

Ag Water Board

Regular Meeting September 18, 2019, 1 pm

Ag Water Board office, 204 Hawley Street, Lynden

<u>AWB Board:</u>	__o__ Andy Enfield	__t__ Marty Maberry	__x__ Scott Bedlington
	__x__ Mike Boxx	__x__ Jeff De Jong	__x__ Kevin Te Velde
<u>Others:</u>	__x__ Fred Likkel	__x__ Dan Eisses	__x__ Henry Bierlink
	__t__ Bill Clarke	__x__ Gary Stoyka	__x__ Chris Elder
	__x__ Dillon Honcoop	__x__ Loren Vander Yacht	__x__ Kathy Sabel
	<i>x = present</i>	<i>o = absent with notice</i>	<i>t = teleconference</i>

- I. Review & Approve June 19 Minutes – Jeff moved approval of the June 19th minutes, Kevin seconded, motion carried unanimously.

- II. Financial/Administrative
 - A. Financial Reports – after a review of the reports Jeff moved approval, Kevin seconded, motion carried unanimously.
 - B. 2020 Budgeting – A draft budget for 2020 was presented. Henry noted that WIDs needed to know what the AWB budget would be as they set their budgets. Scott asked about the administration operations budgets. Henry will double check to make sure they are accurate. Mike moved to advance the following budget as AWB’s plans for 2020 with the option to revise in December after receiving feedback from the WIDs, Kevin seconded, motion carried unanimously.

<u>WID</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Office/</u>			<u>Water</u>	<u>Quality</u>	<u>Public</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
			<u>Misc</u>	<u>Admin</u>	<u>Legal</u>	<u>Supply</u>	<u>& Drainage</u>	<u>Affairs</u>	
Bertrand	14,956	22.0%	\$8,792	\$10,991	\$13,189	\$10,991	\$8,243	\$8,243	60,448
North Lynden	5,909	8.7%	\$3,474	\$4,342	\$5,211	\$4,342	\$3,257	\$3,257	23,883
South Lynden	12,439	18.3%	\$7,313	\$9,141	\$10,969	\$9,141	\$6,856	\$6,856	50,275
Drayton	7,363	10.8%	\$4,329	\$5,411	\$6,493	\$5,411	\$4,058	\$4,058	29,759
Laurel	8,326	12.2%	\$4,895	\$6,118	\$7,342	\$6,118	\$4,589	\$4,589	33,652
Sumas	19,047	28.0%	\$11,198	\$13,997	\$16,796	\$13,997	\$10,498	\$10,498	76,983
			40,000	50,000	60,000	50,000	37,500	37,500	275,000

Henry noted that the likelihood of support for some of these areas through grants may alleviate the need for the AWB to rely on the WIDs for all these funds.

- III. Water Quantity/Supply
 - A. County proposal for water conservation – Gary reported on three projects:
 - i. 2 projects with WCD – one for residential water use efficiency, the other for ag – one of the results of the WCD contract is the availability of 5 new weather stations in the County. The CD is working with WSU and AWB to find locations.
 - ii. RH2 to examine water banking – this project is slated to be completed by the end of 2019.

- B. Bill Clarke Report
 - i. Nooksack Rule – Ecology has until August, 2020 to complete the revised Nooksack in-stream flow rule. They expect a draft out by fall and public hearing beginning in November. Bill’s impression is that there will be limited changes to the rule.
 - ii. Foster pilot meeting – Bill represented us at meeting earlier this month of all the pilots and the legislative members of the Task Force. The work has been delayed. There will be a status report to the Legislature in 2020 but the complete report won’t be complete until late 2020 making it likely to be addressed in the 2021 session.
 - iii. Review of potential adjudication locations – Ecology has hired a consultant to review the existing and pending adjudication requests and suggest other areas where adjudication may be the best next step. The consultant will report to the legislature in 2021. Bill continues to believe the Nooksack will not be a high priority provided progress towards resolution of water issues is proceeding locally.
 - iv. Net Ecological Benefit guidance – Ecology released their understanding of this term. We sense that it matches well with our ideas advanced in Drainage Based Management.
 - v. 2020 Legislative Session – a question about having a strategy for the January session prompted Bill to report that he doubts there will be much attention to water next year. Looking ahead to the 2021 session is more prudent.

- C. Watershed Management Board and Planning Unit update
 - i. Water Management Board
 - 1. Water Supply Plan – facilitated by PUD, beginning in 2 pilots in October
 - 2. Drainage Based Management process to build on Water Supply Plan pilots
 - 3. Drayton and Bertrand as likely pilots – decision October 3rd
 - ii. Planning Unit
 - 1. updating Management Plan
 - 2. self-education opportunities on water issues – inviting speakers to allow newer PU members to get a broader perspective of the issues and what is being done currently.
 - 3. concern over legal status of the Planning Unit continues to divide the group and divert time from discussing real issues and projects.

- D. Streamflow Restoration Grant – \$150k available this fall for advancing projects described in the grant application – surface to ground conversions and augmentation. Some funds to advance DBM as a means to identify these projects. We expect a letter from Ecology soon and to negotiate a Scope of Work for this grant funded project within the next months.
- E. Drought Response Plan – grant opportunity for more funding of water banks, transfers, etc. – A Drought Response Plan for the area is a prerequisite for Bureau of Reclamation funding for water banks and other water management tools.
- F. Shared Waters, Challenges, and Solutions – forum on latest developments in local water negotiations – 6pm, September 19th – partially sponsored by AWB

IV. Water Quality/Drainage - Fred

- A. Letters to farmers re high fall fecal counts – all the WIDs are sending a one-page letter to landowners concerning steps that can be taken to reduce the fecal counts we typically experience in the fall.
- B. Update on Floodplains by Design discussions and potential projects – these discussions are back on track as we sense we are gaining traction in getting Drainage Based Management discussions going.
- C. Ecology enforcement – Fred was asked if the AWB would be willing to publically advocate for Ecology to be more proactive with their enforcement powers on landowners that disregard good

management practices. He did not believe that this was a role the AWB was willing to play and the board concurred.

V. Communication/Education

- A. Media Relations report – Dillon provide a written report from both Whatcom Family Farmers and Save Family Farmers. It featured the REAL campaign, Meet your Farmer events, and the media/podcasts.
- B. REAL campaign – several videos featuring farmer innovation and environmental stewardship have been, and are being produced.
- C. Labor – Marty emphasized the need to stay engaged in the WA labor issues surrounding agriculture. Particularly the ag overtime case pending before the WA Supreme Court (*De Ruyter case*).
- D. Letter to ReSources – Fred reported on the conversations he and Henry have been having with the new leadership at ReSources. WFF sent a letter to them responding to some of the concerns they had expressed in emails. A planned meeting with them was cancelled earlier this month. Henry is meeting with their new ED to discuss potential avenues forward.

VI. New Business

- A. Ag Advisory Committee – Chris reported on the work of the AAC to clarify rural zoned areas that deserve more ag land protection. The Committee is reporting to the Council on Sept. 24th. Chris has substantial new funding for the PDR program through the NRCS Regional Partnership. He is not pushing this hard yet waiting to see how it may be integrated into the water issues through Drainage Based Management. He also noted three vacancies on the AAC. Production agriculture is not adequately represented.
- B. Drayton Project with BBWS – Dan briefly reported on the progress of the deep aquifer project that Birth Bay Water and Sewer is leading. The PUD, City of Blaine, and the Drayton WID have an Interlocal Agreement allowing them to advance this together. The DWID is connecting with 22 farmers to get a better sense of potential water needs.

VII. Adjournment - Next Meeting – December 18

Respectfully submitted by Henry Bierlink, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____