

## **Minutes**

Yakima County Voluntary Stewardship Program  
Tuesday, December 28  
1:00 PM – 2:15 PM

1. Welcome, Introductions, Agenda Overview.

**Meeting was conducted via Zoom in video and by phone. Chairman Gail Thornton opened the meeting. Participants included: Eric Bartrand, WDFW; Stuart Crane, Yakama Nation; Erin Eaton, Trout Unlimited; Lisa Grueter, BERK; Rodney Heit, SYCD; Mark Herke, Yakima County Farm Bureau; Noelle Madera, Yakima County Long Range Planning Manager; John Marvin, Yakama Nation; Eric Olsen, Orchardist and Commercial Beekeeping; Gail Thornton, Cattleman, Yakima County Farm Bureau; Michael Tobin, NYCD; Kerry Turley, Audubon Society**

2. Review September 2021 meeting minutes

**Gail Thornton asked the Work Group Members for approval of the September 2021 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Eric Olsen and seconded by Kerry Turley to approve the minutes. By consensus, the Work Group approved the minutes.**

3. Public Comment

**Gail Thornton noted there were no members of the audience. Gail offered comments about a legislative proposal around buffers that picks on agriculture. Eric Olsen suggested getting producers involved.**

4. Adaptive Management for Enhancement

**Lisa, Rodney, and Mike discussed the progress in reaching out to producers in various “edge” basins. Lisa presented slides focusing on the following basins:**

- **Klickitat: The Yakama Nation provided some information on practices in the basin. Also based on direct letters to producers in 2021, SYCD received about six responses with a range of practices identified since 2011, e.g., prescribed grazing, no-till, and Conservation Reserve Program.**
- **Rock Glade: Based on letters to producers in summer 2021, the SYCD received six responses. There are a variety of practices, particularly no-till, vegetation management, rain guzzlers, etc.**

**Other adaptive management is pending in Upper Yakima and Alkali Squilchuck basins on shrub-steppe.**

**The group discussed that NRCS allowing for emergency grazing on south-facing slopes could help right now and allow for re-seeding thousands of acres.**

5. Upcoming Meetings

**Lisa described the upcoming monitoring symposium in January 2022, and a slot for Yakima to address the Statewide Advisory Committee/Tech Panel in June 2022.**

6. Administrative Items

- NYCD Report on Outreach & Cost Shares

**Mike discussed continued fish and riparian enhancement, irrigation, floodplain, and other projects associated with Wenas Creek and Purdin Ditch.**

- SYCD Report on Outreach & Cost Shares

**Rodney discussed several projects such as Dairy producers and waste storage/leak detection. Greenstrips along SR 241 and fence line protection was described. An irrigation projects in Glennwood in the Klickitat basin is under development (water trust, water rights). The drill program has taken off. Soil sampling with WSDA was discussed. A lot of practices can be added to the tracking map.**

7. Solar Proposals in Agricultural Areas

**Mike discussed solar proposal and effect on agricultural lands and a multi-conservation district resolution with a problem/opportunity statement. The group discussed the potential for a letter from the Work Group about agricultural lands viability and solar proposals. More counties should be aware. Mike planned to put together a letter. The Yakama Nation would not be a party on letters that take a position; that is a tribal council role.**

8. Next Steps and Adjourn

**Gail Thornton thanked the Work Group. The Yakima Work Group is scheduled to meet next on March 22, 2022, from 1-4 pm.**

Meeting adjourned