

Bertrand Watershed Improvement District

Minutes – February 12, 2024

Attendees

“(t)” indicates presence via tele-conference, “(p)” indicates proxy vote.

Board – Present	Board – Absent with Notice
Vern VandeGarde (<i>chair</i>) Scott Bedlington Greg Ebe (t)	Pete Vlas Mike Schoneveld

Staff and Consultants	
Name	Organization / Affiliation
Gavin Willis	Ag Water Board
Jon Hutchings	City of Lynden Public Works
Fred Likkel	Whatcom Family Farmers
Dale Buys	Reichhardt & Ebe Engineering
Jay Chennault (t)	AESI

Other Guests	
Name	Organization / Affiliation
Mark Stremmer (t)	Whatcom County Council
Alan Chapman (t)	Whatcom Conservation District

Proceedings

Vern called the meeting to order at 2:05 pm.

1. Consent Agenda

- a. Agenda was reviewed.
- b. Jan 8 minutes were reviewed.
- c. Financial reports were reviewed.
- d. AP voucher in the amount of \$2,932.82 was reviewed.
- e. Scott moved to approve the consent agenda. Greg seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Administration

- a. Scott moved to cancel incorrectly issued warrants 1184666, 1184665, and 1184664. Greg seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. FEMA Projects

- a. Gavin provided an update on FEMA projects. EMD is currently reviewing the procurement policy that the WID adopted. As soon as that is approved, the Parklyn Drainpipe project can begin.

4. Ag Water Board / Water Supply

- a. Gavin provided an update on Ecology’s draft claims form. Bill Clarke is working on a comment letter to ECY – Gavin will send the first draft of that letter to board members via email as soon as it is completed.
- b. AWB and AESI staff are working on developing a GIS water rights info tool, and setting up water rights office hours for WID landowners. More info to follow.

- c. Discussion of Whatcom County 2025 Comprehensive Plan update. AWB will continue to emphasize the need for adequate water supply to accompany agricultural land use planning. Need for adequate drainage for farmlands was also emphasized, especially in areas identified as flood overflow.

5. Drainage / Habitat / Flood

- a. Gavin, Dale, Fred, and Jon provided an update on CLASS modeling work.
 - i. Mouw Ditch preliminary results look good. Reshaping the ditch bottom and improving culverts should lead to reduced water level in Mouw Ditch. The resulting hydrograph shift also slightly decreases peak flows in Bertrand Creek below Mouw Ditch.
 - ii. Modeling shows that for very high flood events, raising Rathbone and blocking the culvert will only make a small difference in preventing flooding in adjacent farm fields.
 - 1. A board member noted that overtopping typically occurs on east Bertrand levee before Rathbone Rd. This suggests that blocking the culvert is more critical than raising the road from a flood prevention perspective (although from a road maintenance perspective it would be beneficial to raise the road as well).
 - iii. Discussion followed about potential stormwater detention requirements for new development in Fishtrap and Bertrand watersheds, with the ability to adjust the detention infrastructure to reach the desired hydrograph phase.
 - 1. Additional comments made related to the potential to adjust the float elevation on Duffner Ditch tidegate to reduce flooding in adjacent fields.
 - iv. Fred and Dale will be asking FLIP for more funding to finalize the modeling. Paula Harris has indicated that the county is enthusiastic about providing that support.
 - v. Fred noted that the tribes may also be interested in supporting projects in Reach 2. Dale added that the Nooksack tribe had received a tour of the Mouw Ditch site and had expressed enthusiasm about the project.

6. Water Quality

- a. Whatcom Conservation district staff provided a water quality update via email.
 - i. Some high counts have been present at border sites, and have persisted downstream. Those counts have been reported to Canadian agencies, which have promised an update by the end of Q1.

7. Communications / Education

- a. March 27th will be the next water rights education event. It will be from 6:30-8:30 PM at the Northwest Washington Fairgrounds in Lynden

8. Other Items

- a. None.

9. Next Meeting

- a. Next meeting is scheduled for March 11th at 2:00 pm.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:28 pm.

Submitted by Gavin Willis, Ag Water Board

Approved by Vern VanderGard