

Skagit County Agriculture Advisory Board
Meeting Summary – April 10, 2019
Skagit County Administration Building

[Members in Attendance](#)

Michael Hughes	Nels Lagerlund	Barbara Cleave	John Morrison
Justin Hayton	Murray Benjamin	Terry Sapp	Tim Van Hofwegen
Kraig Knutzen			

[Proxy Designations](#)

Tim Van Hofwegen proxy for Steve Omdal
Nels Lagerlund proxy for Steve Wright

[Members Absent](#)

Steve Omdal	Scott Hanseth	Steve Wright
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[Others in Attendance](#)

Kathy Jewell, Skagit County Planning & Development Services (PDS)

[Call to Order, Introductions](#)

Michael Hughes called the meeting to order at 6:08 pm.

[Approval of Meeting Summary](#)

Kraig Knutzen moved to accept the January 9, 2019 summary, John Morrison seconded. Motion carried.
Kraig Knutzen moved to accept the March 13, 2019 summary, John Morrison seconded. Motion carried.

[Committee Reports](#)

Economic Development- Don McMoran

Pickle producer interested in our area, coming back in 2 weeks for a return visit. They look at ground for a trial planting. The first visit they met with pickle producers here and talked about how it has to be different than what they are doing overseas.

Port of Skagit has a great opportunity with agricultural production.

Critical Areas – Nels Lagerlund

Salmon Recovery Council met to prioritize Skagit river project. Would require setbacks around salmon streams and restoration around said streams. March 13 Puget Sound Leadership Council discussed the policy recommendation of Salmon Recovery Council. The AAB members discussed various stakeholders input and the impact it would make on farmers and agriculture in the valley. June 11 or 12 Puget Sound Leadership council to hold a meeting for various stakeholders to comment.

AAB feels there has been a lack of outreach to Skagit agriculture regarding the 200-300' each side mandatory setback/buffers. This would be incredibly damaging to small farms. And especially up river between Sedro Woolley and Lyman due to the cross drainage in that area. They discussed what AAB can do, draft a memo to BOCC about their stance. Nels will do more research and draft a letter for everyone to read and approve through email. We can review draft next month's meeting.

Land Use –Barbara Cleave (Chair), Michael Hughes, Scott Hanseth, John Morrison, Steve Wright
Nothing this month

Flood, Drainage & Irrigation – Kraig Knutzen (Chair), Nels Lagerlund, Scott Hanseth, Steve Wright
Nels Lagerlund - 40 drainage districts and Kara Symonds gave him a list of projects what co has done to help districts. RCW from 1800's. If new district is created upriver that new district must help the older downstream district. AAB is curious to how that is happening now. Codify that the districts will help upgrade infrastructure? This was brought it up during Avalon. Almost all sources are unregulated. What happens when there is staff turnover what if Dan Berentson and Kara Symonds leave the county, what is the policy? Does PW have administrative decisions like PDS?

Kraig brought up that there is a lot of mislabeling of drainage ditches in the county. When it was brought up to Public Works the reply was "what difference does it make". And that could make a big difference with this salmon recovery issue. Need maps of the sloughs, creeks, rivers etc.

Old Business

None this time

New Business

Skagit county Brassica Ordinance – Don McMoran
State law has a loophole so this ordinance was created to close that and can work with the homeowner gardener. Makes the process local, faster hopefully. Gives the farmer more protection and can show the homeowner that the state & county care about this.

The ordinance was given to the BOCC and they will not move on it until AAB weighs in on it. AAB liked the ordinance and resolution to encourage the county commissioners to move forward on this. Kraig motioned to write a letter in support, John seconded, no comments passes unanimously. Michael will write and send draft for approval.

Skagit Conservation District (SCD) Rate Increase

Kathy will follow-up and ask them to come speak to the AAB again - July

They will submit to BOCC and they will have a public hearing. They are meeting with SPF and WW Ag. AAB discussed how they can comment for the public hearing. SCD did not make any changes that were suggested last time. They didn't reduce the fee for multiple parcels.

Don McMoran, WSU Extension Update

Grants: working on 2 grants.

Workshops at WSU extension in Mount Vernon

April 17-18– train the trainer for worker protection standards

April - prelicense pesticide training in Spanish

April – Tractor safety

Terry Sapp read in capital press that WSU was recognized as 2nd in nation for agricultural research! Second to Cornell! Everyone congratulated Don for his hard work on behalf of WSU.

[Adjourn](#)

John moved to adjourn, Murray seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm

Next meeting is May 8, 2019 at 7 pm only meeting if it's raining.