



YAKIMA BASIN  
FISH AND WILDLIFE  
RECOVERY BOARD

**MINUTES,**

**8/20/09 Board of Directors Meeting**

*as approved by the Board of Directors on 11/30/09*

Those present:

*Board of Directors Members:* Nancy Lillquist (City of Ellensburg), Dave Brown & Maureen Adkinson (City of Yakima), Terry Keenhan (Yakima County), Leo Bowman (Benton County), Paul Ward (Yakama Nation, by telephone)

*Guests:* Richard Visser (USFWS), Dan Olsen (City of Union Gap)

*Staff:* Alex Conley, Angie Begosh, Yuki Reiss

**1) Welcome, Introductions & Announcements**

Chairman Paul Ward confirmed the presence of a quorum and called the meeting to order at 4:40 pm. Following introductions, Alex handed out the minutes from the last meeting. Leo moved to approve the minutes as presented; Nancy seconded. Motion was approved by consensus.

**2) Board Correspondence and Announcements**

Alex updated the Board on the consolidation of the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) and the WDFW Lead Entity Program into the Recreation and Conservation Office. This is an effort by the governor to increase efficiencies. Alex noted that the transition appears to have gone smoothly. Leo asked if there are any negatives, and the Board discussed the as yet unresolved question of the relative degree of independence that the GSRO would maintain. Board members expressed support for the effort to develop a more streamlined process, and discussed the changes in staffing.

Paul updated the Board on the Yakama Nation's sockeye reintroduction program. 1,000 fish were released in the lake this summer, and are being tracked to see how well they reproduce. This is essentially a feasibility test. The Yakima Basin used to produce a tremendous amount of sockeye, and the Nation is anxious to have them back.

Alex noted that the steelhead run at Bonneville will be one of the highest ever, and that this should help us make positive progress toward meeting our recovery targets for steelhead in the Yakima.

Richard Visser announced to the Board that he left his position as WDFW watershed steward to take a job with the USFWS. He hopes to continue working with the Board in his new position.

### **3) Lead Entity Program Business**

Angie gave a presentation on the 2009 Lead Entity process and the ranked project list proposed for submission to the SRFB. The Board of Directors reviewed the minutes of the Citizens Committee meeting, where one of the Yakima County representatives took a very strong stance against acquisitions, resulting in an inability to reach consensus a proposed scope change and the ranking of two acquisition projects. While the bylaws call for a supermajority decision when consensus can not be reached, the committee was working under the presumption that its decisions had to be made by a full consensus. Terry Keenhan noted that the County has not taken a position against acquisitions, as had been stated at the Citizen's Committee meeting, but rather evaluated them on a case-by-case basis based on their expected public benefits. The Board discussed issues raised by acquisition projects and proposed development of a white paper addressing these issues and how they can be resolved. Board members noted that the Citizen's Committee discussion of acquisitions did not affect the ranking of any of the top-ranked projects that are expected to receive funding in this round, but expressed discomfort with the misrepresentation of County perspectives on acquisition projects and the failure to apply the supermajority rule.

Alex explained the Board of Director's options – to approve the list as it stands, or to remand it to the citizens committee for reconsideration. Nancy Lillquist made a motion to remand the list to email review by the Citizen's committee, for reconsideration based on a) a clarifying statement by Commissioner Leita regarding Yakima County's stance on acquisition projects, and b) polling to reconfirm or change the decision not to rank two acquisition projects using the supermajority rule in the bylaws. Terry Keenhan seconded the motion, which was approved by all present. The Board then reviewed a motion to approve submission of the list to the SRFB as either reconfirmed or amended by the Citizen's Committee. The motion was approved by all present.

Alex updated the Board of Directors on the status of discussions with the Klickitat Lead Entity on how to divide the Middle Columbia allocation between Yakima and Klickitat Basin projects lists. Board members asked Alex to identify who the governing body is for the Klickitat Lead Entity.

### **4) Recovery Planning Update**

Alex reviewed the Board's work with NOAA Fisheries to respond to comments received on the previous draft of the Middle Columbia Steelhead Recovery Plan. Resulting edits to the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan and a response to comments have been completed and Alex asked the Board for approval to submit the final versions to NOAA by August 28. This will allow NOAA review prior to release of the final NOAA Mid-Columbia Steelhead Plan in late September. No feedback has been received on the last round of edits to the plan following its posting on the web and email announcements in late July. Nancy Lillquist motioned to submit the plan to NOAA, and Leo Bowman seconded the motion. Members present noted that it will be good to finally complete the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan. The motion was passed by consensus of all members present.

Alex briefly updated the board on other recovery planning activities. Yuki Reiss is acting as lead on steelhead monitoring issues. She is working with Alex to represent the Board in Columbia Basin monitoring planning efforts and is the lead for development of a Research, Monitoring and Evaluation supplement to the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan.

Paul and Yuki updated the board on lamprey conservation efforts. The Yakama Nation has started a lamprey program and Yuki will be working with Nation staff to keep current on lamprey issues in the Yakima Basin. Lamprey populations have crashed in recent years, and both the Yakama Nation and the USFWS are promoting conservation efforts to protect the species and avoid the need for

future ESA listings. The tribe is exploring options for rebuilding the Yakima basin's run. The Board recently hosted a USFWS meeting to review the status of lamprey in the Yakima Basin.

#### **5) Approval of PCSRF support letter**

Alex and Paul updated the Board on congressional proposals for the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF). This program is a primary funding source for Washington's Salmon Recovery Funding Board. The Senate has proposed increasing funding for PCSRF, while the House has proposed eliminating the program and replacing it with a nationwide program for listed fish recovery. Nancy Lillquist motioned to approve the Board chair's signing of a letter in support of PCSRF, either from the Board alone, or if possible, as part of a joint submission from Washington's regional salmon recovery organizations. Leo Bowman seconded the motion, which was passed by consensus of all members present.

#### **6) WDFW Budget issues**

Alex briefly updated the Board on the status of the WDFW budget. He noted that the contract for WDFW staff support of recovery planning that was approved at the last meeting was available for review. The Board asked Alex to draft a letter emphasizing the importance of filling the now-vacant Watershed Steward position for Paul to sign and submit to WDFW.

#### **7) Other business**

Alex invited Board members to participate in the September 14<sup>th</sup> discussion with GSRO staff and Yakima and Klickitat Lead Entity, Regional Organization and Watershed Planning Unit representatives. The Board briefly discussed the ongoing YRBWEP Workgroup process.

#### **8) Board Logistics**

The Board of Directors reviewed plans for future meetings, Executive Committee membership, and Board finances. Alex noted that we were operating off of our new two-year contract, and that he was almost done closing out all of the previous biennium's contracts.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:19 pm.