

- ii. Nooksack Flow Rule – Bill noted the comments are being processed and a Final Rule should be made by July.
- iii. Water Rights and Relinquishment paper by RH2 and the Drayton Water Supply Strategies Report – comments were that these reports illustrate the need to have the Water Management Board embrace changes to the state water code that would provide local water managers the ability to use water banks/exchanges to solve water supply issues without the constraints in law that this paper illustrates. Without changes we will have little or no water to deposit. The concept of “water security” which had been advanced by Executive Sidhu was much appreciated. Like municipalities and industrial zone, land zoned agriculture should be able to rely on the water they need to farm profitably. Working within the current water code is not going to allow this be to realized.
- B. Legislative Report – Bill mentioned a taskforce to study water banking was established. Primarily to address the market for water rights on the eastside where rights are being moved from lower value crops in the Methow to wine grapes in the lower Columbia. He also noted that there were many water reports due by the end of 2020 which will make the 2021 session a prime opportunity to have water legislation considered.
- C. Support request for Lynden’s Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) grant application – Jeff summarized the request from the City. It was presented at the South Lynden WID meeting. SLWID agreed to support the project but expressed disappointment that AWB had not led on this project as we would also be a beneficiary. Also that Lynden had not approached us to partner on this project. Jeff moved support from the AWB with an added note that future development of this project should be a City/AWB partnership,

IV. Water Quality/Drainage/Flood

- A. Quality update – Fred referred to the quality reports regularly presented at each WID meeting. Most news is good with some isolated exceptions. The high rain events in the fall were challenging.
- B. Drainage projects – a meeting with County Public Works and WID boards is being arranged to discuss drainage in roadside ditches.
- C. Update on Floodplains by Design discussions and potential projects – overlap with DBM – Reach 2 planning has helped in obtaining funding for the Duffner tidegate and is considering a Cougar Creek project. A potential project in Reach 1 was discussed which clearly fits the goals of the FLIP and DBM processes.

V. Communication/Education

- A. Media Relations report – continued work at Whatcom Family Farmers and Save Family Farmers.
- B. REAL campaign – generated a report ready for press entitled “Fish need Farms and Farms need Fish”. Media buzz about COVID-19 delaying release.
- C. March Newsletter – nearly ready for publication.

D. Food Security – Family Farmers was invited to participate in a County led Task Force addressing the ability to deliver food to county citizens given the disruption in the market. Food outlets like Edaleen Dairy and CSA's are left wondering where they market their food and how the County can ensure that food gets to all. Fred expects this will be at least a weekly teleconference.

VI. New Business

A. Whatcom Conservation District parcel assessment proposal - In light of the discussion that the WCD had with each WID in February the Laurel WID discussed hiring an engineer directly or contributing a portion of the salary in return for participation in hiring and management of this position. Other WIDs were supportive of exploring this further and pessimistic about the WCD's per parcel plan.

Scott appointed a study committee to explore potential options that would ensure that farmers would have some control of how any new funds would be focused on ag needs. Issues to be considered include: what services did the WCD Ag Engineer provide, how hard will this be to replace, what is the potential of AWB doing this in-house, and what would partnerships with NRCS and/or the WCD look like. Ed, Terry, and Rod VH were appointed to this committee. Fred will facilitate it and Scott will join as needed.

VII. Adjournment - Next Meetings

June 17

September 16

Respectfully submitted by Henry Bierlink, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____