

**Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB)  
Minutes –October 17, 2007**

Members in attendance:

Kim Mower  
Nels Lagerlund  
Murray Benjamin  
Randy Good  
Lyle Wesen  
Bill McMoran  
Annie Lohman  
John Vendeland

Members not in attendance:

Mike Hulbert  
Dave Boon  
Bob Hughes  
Roger Knutzen

Others in attendance

Carly Ruacho  
Mary Heinrich

1. Call to order. 7:02 p.m. Kim Mower called meeting to order and welcomed the committee.
2. Proxies: Randy Good proxy for Mike Hulbert
3. Minutes. Randy moved and Murray seconded to approve the minutes. Approved.
4. Wetland Bank Mitigation. Guest, Mary Heinrich, reported to the AAB on the outcome of the League of Women Voters panel on wetland mitigation. She was a panelist and was received with enthusiasm from the Ag community on her research and commitment to trying to show the affects of this activity on agriculture. Mary announced the following information: that a 12 Ag organizations signed letters to ask the County to review this as a Special Use; unfortunately a letter from the Department of Fish and Wildlife sent to the County stated that wetland banks were restoration and therefore exempt from permitting; the Governor's Office has said that creating banks are part of the Working Lands Initiative and that Loveland said she would work as an ambassador to the Gov's office; DOE felt that it was too expensive to do much if anything in cities so focus would be on rural areas; and that Jake from the Clear Valley bank gave Sagittarians to Protect Farmland money to do a Critical Mass Study. Mary said her next step would be to go national on the issue, similar to what she did back east. She feels that this will get a lot of national support and pressure the banks into going to sites other than agriculture. She then answered some questions from the AAB and said she would keep the Board updated.
5. Clean Water District/Dairy Nutrient Plans: Kendra reported that after talking to Tom Karsh he indicated that he would be meeting with the Public Works Director the following day to discuss what they will take before the BoCC in a Resolution. Not sure where it will go, but he plans on recommending relief for the dairy farmers who have management plans in place.
6. Chuckanut Metropolitan Park District: Discussion on the need to propose a bill to change the current legislation. The original bill went through the house with no discussion, however there was controversy within the Senate. Quall has said not to worry, Spanel has not taken a position, Morris knew nothing about it and Pearson said send his office information.

7. Planning Update. Carly stated that October 10<sup>th</sup> was the date the new codes became affective with November 10<sup>th</sup> being last day to appeal. 1,000 trails is appealing on basis of Due Process. They wanted a Master Plan Resort in Alger area and were denied based on the criteria in place. Dog kennels are taking a lot of Carly's time. Push for the Town of Hamilton UGA expansion out of the floodway.
8. Farmland Legacy Program. Randy gave an update. 1996 the program was started and it was done from the bottom-up approach inventing the wheel as they went. The actual legislation allows other areas besides farmland to be purchased i.e. critical areas. It was important to Skagit County's program to NOT allow public access onto the easements and they are written to ensure this would not happen.
9. FAA Discussion: Discussion centered on the AAB possibly taking a more active role in the community on this. It is the foundation for young farmers. This is a way to promote Ag in the valley. Yelm has 8 full time staff for FAA. Our county needs vocational programs. School counselors need to be educated to help steer the youth toward farming if that is what they are interested in doing...not discourage.
10. Winter schedule: 6-8 starting November.
11. Ruckelshaus Center: Annie commented that what they are reviewing are the ordinances that are currently on the books. Tribes have made a presence in Olympia and are being told that they must be consistent. They have asked those parties involved not to lobby any issues related to the GMA while serving on the board. This is unrealistic and Ag could not agree to this stipulation. They need to look at the number of fish in the nets.
12. EPA Notice: Notice in the paper indicating that the Swinomish Tribe is requesting standing to review 401 Certifications under the Clean Water Act. They would have input on the water quality standards. This would be only if their waters are affected. This may become the case if they get lands outside the current reservation.
13. Meeting Date: Murray moved and Jon seconded to have the next meeting November 14<sup>th</sup> due to Thanksgiving Holiday. AND at 6:00! Approved.
14. Adjourned. 8:55 p.m.