

North Lynden Watershed Improvement District

Minutes – February 21, 2023, 9 AM

Board Attending:

Larry Stap Brad Rader Kevin Te Velde
 Kevin Engelsma Harman Brar

Others Attending:

Gavin Willis Henry Bierlink Alan Chapman
 Cynthia May Jay Chennault Katie Faber
 Fred Likkel Bill Clarke David Haggith
x – present o – absent with notice t – teleconference p – proxy

The Lynden FFA Public Issues Team gave a presentation on the pros and cons of dredging the Nooksack River.

Larry called the meeting to order at 9:39.

1. Consent Agenda

- a. January 17 minutes were reviewed.
- b. Financial report was reviewed.
- c. Discussion occurred about Sumas FEMA project and how other WIDs are loaning money to the Sumas WID to cashflow the project. Kevin E moved to loan \$25k to the Sumas WID via the AWB in the same manner as loans from other WIDs. Harman seconded. Motion carried unanimously.
- d. Brad moved to approve the consent agenda. Harman seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Ag Water Board / Water Supply

- a. Henry updated the board on the legislature’s progress on the adjudication funding and filing request. The proposed bills will include a lengthening of the filing process (up to 4 years total) and will put funds into the local settlement process, as well as provide technical assistance in filing. All sides seem to support this change to the adjudication statute. The Whatcom PUD has been taking a leading role in this.

3. Drainage / Habitat / Flood

- a. FLIP Team and water storage meetings are ongoing. Fred has asked the water storage group that Gavin join as an AWB representative. He is also requesting that a representative from the small cities be allowed to join.
- b. Fred is working on setting up a date to meet with the county on ditch maintenance. He also mentioned that NRCS currently has lots of funding, and culvert replacement projects may be eligible for some of those funds.

- c. Fred provided an update on the bipartisan voluntary buffer bill. Funding for the program will go to the salmon recovery board, but they must use the standards set forth in the bill for buffers, and not SPTH. Having the funding go through the salmon recovery board will require local cooperation in order to unlock those funds. There is also a bill to re-open the voluntary stewardship program and allow counties to enroll. The hope is to get Whatcom County enrolled – county council voted unanimously to support the bill.
- d. The WCD worksession was delayed until next meeting, due to a number of WCD staff being ill.
- e. Gavin provided an update on conversations with USDA APHIS on a potential beaver management program. The program would use a Cooperative Service Agreement and Work Financial Plan, with regular billing not to exceed a set amount for the year. He will update the board via email when he hears back from USDA on what that amount would approximately be.

4. Water Quality

- a. Cynthia shared the water quality map. Patterns remain similar – high counts on Double Ditch from the border going down into Fishtrap, and low counts along Fishtrap. The counts don't seem to have a significant impact on water quality in the Nooksack mainstem.
 - i. DoH marine system results have been mostly low, with numbers in Portage Bay looking good. Calculations are based on the last 30 samples, and a number of higher values have recently dropped off the list.
 - ii. High numbers coming across the border at Double Ditch appear to be related to discharges from a gravel facility that has recently changed their land use patterns. Canadian partners are investigating – the previous point of contact there has moved to a different ministry, and staffing changes on that side of the border have stifled communication. Fred suggested that more pressure needs to be applied to address the problem.
 - 1. E. coli numbers seem to be low relative to fecal coliform numbers, suggesting that the high numbers may be related to compost or sawdust rather than animal waste.
 - 2. Staff will look at options for where to apply pressure to address the issue on the Canadian side of the border.
- b. Exact Scientific Services is now confident with their ability to identify avian DNA in samples, but are working on updating their database to more clearly identify human DNA. WDFW is also working on expanding options for dealing with geese, although that doesn't seem to be a significant problem in NLWID.

5. Education / Communications

- a. Website – northlyndenwid.com

6. Other Items from Commissioners

- a. None

7. Next Meetings

- a. The next meeting is scheduled for March 21st at 9 AM.

Larry adjourned the meeting at 10:43.

Submitted by Gavin Willis, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____