

**April 25, 2024**

**UCSRB Board of Directors Mtg. Summary**

**Douglas County Transportation & Land Services Building – East Wenatchee, WA**

**9:00 am to 3:00 pm**



**Formal Approvals**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Action-Decision</b>
Agenda for April 25, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting	Approved and posted online at: <a href="#">UCSRB Agenda</a>
Summary for February 22, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting	Approved and posted online at: <a href="#">UCSRB Summary</a>
Bank Signature Resolution #24-002	Approved
Resolution to Extend the Line of Credit #24-003	Approved
Disbursement Summary for January – February 2024	Approved
Yakama Nation contract for April – September 2024	Approved
ED Small Grants program and application	Approved
Implementation Schedule for 2024-2027	Approved

Present: Board Chair Chuck Brushwood (Colville Confederated Tribes), Vice-chair Douglas County Commissioner Marc Straub, Shannon Adams (Yakama Nation), Chelan County Commissioner Shon Smith, UC SRB Executive Director Amanda Ward, UCSRB staff - Elaine Sivey, Ryan Niemeyer, Aerial Edwards, Gabby Vermeire, Chris Johnson (MSRF), Matt Young (CCT), Steve Kolk (BOR)

Present remotely: Okanogan County Commissioner Andy Hover

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Chair Brushwood welcomed everyone to the meeting at 9:00 am and participants introduced themselves.

**2. Regular Business**

Chair Brushwood reviewed the agenda for the meeting and asked if there were any corrections or additional items to be added to the agenda. No requests were noted.

*Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve the April 25, 2024 agenda as presented.*

*Commissioner Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

The meeting summary from the February 22, 2024 Board of Directors meeting was shared. Vice-chair Straub noted that the spelling of his first name was incorrect on the meeting summary.

*Vice Chair Straub made a motion to approve the February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 Board of Directors meeting summary as presented with the exception of the spelling of Chairman Straub's name. Shon Smith seconded the motion and all approved.*

**3. Finance and Operations**

**Budget vs. Actual – July 2023 – February 2024**

Finance Manager Elaine Sivey presented the Budget 2 Actual. Amend date for record. She advised the Board that there was now a net income for the 2024 Science Conference of \$8,776, with \$52K in revenue and \$43K in expenditures. She noted that net revenue did not include employee time associated with the event. Vice Chair Straub asked how this net revenue compared to that of previous Science Conferences – Elaine advised that it was similar.

Payroll expenditures are lagging for this time in the year. Elaine said that this was a factor of headcount and the fact that training expenditures have been lagging, in part due to seasonality and staff turnover. She noted that the training budget has tended to underrun since COVID but that she expected staff to expend the training budget in the next year. The Board asked if the training budget item should be adjusted – Amanda Ward said she did not believe it was necessary at this point.

Elaine said that while outreach activities have been minimal through February, she expected them to increase with new outreach subcontracts and podcasting activity. Data and stewardship have run higher than projected for the year due to frontloading on the CCT contract and more Aspect subcontractor work at the beginning of the year.

Community engagement activities will be starting in earnest with the beginning of WAT meetings. Elaine expected this budget item to be fully expended.

In terms of money budgeted for Board engagement activities, expenditures for the year have mostly been lunches. Elaine noted it would be good to have Board feedback on making this part of the budget for next year, including budgeting for strategic planning retreats or legislative outreach.

The most notable administrative expenditure item was audit fees, which exceeded the 31K budget by approximately \$2k. This is because it was the first time accountability audit took the SAO more time to complete: it is not an indication of the state of our records.

Chair Brushwood asked if there was a way for Board members to address line items that went over budget. Amanda suggested setting a ceiling where if a line item was a certain amount over the budget, it would be brought to the Board's attention.

#### **Statement of Financial Position – February 29, 2024**

Elaine presented the Statement of Financial Position and noted that discrepancies between this year and last were due to fluctuations in cash and accounts receivable relating to the timing of invoices and the associated amount requested. Last year's accrued revenue of \$191K compared to this year's of \$183K was due to accruing more invoices at this time last year. The value of UCSRB contracts last year was also higher, meaning a higher run rate for revenue and more cash in our checking account. Amanda added that she wanted to work on diversifying our contracts and introducing new programs to get new contracts.

#### **Current Grant Activity**

The BEF grant was received in late February and no expenditures have been put towards it yet. Because they provide funding up front, the money is placed in a segregated restricted cash account and considered deferred revenue until spent.

Spending on the BPA admin grant is low but expected as that position has been vacant. Spending on the contract will start increasing after the new hire for the position, Meghan Camp, begins work on Monday, April 29.

The DNR contract was received in February. The \$50K contract will go through June of 2025, and will go towards funding Claire Thompson's NCWFHC Coordinator position.

Lead Entity spending has been underrun partially due to the state of Washington giving additional money beyond the usual LE activities for supplemental admin activities. This additional money from the state is largely to catch up with inflation. Elaine advised that she expected it will be expended by the end of the fiscal year.

The RCO admin contract was received in October 2023. The annual budget is not expected to be fully spent but, as it's a 2-year contract, the unspent funds can carryover past June 2024.

The TWS grant is supplemental to the DNR grant in providing funding to the NCWFHC – Amanda advised that NCWFHC Co-Chair Tiana Luke has asked UCSRB to spend the DNR grant first.

Elaine advised the Board that the presented YN contract was the expiring one and that the new one was on the agenda to be approved later in the meeting. This contract was underspent as of February, mostly relating to the subcontract with Triangle Associates for Science Conference. Greer Maier transferred from Triangle to RCO during the course of the contract and therefore stopped charging for her time. Shannon Adams asked what was planned for the unspent Science Conference funds – Elaine advised that they were still with YN since they were never vouchered.

#### **Operating Reserve Activity**

Elaine advised the Board that the only OR activity consisted of the net activity for the Science Conference, a credit card rebate from U.S. Bank, and spending \$25 of a credit card rebate.

#### **Bank Signature Resolution #24-002**

Elaine presented the Resolution which listed the staff and Board members who should be the bank signatories for the checking account. Commissioner Hover asked if the resolution should also be to remove a former Board member from signatories for the account. Elaine advised that it did not need to explicitly remove the former Board member since this Resolution would supersede all previous signers.

*Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the Bank Signature Resolution 24-002. Vice Chair Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

#### **Resolution to Extend Line of credit #24-003**

Elaine advised that the line of credit through Wheatland Bank (formerly North Cascades Bank) would be in place as a contingent source of funds. The Resolution would also amend the interest rate of the line of credit and would extend the line of credit for another two years. The Resolution needs to be signed by Amanda and Chair Brushwood. Elaine emphasized the line would only need to be used should the checking account ever be overdrawn.

*Vice Chair Straub made a motion to approve the Resolution to Extend the Line of Credit 24-003. Commissioner Hover seconded the motion and all approved.*

#### **Disbursement summary**

Elaine presented the disbursement summary of all UCSRB expenditures for January through February 2024.

*Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the Disbursement Summary for January – February 2024. Commissioner Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

#### **Contract updates**

##### **Yakama Nation**

Amanda presented the new YN contract - \$63,633 (4/11/2024 – 9/30/2024). She advised that she had presented it at the Executive Committee meeting and asked Chair Brushwood to sign it after for the sake of expediency, since it would need to be expended by September. The scope of work included education and outreach activities, supporting the annual report, maintaining and managing regional databases (RTT, MadMac), stream reach assessment units, watershed coordination, and billing costs. Amanda advised that she had no concerns about expending or achieving the deliverables of this contract.

*Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve the YN contract. Commissioner Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

#### **CCT**

Amanda advised the Board that we were still waiting for the final signed CCT contract. Ryan reached out to John Box to convey concerns about the delay, since it is impacting some of the work covered by the contract. Chair Brushwood noted that the CCT does have an alternative process that could be used to expedite finalizing the contract. Chuck will follow up with CCT regarding this option.

#### **DNR**

This grant will go towards funding a Coordinator for the NCWFHC. The new hire for the part-time position, Claire Thompson, started working 30-50 hours a month on April 3. Claire has facilitation experience and, if needed and/or available, could potentially take over the facilitator role for the Collaborative in the future.

##### **NCWFHC facilitator grant**

Amanda advised that the steering committee of the NCWFHC had asked UCSRB to be the fiscal sponsor for a \$20K grant to go towards facilitation and strategic planning for the group. The Board and staff discussed the role of the facilitator for the Collaborative and that, for the time being, it would be better to engage an objective professional facilitator. Amanda noted that recent past meetings have been facilitated by the Co-chairs Tiana Luke and Chris Branch.

##### **BPA Salmon Habitat Recovery Program Manager – New Hire Meghan Camp**

Amanda reported that Meghan Camp, the new hire for the Salmon Habitat Recovery Program Manager position, would begin work full-time on Monday April 29. Her last position was with Cramer Fish Sciences, and she has a PhD in Biology. Amanda advised that Meghan was working remotely for Cramer Fish Sciences and that she should have no problem working in a hybrid capacity for the UCSRB. Meghan is already familiar with BPA and CBFish software.

The Board discussed the difficulty of hiring for in-person positions since many people only want remote work. Amanda noted that it was hard to build a team dynamic if one staff member was not in the office.

Ryan Neimeyer added that there were advantages and disadvantages to having near fully remote WAT meetings, which were in-person prior to COVID.

#### **UCSRB Small Grants**

Amanda presented the description and application for the small grants program that UCSRB would offer partners, using the Executive Director's discretionary funds. Dr. Joyce Garrett, a professional grant writer who has previously assisted the UCSRB, has provided feedback to Amanda. Amanda stated this grant would only be available when funding permits - since it comes out of the ED discretionary funds, it could differ by year. The grant is capped at \$10K per entity, per grant round.

Amanda asked if she should review and approve applications and present the selected ones to the Board or give the applications to the Board for review and approval. The Board agreed that it would be sufficient for the ED to award the grant and keep the Board apprised of her decision, but that it would be good to have a measurable way to defend decisions made on awarding the small grants. Amanda said that she would develop a transparent system with oversight and staff review. Chair Brushwood suggested developing a scoring matrix.

*-Commissioner Smith made a motion to approve the small grants application. Vice Chair Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

#### **25<sup>th</sup> anniversary**

Given that UCSRB's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary is coming up in October, Amanda wanted to gauge Board interest and discuss options for celebrating this anniversary. Since there are already plans for a legislative tour of projects in the fall, it might be a good idea to combine the site tours with a celebration of the anniversary. UCSRB's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration consisted of a tour of Wells Dam and an event with speakers at the Hilton Gardens Inn. Funding for the anniversary could come from the ED discretionary funds, legislative outreach funds, and general RCO funding. Shannon Adams suggested carrying over the previously mentioned unused YN funds, originally allocated to the Science Conference.

The Board discussed ideas to commemorate the anniversary. One potential idea is a day consisting of a morning of site tours followed by lunch at Rocky Reach Dam. All agreed it would be good to consider and try to incorporate all four H's. A tour of the Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery was another idea, since it has recently undergone improvements. The Board agreed it would be valuable to bring in folks who had been involved since the inception of the UCSRB, such as Paul Ward and Bill Towey, and engage partners and the community as the UCSRB looks to the future. Chair Brushwood added that it would be good to have a subcommittee to plan for the anniversary.

#### **BEF**

Ryan Niemeyer presented on the scope of work for both the previous and new BEF grants. The previous grant's three focus areas were 1) to amplify voices of landowners per recommendations from the Ruckelshaus Report; 2) application and delivery of new federal and state funding to sponsors; and 3) planning and implementing a floodplain workshop.

The current grant runs from January 2024 to March 2025, and includes planning for a permitting workshop in November 2024. The workshop would be a collaboration with the Forest Service, so there is

potential to cost-share the event. Ryan noted that permitting is a huge issue for sponsors. The Council of Regions, Washington Salmon Coalition, and the Regional Fisheries Enhancement groups are holding a roundtable on permitting that coincides with our regional May SRFB site tours. Commissioner Hover added that planning for the workshop should be put out to the Okanogan County planning department, since they've also encountered issues with permitting.

The three focus areas of the new grant are 1) providing support to RTT chair Tracy Hillman; 2) planning and executing the Permitting Workshop; and 3) prioritization tool development, including riparian shading data and climate change impacts.

### **BEF 2022-2023 Okanogan Listening Sessions**

Ryan Niemeyer and Commissioner Hover presented on the listening session they held with landowners in the Okanogan and Methow Watersheds in 2022 and 2023 which were part of the deliverables of the previous BEF grant. Conversations were had with landowners who were resistant to restoration work on their land. The listening sessions consisted of four meetings with landowners in the Okanogan watershed and one with landowners in the Methow. Ryan and Commissioner Hover emphasized that their role in the listening sessions was not to tell landowners what to do or try and change their minds about being more receptive to restoration work, but to listen and hear their perspectives.

General themes identified from the Okanogan listening sessions included:

- Salmon are perceived as threat to landowners' livelihood, restoration work will take water from them at a time when ranching and agriculture is becoming more difficult
- If landowners open up to allow a project on their land, more of what they have will "be taken away"
- Sponsors are trying to buy up their land
- If work is being done on their property, potential "infractions" on the property will occur
- Landowners who had previously allowed projects on their land sometimes saw project infrastructure break down, or the project didn't work, which led to a lack of trust.

Commented [AW1]: Cross-check with Ryan on these please

The Board and staff discussed the best messaging to use with landowners and their diverse perspectives on restoration work on their properties. It was noted that per conservation district and tribal sponsors accounts, many landowners were fine with stream survey work. Shannon Adams added that many riparian improvement projects also helped with agricultural irrigation. All acknowledged the inherent difficulty of projects constantly needing to be re-done/upgraded due to the always-updating science. All agreed that, in general, listening and being open to landowner perspectives is the first step towards building trust, as well as emphasizing areas where work can be mutually beneficial. Ryan noted that the landowners in the Methow listening sessions had similar views to those in the Okanogan listening sessions. The next steps are to continue building trust with landowners through Board member outreach. Ryan will share a final summary of the findings in the upcoming SOWAT meeting.

### **Implementation Schedule**

Ryan presented the project Implementation Schedule for 2024 through 2027, which consists of planned projects and sponsors' projected dollar amount asks for the projects. The schedule will be shared with RCO to assist with planning for legislative budgeting and will also be shared with NOAA.

*Commissioner Hover made a motion to approve the Implementation Schedule. Commissioner Straub seconded the motion and all approved.*

Chair Brushwood proposed adding an item to today's agenda to discuss creating a draft budget per Elaine Sivey's request. All approved.

Commented [AW2]: For what?

### **Budget format**

Elaine Sivey requested guidance from the Board for preparing the budget prior to her retiring from her position in two months' time. Her options for preparing a budget are as follows: 1) Budget for FY2024 only; 2) Craft a six-month addendum to the FY 23-24 budget; 3) Create item 2 plus a courtesy 12-month budget for calendar year 2025; 4) Craft an 18-month budget for the remaining balance of FY24 plus all of FY25.

Commissioner Hover asked what dates the known revenues extend to. Elaine advised that current RCO funding ends in June 2025 and BPA funding goes from December to November. The Board agreed their preference was for Option 4, an 18-month budget.

### **Chris Johnson (MSRF) – Presentation**

Chris Johnson, Director of the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (MSRF), presented on a new system of valuing water. He first updated the Board that MSRF had just received qualified local entity (QLE) status, allowing it to work with federal agencies.

Chris spoke about the difficulties with discussing water use and water value with irrigators when trying to present them with alternative strategies to lower their water usage. His idea for valuing water would be that it would be based on location, such that water in places with water scarcity like Twisp is valued higher than water in places like the mainstream Methow.

The Board discussed this idea of water valuation in the overall context of trying to create incentives for irrigators to get more water in the stream, and ultimately more money on the ground for restoration projects. Chris emphasized that convincing irrigators to give up the excess of what they need to produce on their farms is more convincing them to donate what amounts to wasted water after increasing their irrigation efficiency. He added that it was also important to engage side channel habitat over ditches and stream-based storage over lake storage to make watersheds more resilient to climate change. Matt Young from CCT added it was important to look to forest health for resiliency against climate change and to restore wetlands in higher areas to saturate groundwater in early spring. Chair Brushwood emphasized the importance of being thorough in characterizing benefits of increased efficiency to irrigators and to being creative in transactions with them. For instance, if excess water saved because of increasing efficiency is donated to a water bank or to the Department of Ecology, it doesn't have to go through the ROE process. It was noted that while it was hard to get funding from BPA for efficiency work, the Department of Ecology does offer stream restoration inflow grants.

### **Loup Loup Fish Passage Project**

Matt Young, Fish Biologist with Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, presented on the Loup Loup Fish Passage project. The project site is a series of naturally occurring waterfalls in Loup Loup creek,

a tributary to the Okanogan River. In 1938, a dam in the creek that created Wagner Mill Pond failed and the resulting Mallot flood destroyed the town of Mallot.

The creek is also home to a population of ESA-listed summer steelhead, and since 2014 has been the third most productive tributary for steelhead smolt production in the Okanogan watershed. However, the steelhead population is currently stuck in a density-dependent situation where population growth is limited by available resources and habitat. This means more adults are returning to spawn than the habitat can support. Prior to construction of the project, adult steelhead had access to only 2.2 miles of spawning habitat and were unable to pass the falls and access five miles of potential upstream habitat. The condition of the creek habitat itself fulfills two of the four C's in that it is cold and clean, but not connected or complex. As a relatively cool tributary, it is also considered an important cold water refugia for fish.

The project required five years of planning and monitoring, obtaining federal, state, and local permits, permission from four private landowners with funding provided by BPA. It was set over three different sites and consisted of filling a sub-grade wedge with void-filled riprap to the stream a more consistent, lower grade and added wedged to allow adult fish to travel upstream to spawn. Rocks used in construction were sourced from nearby floodplain. As of April 18, six unique tagged adults were detected above the falls, four of natural origin and two of hatchery origin. The current expansion rate is 20 steelhead above the project and 7 below, suggesting that increasing fish passage has been successful so far. Loup Loup Creek is now the second most productive steelhead tributary to the Okanogan.

Matt added that the cost of the project was \$2.3 million.

Public comments – No public comments

## 11. Wrap-Up and Adjourn Meeting

Chair Brushwood thanked everyone for attending the meeting and adjourned at 2:48 pm.

**Next scheduled Board meeting - June 27, 2024.**

### Board Members Present:

**Chair, Colville Confederated Tribes:** Chuck Brushwood; **Vice-Chair, Douglas County:** Marc Straub; **Yakama Nation:** Shannon Adams; **Chelan County:** Shon Smith; **Okanogan County:** Andy Hover (virtual)

**UCSRB Staff Present:** Amanda Ward, Ryan Niemeyer, Elaine Sivey, Ariel Edwards, Gabby Vermeire, Claire Thompson

### Others Present:

**Colville Confederated Tribes:** Matt Young; **Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation:** Chris Johnson; **Bureau of Reclamation:** Steve Kolk

Commented [AW3]: From my experience, all this information should be at the beginning