

# Ag Water Board

## Regular Meeting Minutes, December 19, 2018, 1-3 pm

Ag Water Board office, 204 Hawley Street, Lynden

<u>AWB Board:</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Andy Enfield	<input type="checkbox"/> Marty Maberry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Scott Bedlington
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike Boxx	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jeff De Jong	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kevin Te Velde
<u>Alternates:</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> Vern Vande Garde	<input type="checkbox"/> Terry Lenssen	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greg Ebe
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rich Appel	<input type="checkbox"/> Landon Van Dyk	<input type="checkbox"/> Rod Tjoelker
	<input type="checkbox"/> Jon Maberry	<input type="checkbox"/> Brad Rader	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Keith Boon
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rod Vande Hoef	<input type="checkbox"/> Rolf Haugen	<input type="checkbox"/> Larry Stap
	<input type="checkbox"/> Ed Blok	<input type="checkbox"/> Pete Vlas	<input type="checkbox"/> Harmon Brar
<u>Others:</u>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fred Likkel	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Hank Kastner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Henry Bierlink
	<input type="checkbox"/> Bill Clarke	<input type="checkbox"/> David Haggith	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chris Elder
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Meg Harris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Randy Honcoop	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Perkow

*x = present*

*o = absent with notice*

*t = teleconference*

- I. Review & Approve October 17 Minutes – Jeff moved approval, Mike seconded, motion carried unanimously.
- II. Financial/Administrative
  - A. Financial Reports
    - a. WFF splitting Conference room renovation expenses – approx. \$4500 each
    - b. Mike moved approval of the Financial Report, Andy seconded, motion carried unanimously.
  - B. AWB appointments to WFF Board – Mike Boxx term is completed – Keith, Brad, and Mike are the current AWD designees on the WFF Board. Potential new members to fill Mike’s position included Chad Bajema, Matt Maberry, Joe Vander Pol, Rob Dhaliwal. Rich and Scott are talking to the nominees and will have a replacement soon.
- III. Water Quantity/Supply
  - A. Bill Clarke Report
    - i. Foster Task Force – The 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting was held recently. There is some discussion about extending the deadlines in the workplan.
    - ii. Areas for water right adjudications – The Yakima adjudication is expected to be completed in 2019 (began in 1977). Ecology is discussing where the next focus of adjudications might be. Leading candidates are Methow, Spokane, and Nooksack. The issues surrounding adjudications have not been favorable towards farmers in the Nooksack so our sense is that the other areas would be better candidates. There was uncertainty on how the local Tribes would feel about state adjudications. Bill will check informally with the other water right attorneys and James Stroud at Lummi.
  - B. Update to Landowners – Marty suggested that we update the July, 2017 letter we sent to all WID landowners to inform them of the status of water discussions and programs and

provide contact information for people who can help them get their water rights in order. A draft will be presented to the March AWB Board meeting.

- C. AWB dialogue with tribes – Nooksack meeting was completed. Lummi meeting should occur once we get a sense of when and how Drainage Based Management is initiated.
- D. Watershed Management Board and Planning Unit update
  - i. Policy Issues: fees, meters, and allowed amount for exempt wells
  - ii. Lack of consensus on these issues will mean we miss the February 1<sup>st</sup> deadline but both the Planning Unit and the Watershed Management Board will continue working towards solutions.
  - iii. Watershed Management Board is likely to return to implementing the [5-year Workplan](#) which addresses the rural well issues and much more. Henry and Fred saw this as welcome news.
  - iv. Ecology takes over and moves towards “rule making”. It is clear that the Rule they will seek to amend is the [Nooksack In-Stream Flow rule](#). This provides us opportunity to address flow settings and year-round closures. Ecology has 18 months to complete this work.
  - v. Fred sought advice on continued participation in the Planning Unit for the Drainage District caucus. He saw little need to invest much time to have both ag and DID there when the workplan is unclear. General consensus was support for his judgement. Loren Vander Yacht is the DID alternate and has been a willing participant. Some effort to ensure that Loren is aware of the AWB perspectives should be made.
- E. Ecology grant application
  - i. Should know by middle of January.
  - ii. Need a plan to move forward with [Drainage Based Management](#) which is part of the Watershed Management Board’s workplan. If AWB is provided the funds to move forward the first priority will be to contact the Tribes and engage their participation in forming how DBM would proceed.
  - iii. WC Councilmember Satpaul Sidhu is looking to form a task force to create a Water Bank. Bill’s [draft White Paper](#) should be a valuable contribution to this process. Marty observed that it should begin with ag only as if farmers have to compete equally on price with cities and development we will not be able to match those costs.

#### IV. Water Quality/Drainage

##### A. Report from WCD on Transboundary water quality – Meg Harris

*The Nooksack River Transboundary Technical Collaboration Group (TCG) has a 3-year work plan for agency partners that outlines deliverables for BC/WA actions to reduce fecal coliform. The first deliverable is to set a three-year goal for fecal concentrations at border stations. Our timeframe for this is to set these goals by January 2019. Local Whatcom Clean Water Program staff are meeting locally and with BC counterparts to determine what this goal would be, how to ensure sampling is consistent in BC and WA, and how to track water quality overtime (i.e. progress towards a goal). This is a big step in transboundary collaboration!*

Meg outlined the recent transboundary work that shows significant promise to address the water quality issues in BC that have been causing fecal challenges in Portage Bay. Fred and/or David will be part of the team that helps to set these goals and sampling protocols. Meg also addressed the ZAP units which are proving valuable to help fill in

parts of the water quality story even though their reliability for accurate real-time data is questionable. She also noted the Wildlife Tracker App developed by the WCD which also provides information that fills in a more complete water quality story. The DNA project coordinated by the WCD is also underway. Meg thanked the SLWID, and other WIDs that supported the Scott Ditch project, as being very helpful to frame and advance this DNA work.

- B. CAFO permit update – Fred reported the dairy community had a big win in the latest ruling by the PCHB. This ruling is being appealed by environmental groups although ReSources did not participate in the appeal.
- C. Draft letters
  - i. To County Executive re transboundary issues – on hold as it seems the work we have been requesting is advancing.
  - ii. To farmers re high fall fecal counts – Fred suggested the AWB recommend it to the WID's for sending to their landowners. This is a response to the high count in Portage Bay in November. Each WID will adapt the letter as they see fit and send to their members this spring, and possibly an additional letter next fall. Pictures would help make this more readable.

V. Communication/Education

- A. Media Relations report – submitted by WFF
- B. REAL campaign – progressing – billboards will be coming up soon

VI. New Business

- A. Approval of changes to priority scoring for applications to PDR Program – Chris Elder provided a packet of information for board members to review on the suggested changes to the rankings of PDR applications. The PDR program has an infusion of \$1.3 million from grants which will match the County's Natural Heritage Funds. More purchases are likely and the County's hope is that the AWB will help to focus them on key properties to protect the future of ag.
- B. Advisory Committee vacancies – Fred distributed a list of current vacancies on County Boards and Committees. WID members are encouraged to recruit farmers to participate in these committees. Priority vacancies discussed were the Ag Advisory Committee and the Food System Committee.

VII. Adjournment - Next Meeting - March 20

Respectfully submitted by Henry Bierlink, Ag Water Board

Approved by \_\_\_\_\_