

**Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB)  
Minutes –March 19, 2008**

Members in attendance:

Kim Mower  
Murray Benjamin (proxy for Randy Good)  
Bill McMoran  
Mike Hulbert  
Nels Lagerlund  
Roger Knutzen  
John Vendeland

Members not in attendance:

Annie Lohman  
Randy Good  
Bob Hughes  
Lyle Wesen

Others in attendance

Mary Heinrich  
Carly Ruacho  
Kendra Smith  
Don McMoran  
Allison Aurand

1. Call to order. 6:05 p.m. Kim Mower called meeting to order and welcomed the committee.
2. Proxy: Murray proxy for Randy.
3. Comp Plan Update: Kendra followed up with the request from Gary Christensen from PDS to have the AAB review proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. Carly noted that at the first of the week they held the first hearing and that all proposals will make the docket. Suggestion was made to form a subcommittee to review all land use/comp plan amendments and then get back to the larger committee for further discussions when needed. AAB will think about this option. The two current proposals that may affect ag are the F and S Grade request that will have multiple parcels and owners. The second is the school location off ag land. At some point the location will need to be dealt with due to population increases and being 'proactive' as to an appropriate citing could be beneficial.
4. Chuckanut Metropolitan Park District: Kim asked the AAB if they thought it would be appropriate to invite Dr. Gibb from the group proposing this district to come talk to the AAB. Dr. Gibb had offered to do so. It was felt that there was no need at this time but perhaps in the future. Update....the Boundary Review Board voted it down because they had not done SEPA to analyze the impacts. However, they did leave it op-en that at some point they could return if they had more information.
5. DOT updates: Mary Heinrich attended a work session put on by the DOT discussing the future expansion of the I-5 corridor through Skagit Valley. Unfortunately the DOT had the wrong mailing addresses and contacts to invite to the meeting so some interested parties were not in attendance. The additional lanes raise the following concerns: loss of ag land, what type of mitigation is appropriate for the loss, circulation and flow patterns, impacts on neighboring farms. Concerns over excess fill being removed and then replaced on Hwy 20 were raised as well as what type of mitigation banks would be created. DOT would like to come back and give a smaller more informal presentation to the Ag community and to get feedback regarding the project. Bill noted that truckers need to give their input as how this will affect their ability to access the ramps. After discussion it was decided to center the next AAB meeting around a DOT presentation with a question and answer period. The AAB

- suggested inviting all ag interests as well as the timber folk. It was hoped that the WSU research Center could be secured for the meeting...same time as the normal AAB meeting.
6. \*Clear Valley Environmental Bank: Mary Heinrich reported that SPF, the Friends of Skagit were both going to appeal the SEPA determination and Shoreline application. Mary discussed Haugen's two large scale bills and noted that it seemed like ag couldn't get tot the table on the mitigation bank actions. There were two articles statewide and she felt is may be time to do another national push due to the impact of the banks on viable farmland. Two letters were written for the AAB to review and select which, if any, they would like to send. It was suggested that one be signed by the ABB and the other be sent from individuals. Mike moved to adopt option one to be sent from the AAB and the other by individuals. Murray seconded. Discussion to take the last paragraph of option two and place it into option one. Passes unanimous. Mary suggested that two opposing letters be sent clearly opposing both of the above actions.
  7. Ag Leaders Breakfast: The groups agreed to sponsor a candidates' forum July 16<sup>th</sup> to pose questions to the candidates for the Commissioner's race regarding ag issues. It will be organized similar to the forum on wetland banks where speakers will present and then written questions from the audience will be submitted for their input. It would be helpful if by the June meeting the AAB could formulate a list of issues to be discussed.
  8. Ag Issues Presentation: Kim reported on the group's progress and stressed the need to educate the public and trying to find the best way to do so. They are picking one topic at a time to present to the Commissioners...the first will be Bayview Drainage. Kim, Mike, Roger and John are the committee.
  9. PDS Update: Nothing new at this time.
  10. Friends of Skagit County appeal of Clear Valley: Allison Aurand, a member of FOSC outlined their desire to appeal Clear Valley application and SEPA Determination. She said they needed support and donations if possible. She was not sure what SPF was doing, but thought they were also filing action. The appeal will be on: lack of process, the SEPA MDNS, drainage issues not addressed as well as whether or not the use is allowed or needs a conditional use under the Shoreline Master Program.
  11. Concerns: Murray is concerned that the next full meeting will be in May and the AAB has not gotten any issues before the BoCC yet. Need to get moving....does not want to lose creditability.
  12. Next meeting: April 16<sup>th</sup> ...topic DOT expansion.
  13. Adjourn: 7:54 p.m.