

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Basin Advisory Committee (BAC) Member Roles and Process Overview for Filling BAC Caucus Vacancies

Prepared for the February 26, 2025, and March 26, 2025 BAC Meetings

Overview

The purpose of this discussion guide is to support the ongoing cohesion of the Walla Walla Basin Advisory Committee (BAC) by providing background for reviewing the roles of BAC members and the various BAC caucuses.

As a reminder, both Washington ([RCW 90.90.120](#)) and Oregon ([SB1567](#)) legislatures passed legislation that directs implementation of the Walla Walla Water 2050 Strategic Plan with input from the BAC.

In March 2022, the BAC adopted [Operating Procedures](#). Within this discussion guide, we have highlighted for BAC members the following items, which we will discuss over the course of our February and March BAC meetings:

1. The [purpose of the BAC](#), intended to serve as a refresher for what we are collectively aiming towards as a BAC.
2. The [roles and responsibilities of BAC members](#), which we hope to lean on as a foundation for discussing how the Tri-Sovereigns and the facilitation team can support you in bringing the concepts of the interest groups and caucuses to life.
3. The [process for filling BAC caucus vacancies](#), as a reminder for the steps to fill any vacancies on the BAC.
4. The [overview of the consensus decision process](#), as reference to support the process to fill BAC caucus vacancies.
5. The [current BAC membership list](#), as there are several vacancies to be filled, as well as several changes that will be brought forward to the BAC during the March meeting.

1. Purpose of the Walla Walla Basin Advisory Committee

Excerpt from Operating Procedures:

- A. The Walla Walla Basin Advisory Committee (WWBAC) is established to provide advice and recommendations to the Tri-Sovereign governments (State of OR, State of WA, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation [CTUIR]) on the implementation of the Walla Walla Water 2050 Strategic Plan and the general management of waters within the Walla Walla Basin.
- B. The WWBAC will:
 - Be comprised of diverse representation.
 - Rely on consensus decision-making.



- Engage in education and outreach to the interests they represent and to the broader community.
- Work to build partnerships and connections to ensure outcomes that benefit the entire basin.
- Develop advice and recommendations to the Tri-Sovereigns to meet these desired future outcomes:
 - ✓ Ensure long-term Walla Walla Basin watershed health.
 - ✓ Retain quality of life in the basin.
 - ✓ Achieve meaningful fish recovery.
 - ✓ Effectively invest public water resources and public funding for both instream and out-of-stream needs.
 - ✓ Manage surface water & groundwater in a coordinated and consistent manner across the bi-state Walla Walla Basin.
 - ✓ Plan for and adapt to climate change.
 - ✓ Assist and support in implementation of the WWW 2050 Strategic Plan

2. Roles and Responsibilities of WWBAC members

Excerpt from Operating Procedures:

A. WWBAC members will:

- Actively participate in all WWBAC meetings and contribute to discussions. Consistency in attendance is important. Remote participation will be allowed.
- Respect and consider diverse perspectives and work to find common ground.
- Work between meetings to educate themselves on issues. Members accept the responsibility to come to meetings prepared for the discussion.
- Actively participate in at least one Working Group.
- Work cooperatively with each other, the facilitator, and staff to accomplish the purpose of the WWBAC (see section I.)
- Keep other members of your interest group informed of WWBAC efforts, solicit input on issues discussed, and share this input with the WWBAC as a whole. This is a key responsibility of members; it is important that members represent the broad perspectives of their interest group.
- Work to build partnerships, connections, and enthusiasm for long-term commitment to watershed health and recovery.
- Follow the discussion Ground Rules included in Appendix A.

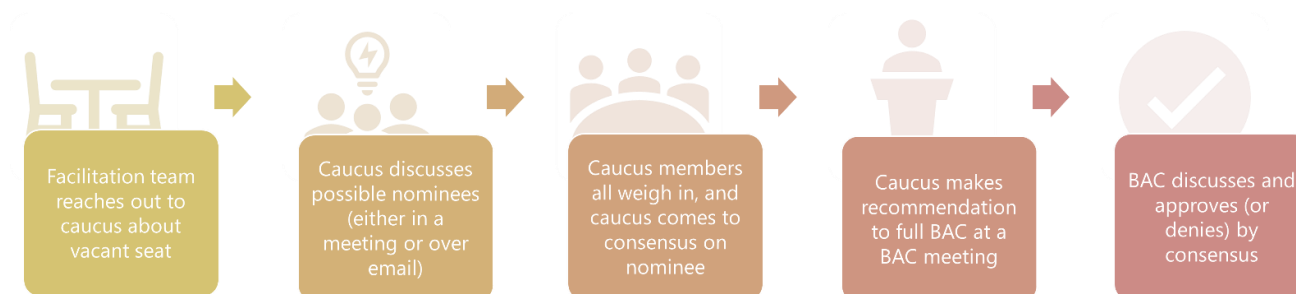
3. Process for Filling BAC Caucus Vacancies

At the September 2023 Basin Advisory Committee (BAC) meeting, BAC members expressed the desire to self-select members of the BAC, and received Tri-Sovereigns support for this approach. BAC members agreed to use a caucus method to help fill vacancies on the BAC. The BAC

approved the following process: Caucuses would bring nominees to the BAC for discussion and approval by consensus. Caucuses are distinct from interest groups: **caucuses** are formed for the purpose of recommending new people to fill vacant seats on the BAC; **interest groups** are the organizing structure for representation on the BAC. Due to size, some interest groups are combined into one caucus (for example, the Environmental Caucus includes both the Environment and the Recreation/Quality of Life Interest Groups). The WW BAC Operating Procedures direct BAC members to represent broad interests within their interest group or caucus (see Section 5). Therefore, in filling vacancies it is important to consider perspectives within the interest group that are not currently represented on the BAC—rather than adding more members who share existing perspectives. The agreed-upon process is as follows:

- There are six BAC caucuses: Agriculture, Environment & Recreation, Local Government, State Government, Federal Government, and Tribal Government. Each caucus is responsible for recommending individuals to fill any vacant seats within their caucus (e.g., the Agriculture caucus makes recommendations to fill a vacancy within the Agriculture seats).
- When a seat opens, the facilitation team contacts the caucus to notify them of the vacancy.
- The caucus then discusses possible nominees either over email or in a meeting and caucus members come to consensus around a recommended nominee.
- Caucuses then bring their recommendation to the BAC for discussion during an Advisory Committee meeting, and the recommendation is approved by consensus of the BAC. The Caucus Vacancy Filling Process Graphic below illustrates this.

Caucus Vacancy Filling Process Graphic



4. Consensus Decision Process

Excerpt from Operating Procedures:

- The definition of consensus is:
 - *Consensus is a group process where the input of everyone is carefully considered, and an outcome is crafted that best meets the needs of the group as a whole.*

The root of consensus is the word consent, which means to give permission to. When members consent to a decision, they are giving permission to the group to go ahead with the decision. Some members may disagree with all or part of the decision, but based on listening to everyone else's input, all members agree to let the decision go forward because the decision is the best one the entire group can achieve at the current time.

- The levels of consensus include:
 - I can say an unqualified "yes"! (enthusiastic support)
 - I can accept the decision. (support with some reservations)
 - I do not fully agree with the decision but I will not block it. (significant reservations but believe it is the best the group can do)
- Failure to reach consensus means at least one member votes to block the action from moving forward.
 - I oppose the decision and do not consent to it going forward. (opposition)

5. Basin Advisory Committee Caucuses

Caucus	Interest Group	Primary	Alternate
AGRICULTURE	Agriculture	Mark Wagoner Gardena Farms Irrigation District markswagoner@gmail.com	Mike Ingham Gardena Farms Irrigation District mikeingham@inghams.org
		Annie Byerley Walla Walla Conservation District annie.byerley@wwccd.net	Renee Hadley Walla Walla Conservation District renee.hadley@wwccd.net
		Alli Newhouse Little River Group allison.newhouse@yahoo.com	Vacant
		Travis Trumbull Walla Walla River Irrigation District travistrumbull@hotmail.com	Nathan Rea Oregon Agriculture nrea@htreafarms.com
ENVIRONMENT & RECREATION	Environment	Ralph Perkins Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council barbperk@POCKETINET.COM	Troy Baker Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council troy.baker@wwbwc.org
		Judith Johnson Kooskooskie Commons jsj@bmi.net	Vacant
		Steve Martin Snake River Salmon Recovery Board Steve@snakeriverboard.org	Ali Fitzgerald Snake River Salmon Recovery Board ali@snakeriverboard.org

	Recreation/Quality of Life	Linda Herbert Blue Mountain Land Trust lherbert621@msn.com	Jerry Norquist Community Member jlowellnorquist@gmail.com
LOCAL GOVERNMENT	Economic Development	Nicholas Velluzzi Walla Walla Community College nicholas.velluzzi@wwcc.edu	Amy Schwab Port of Walla Walla district2@portwallawalla.com
	Local Government	Steven Patten City of Milton Freewater steven.patten@milton-freewater-or.gov	Brian Steadman City of Milton Freewater brian.steadman@milton-freewater-or.gov
		Frank Nicholson City of Walla Walla fnicholson@wallawallawa.gov	Robert McAndrews City of College Place RMcAndrews@cpwa.us
		Dan Dorran Umatilla County Dan.dorran@umatillacounty.net	Vacant
		Todd Kimball Walla Walla County tkimball@co.walla-walla.wa.us	Jack Miller Columbia County Jack_miller@co.columbia.wa.us
TRIBAL GOVERNMENT	Tribal Government	Jerimiah Bonifer CTUIR jerimiahbonifer@ctuir.org	Chris Marks CTUIR ChrisMarks@ctuir.org
FEDERAL GOVERNMENT	Federal Government	Justin Yeager NOAA NMFS justin.yeager@noaa.gov	Colleen Fagan NMFS colleen.fagan@noaa.gov
		Cindy Boen US Army Corps of Engineers cindy.a.boen@usace.army.mil	Shawn Nelson US Army Corps of Engineers Shawn.L.Nelson@usace.army.mil
STATE GOVERNMENT	State Government	Mark Wachtel WA Department of Fish and Wildlife Mark.Wachtel@dfw.wa.gov	Jeff Dengel WA Department of Fish and Wildlife Jeffrey.Dengel@dfw.wa.gov
		Taylor McCroskey OR Department of Fish and Wildlife Taylor.MCCROSKEY@odfw.oregon.gov	Cole Hendrickson OR Department of Environmental Quality Cole.Hendrickson@DEQ.Oregon.Gov