

Bertrand Watershed Improvement District

Minutes for: September 10, 2018 Meeting, 2 pm - 4 pm

Ag Central 204 Hawley Street Lynden, WA 98264

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Vern VandeGarde	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Scott Bedlington	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mike Schoneveld
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Pete Vlas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Greg Ebe		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Henry Bierlink	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Dale Buys	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Fred Likkel
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Meg Harris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Albert De Boer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Paula Harris
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Frank Corey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Kasey Cykler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mark Ewbank

x = present

o = absent with notice

t = teleconference

I. Consent Agenda

- a. Review and Approval of June 11 Minutes
- b. Financial Report and payment of bills – *see financial report*

Greg moved approval of the Consent Agenda, Mike seconded, motion carried unanimously.

II. Ag Water Board

- a. AWB/Tribal meetings – Nooksacks have responded positively to the invitation to meet sent in July. No response from Lummi yet. We will plan to conduct these meetings before the end of October.
- b. Foster Task Force pilot program
 - Meeting with Ecology - August 30th – advance all potential projects (10) - Dale and Chuck are meeting with the potential project owners to get a better sense of the costs. A grant application will be prepared by mid-October to cover the costs for as many projects as we can develop. We plan to garner support from the Planning Unit caucuses and the Watershed Management Board.
- c. Watershed Management Board and Planning Unit update
 - 6091 work deadlines this fall – ag projects are likely to be high priorities - (conversions, augmentation, efficiencies) – How much help should farmers be providing to help solve rural water users’ issues? There is a tension there as we don’t want to give up any water rights or credits generated by installing stream enhancement projects. But there is an opportunity to help projects get done that would require law changes currently inhibited by *Foster* as well. And with the support of the Water Management Board and Planning Unit a grant application to get these projects done would be rated quite highly.
 - Does Ag want to state positions on amount of water allowed for exempt wells (5,000 gpd in law, 3,000 in 6091), fees (\$500 in 6091), and meter requirements? There was ambivalence on the fees and amount and skepticism on how meters could be a made a useful requirement. Voluntary metering would be our position.
- d. Key partner discussion needed – issues include:
 - Farmers shut off from water – Hans Wolfisburg’s situation explained and discussed.
 - water bank/exchange – PUD partnership – The PUD, Birch Bay Water and Sewer, Bill Clarke, Chuck Lindsay, and RH2 discussed initiating a water bank proposal. This is partially built on the NORTH WHATCOM COUNTY REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY FEASIBILITY STUDY done for BBWS and the increasing need to help farmers like Hans deal with their water supply issues.

The question of how much service should be supplied by the WID and how much should be each farmers' initiative was discussed. There was a consensus to have the WIDs do the preparatory work but leave the final negotiations over water contracts to individual farmers.

- Timing of gage recalculations – AWB wrote USGS to protest the timing of the River gage recalculations. In July the flow was well over the minimum and the interruptible water users began irrigating only to find that USGS recalculated the Ferndale gage and lowered the flow 25% which was under the minimum. As a result, these farmers had to shut off again and have not been able to use their river rights since. Discussion with USGS and Ecology should take place this fall.
 - September meeting with Ecology, PUD, Birch Bay Water, County, *others?* – A discussion with all of our partners this fall bringing all the issues together is being considered. The Tribal meetings would be the priority followed by this meeting.
- e. Enforcement actions – several farmers received Notice of Enforcement letters this summer which ignored the fact that a seasonal transfer had been put into place. The farmers wanted a letter in their file that acknowledged the NOE had been incorrectly sent. Kasey will check with the Ecology office to make sure the letters are sent.

III. Water Quantity

- a. Augmentation project
- Second temporary permit approved. A permanent permit is still in the que.
 - HPA and SEPA permits pending
 - Do we want to try to augment this fall? Mixed feelings about this. It would send a nice signal but since we have no means of being credited, the timing is so short, and the costs would be exclusively to the farmers and the WID it appears this is too late for 2018.
 - Kasey suggested the City of Lynden lab might be willing to partner on the monitoring costs in the future. Meg noted that the WCD may have more staff time available to help in the future as well.

IV. Drainage/Habitat

- a. Guide/WSDOT – Fred noted that WSDOT informed them that there were no funds for cleaning this in 2018. There have been several retirements of the WSDOT officials charged with work in this area. We will have to build new relationships with the new people.
- b. Duffner Tidegate – Frank/Dale have not developed a cost estimate yet. Dale is organizing a meeting with the WID and DID commissioners and Chris and Frank at WCD in late September. Paula noted that the hydraulic calculations done for Appels would be available and potentially useful. The project is slated to be completed in 2019 with the BWID committed to up to \$10k in 2018 (project development) and 2019 (implementation).

V. Water Quality

- a. Monitoring Results – Summer reports looked good. The Langley Environmental Partners group have been cooperating by monitoring 12 sample sites north of the border on the same day that the County samples are being collected.
- b. ZAP unit locations, installation, O & M, reporting – the Bertrand site was installed this summer. Calibrations are still being done.
- c. DNA source tracking project report – Meg reported the state Conservation Commission had awarded the WCD with \$200k to 10 build the source library for DNA of a large

range of potential contributors to local fecal coliform levels, and 2) to conduct monitoring in several county “hot spots” where improved identification of sources would help lead to clean-up.

- d. Portage Bay/Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District – Meg noted that the intensive spring marine sampling was pointing towards potential reopening of the beds for the spring closure period (April – June). There are no assurances from Health yet but the data looks good enough to justify this opening. The Fall closure remains in place.

VI. Education/Communications

- a. Website - www.bertrandwid.com
- b. WID specific E-Newsletter remains an idea but not acted on yet.
- c. WFF – REAL campaign – Fred reported that several stories illustrating farmer’s environmental protection efforts have been and are being developed.
- d. Whatcom Working Lands grant – Henry reported for Chris Elder of County Planning about the recent \$1.3 million Regional Conservation Partnership grant the County received to strengthen the Purchase of Development Right program. Partners in this project are the WCD, the Whatcom Land Trust, and AWB which will be relied upon to give direction to where the program best helps agriculture and water management. This is federal dollars which are matched with the County Natural Resources Fund dollars to make \$2.6 million available for conservation easements.

VII. FLIP discussion – Paula Harris/Mark Ewbank

- a. Update on FLIP process and opportunities for farmers - Overview of Lower Nooksack River integrated floodplain management planning effort. Reference planning process flow chart for anyone who may want more detail about the project road map.
- b. Identify locations of observed problems (flooding, viable land use, habitat) and opportunities to improve on such problems, with as much geographic specificity as possible. The County brought large hard copy maps to take notes on. Farmers gathered to provide them feedback.

VIII. Adjournment/Next Meetings

October 8

Respectfully submitted by Henry Bierlink, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____