

North Lynden Watershed Improvement District

Minutes – February 20, 2024

Attendees

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

Board – Present	Board – Absent with Notice
Larry Stap (<i>chair</i>) Brad Rader (t) Kevin Te Velde Harman Brar	Kevin Engelsma

Staff and Consultants	
Name	Organization / Affiliation
Gavin Willis	Ag Water Board
Jay Chennault (t)	AESI
Fred Likkel	Whatcom Family Farmers

Other Guests	
Name	Organization / Affiliation
Alan Chapman (t)	Whatcom Conservation District
Mitch Moorlag	

Proceedings

Larry called the meeting to order at 9:01 am.

1. Consent Agenda

- a. Agenda was reviewed.
- b. January 16 minutes were reviewed.
- c. Financial reports and voucher were reviewed.
- d. Kevin T moved to approve the consent agenda. Brad seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2. Administration

- a. Harman signed his oath of office and reimbursement waiver.

3. Ag Water Board / Water Supply

- a. Gavin provided an update on adjudication issues. Will send a draft of comment letter to Ecology re: draft claims form to board members via email once it is available.
 - i. Gavin is also working with AESI on developing a water rights document portal and water rights information office hours.
- b. Jay provided an update on the county's work on the WRIA 1 groundwater model. Different scenarios testing impacts on streamflow and groundwater levels, including active ditch and drain management in agricultural areas and moving groundwater withdrawals away from streams. Gavin will coordinate with Jay on further presentations to the WIDs in March or April.
- c. Discussion of Whatcom County 2025 Comprehensive Plan update. Emphasis from WIDs and AWB is water availability for ag land, as well as drainage of ag land in floodplains. Board noted

that they support protecting ag land, but not necessarily rezoning of ag lands as a mechanism to do so.

4. Drainage / Habitat / Flood

- a. No updates for ditch maintenance. There is still an outstanding section of ditch on Assink Rd that was not cleaned out by the county last year.
- b. Discussion on buffers. The SCC should have the program finalized at the beginning of March. Alan noted that the new executive director has been active in talking with the legislature, and continues to promote flexible buffer programs, in spite of Ecology and WDFW continuing to push for mandatory SPTH buffers.
- c. Fred noted that the City of Lynden was asking about NLWID's desire to participate in CLASS work. Current CLASS work is focused on Mouw Ditch and Bertrand Creek; potential thought is that if CLASS work in Bertrand leads to positive results, Pepin Creek may be a target for work.

5. Water Quality

- a. Cynthia provided a WQ update by email.
 - i. Since the last NLWID meeting on Jan 16, there have been two water quality alerts filed with BC Ministry of the Environment, both associated with larger rain events: Jan 24 for Bertrand, Double Ditch, and Fishtrap, and Feb 1 for Double Ditch.
 - ii. Since Feb 1, results in North Lynden have mostly been on the lower side, with a few moderate counts (100-300) on Feb 12 after a rain event.
 - iii. Portage Bay marine results indicate that two sites may be eligible for an upgrade to year-round harvest. DoH will review data over the next couple of months and make recommendations in their annual report.
- b. Fred noted that local agencies did an analysis of sources of fecal coliform last fall that found that 95% of fecal coliform in the Nooksack main stem was coming from upstream of Everson. Not clear on exact sources, but a significant amount coming from the South Fork, potentially in some wetlands and sloughs.

6. Education / Communications

- a. Fred noted that March 27th will be the next WFF water rights education event at the Farm Pavilion at NWWF. Event will be from 6:30-8:30 pm.

7. Other Items

- a. None.

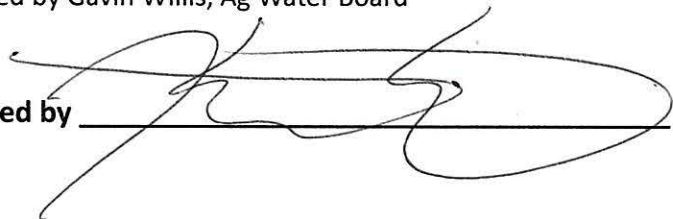
8. Next Meeting

- a. Next meeting is scheduled for March 19th at 9:00 am.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:12 am.

Submitted by Gavin Willis, Ag Water Board

Approved by _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Gavin Willis', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.