

Those present:

Members present: Adam Fyall (Benton County), Mike Leita & Terry Keenhan (Yakima County), Paul Jewell & Kirk Holmes (Kittitas County), Dave Ettl & Dave Brown (City of Yakima), Nancy Lillquist (City of Ellensburg), Paul Ward (Yakama Nation), Dan Olson (City of Union Gap), John Hubbard (City of Kennewick), Dick Poteet (City of Prosser)

Guests: OTAK representative, Mike Livingston (WDFW)

Staff: Alex Conley (Executive Director), Angie Begosh (SRFB Program Coordinator), Yuki Reiss (Recovery Program Coordinator)

1) Welcome, Approval of Minutes, Introductions & Announcements

Following introductions and confirmation of a quorum, Nancy called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm. The Board reviewed the minutes of the June 30th meeting. Dan Olson motioned to approve the minutes as submitted; Paul Ward seconded, and the motion passed with support of all present.

The Board reviewed recent correspondence and received updates on the July 8th WDFW Cowiche Field Tour, positive press on the water stargrass project in Benton County, and the state of federal and state budgets that affect the Board. Alex noted that the YRBWEP and PCSRF budgets for 2011 were under review in DC, and that state budget process would not affect our current biennium's budget, but may have implications for our lead entity funding in the next biennium. The Board also reviewed the current Board and committee memberships; Alex encouraged Board members to continue to recruit people to fill Citizen Committee vacancies.

2) SRFB/Lead Entity Program Update

Alex briefed the board on the current status of the Yakima/Klickitat split of the Mid-Columbia funding allocation. The SRFB increased the total statewide SRFB allocation using returned funds from projects completed under budget, so the total Mid-Columbia allocation increased to \$1,983,870, of which 75% will go to Yakima basin projects and 25% to Klickitat Basin projects. This split worked out about the same as the recent average.

Angie Begosh updated the Board on the 2010 grant review process and presented a slide show of the final ranked project list forwarded by the Communities Committee to the Board. Following the presentation, Mike Leita moved to approve the ranked project list for submission to the SRFB. Paul Ward seconded, and the motion passed with support of all present.

3) Presentation by the South Central Washington Shrub Steppe/Rangeland Partnership

Mike Livingston of WDFW gave a presentation on the work of the South Central Washington Shrub Steppe/Rangeland Partnership. He discussed issues facing the shrub steppe in the region and the potential for sage grouse to be listed under the ESA, and then described the partnership's new strategy document and the steps the partnership plans to take to implement key actions, including improving fire control efforts, preventing the loss of habitat, protecting agricultural lands and open space, and promoting constructive grazing practices. The Board discussed the partnership, its relationship to the Board, and its funding sources. The Kittitas and Yakima County representatives briefly discussed the challenges of managing development in rangeland settings, and the Board encouraged ongoing communication between the Partnership, the Board and individual Board members.

4) Recovery Planning & Implementation

Alex and Yuki noted that a final draft of the fish biology portion of the Steelhead Research, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan is under review, and that Yuki was shifting to working on habitat/project effectiveness portion of the plan. Yuki is also spending an increased amount of time on the bull trout action plan now that the USFWS is moving towards reinitiating broader recovery planning efforts for Bull Trout.

Alex noted that with the completion of the steelhead recovery plan and Yuki's progress on the Steelhead RME Plan and the Bull Trout Action Plan, his attention is shifting to the next set of recovery program deliverables. He noted that the staff is working together with key partners to determine how to produce a succinct overview of the status of salmon recovery efforts in the Yakima Basin that meets diverse reporting requirements (including the State's Habitat Work Schedule database, NOAA project tracking, NOAA recovery implementation scheduling, and Yakama Nation/BPA reporting). The challenge is to develop an accessible reporting format that is jointly owned by key partners in the basin and that addresses as many of these mandates as possible in a single form. The Board briefly discussed the proposal to use an Atlas format, and agreed to make further discussion on this topic a focus of the October meeting.

5) YRWEF Updates

The Board briefly discussed Board staff involvement in the YRWEF Integrated Water Resources process's efforts to further detail fish habitat actions and their anticipated benefits. Alex and Yuki have put significant amounts of time into support the fish benefits analysis.

6) Board Logistics & Finances

Alex reviewed his efforts to address organizational needs over the last six months. The Board briefly discussed the hiring process for the Operations/Outreach Coordinator position, and the need to develop a Board policy manual. After a motion by Dan Olson and a second by Paul Ward, the Board approved working with Manley Services to put in place a Section 125 Premium Only Plan. Following a motion by Mike Leita and a second by Dave Ettl the Board approved the revised Lead Entity scope of work for the Board's contract with RCO. The Board reviewed the fiscal reports and proposed format changes, and Alex confirmed that the next meeting would be October 21st.

12) Public Comment

No public comment was received. The meeting adjourned at 3:50 pm.