



65th Annual APB Conference

2025 Meeting Notes

*Location – Hells Canyon; Oxbow, OR
(September 24-26, 2025)*

Attendees

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Aaron Utz	Idaho Power Company
Brandon Bentz	Idaho Power Company
Clayton Waller	Idaho Power Company
Cory Starr	Eugene Water and Electric Board
Daniel Taylor	US Army Corps of Engineers
Gregg Garnett	Independent
Hayley Tengs	Snohomish County PUD
Jack Wu	Idaho Power Company
James Trainer	Idaho Power Company
Jenise Bauman	Tacoma Power
Kendel McMaster	Pacificorp
Kyle Legare	Snohomish County PUD
Leah Jansky	Tacoma Power
Leah Sullivan	Bonneville Power Administration
Madelyn Martinez	US Army Corps of Engineers
Maggie David	Portland General Electric
Mariah Mayfield	Douglas County PUD
Martha Connor	US Army Corps of Engineers
Matt Nobles	Snohomish County PUD
Mike Stevensen	Idaho Power Company
Natalie Turley	Idaho Power Company
Nick Ackerman	Portland General Electric

Nick Gastelecutto	Idaho Power Company
Rowdy Claycomb	Idaho Power Company
Samuel Williams	Tacoma Power
Sarah Funk	Idaho Power Company
Scott Heller	Puget Sound Energy
Stephen Yunceovich	Pacificorp
Steve Zanelli	Idaho Power Company
Stuart Rosenberger	Idaho Power Company
Tammy Mackay	Bonneville Power Administration
Tholen Blasko	Puget Sound Energy
Tony Fuches	Puget Sound Energy

Wednesday September 24, 2025:

This year’s meeting was a little unique! Because of the remote location of Hell’s Canyon, we elected to camp at the Copperfield campground instead of staying at a hotel.

Prior to the start of the APB welcome and presentations, the Third annual Association of Power Biologist Women’s Resource Group meeting was held. The APB Women’s Resource Group’s primary focus is on promoting and advancing women in the power industry, but all were welcome and encouraged to participate. Eighteen APB attendees were present, all in person. They completed a group exercise called the “fabric model” and “Scarf model” which helps identify threats and rewards, and type of preferred work style to better refine career goals. The APB Women’s Resource Group meets a couple of times a year to stay connected and encourages anyone interested to reach out to get involved.

Idaho Power provided snacks and a light lunch prior to the start of the APB meeting. Scott welcomed everyone and thanked Idaho Power and Stuart for the support and contributions to APB to help make the 2025 possible. Steve Brink of Idaho Power also welcomed and gave an overview of the Hells Canyon Complex to the APB and recapped some of the history that Idaho Power has had with the APB including hosting at Oxbow for the first time in 1962 and then again in 2001. Presentations had a more open format this year with no precise time restrictions, though presenters were encouraged to keep discussions around 30 minutes. This format worked great for having fewer presenters than prior years and allowed presenters with a lot of information to fully share their stories and studies with more room for discussion.

Member Presentations

Summary of a 10-Year Mercury Study; a Fish Centric Story

Nick Gastelecutto: Idaho Power Company

Hells Canyon Complex Wildlife Habitat Mitigation

Aaron Utz: Idaho Power Company

Spring Chinook and Sockeye Salmon Reintroduction; A Skokomish Watershed Perspective

Jenise Bauman: Tacoma Power

How Saving Dollars Saved Fish; An Unexpected Success Story

Nick Ackerman: PGE

Salmon Reintroduction: How and Where to Apply Resources

Cory Starr: EWEB

IPC Avian Risk Assessment Surveys

Natalie Turley: Idaho Power Company

Cornhole Tournament (Day 1)

Wednesday night concluded with the annual Cornhole tournament in the Oxbow Schoolhouse Gymnasium. It was a great space that inspired collaboration and cold-blooded competition! Pizzas, appetizers, and refreshments were enjoyed by all!

Thursday September 25, 2025: Field tour of Hells Canyon. Everyone climbed into one of the three Idaho Power provided jetboats and headed downstream for fun day of whitewater and tours. Tour stops included a stop at the historic McGaffee Cabin where we saw an old homestead and pictographs, multiple stops to discuss Idaho Power's Sturgeon, Bull Trout and Fall Chinook programs, and lunch at the historic Kirkwood Ranch. We couldn't have asked for better weather from start to finish with sunny skies and no wind the entire day! After some R&R time at the Copperfield campground, members headed over to the Oxbow gymnasium for a catered dinner provided by Cow Camp BBQ, drinks, and the conclusion of the cornhole tournament.



Friday September 26, 2025: President Scott Heller welcomed everyone back to the final meeting day and transitioned into the final Member Presentation portion of the agenda.

We opted to forgo dedicated round-table discussions topics in 2025 in lieu of selecting a presentation that was likely to draw a considerable amount of interest and discussion which worked well at the avian predation on the Columbia presentation at the 2024 meeting. For 2025, Mike Stevenson from

Idaho Power shared the story of how Idaho has been dealing with Quagga Mussels through the Snake River Projects with examples of what has and hasn't worked as well as what can be expected in the future.

Highlights of the presentation and discussion included:

- Advise that APB members attend the Columbia River Basin Team "Western Regional Panel" annual meetings
- Skepticism that the outbreak will be contained. Third treatment is starting on Sept. 29.
- An interesting pro to have a quagga mussel infestation is that they do improve water quality.
- Coating equipment with UV paint can be effective... but huge sections would need to be painted and it is likely that paint wouldn't last very long since LWD would likely scrape the surfaces and allow a point for quaggas to attach.
- Difficulty to enforce in Idaho. There is a lot of pushback in the region on government oversight. 2023 was the first treatment and the governor shut down the river... there was A LOT of pushback largely in part due to restricting the public from public spaces following covid shutdowns in 2020-2022.
- Good question: Is it worth it to hit this problem with all available resources since there is a chance that not 100% will be eradicated? Most in the region believe that right now, yes, since the spread and subsequent impact through the rest of the Columbia would be so profound. This opinion may change depending on the results of the 3rd treatment that is occurring in 2025.
- Good question: Could other areas around the PNW get this type of treatment? Likely no. Idaho politics aside, the section of river it was implemented in didn't have any critical native, or ESA species.
- These measures were implemented by the Idaho Department of Agriculture and they swung hard. A similar outbreak happened in the Colorado River and the treatment was unsuccessful in controlling the outbreak - although they didn't go all out and instead opted for half measures.
- What can APB members do? Attend the regional conferences and participate in regional rapid response training

Business meeting

Following the open forum discussions, President Scott Heller called the business meeting to order.

Orders of Business

Old Business

Review of the 2024 Meeting Minutes: Vice-President Cory Starr did a quick read-through from the 2024 meeting minutes to the group. Motion to approve the minutes was made by Kendel McMaster and seconded by Maggie David. No discussion was entered, and the vote carried; the 2024 meeting minutes were approved.

New Business

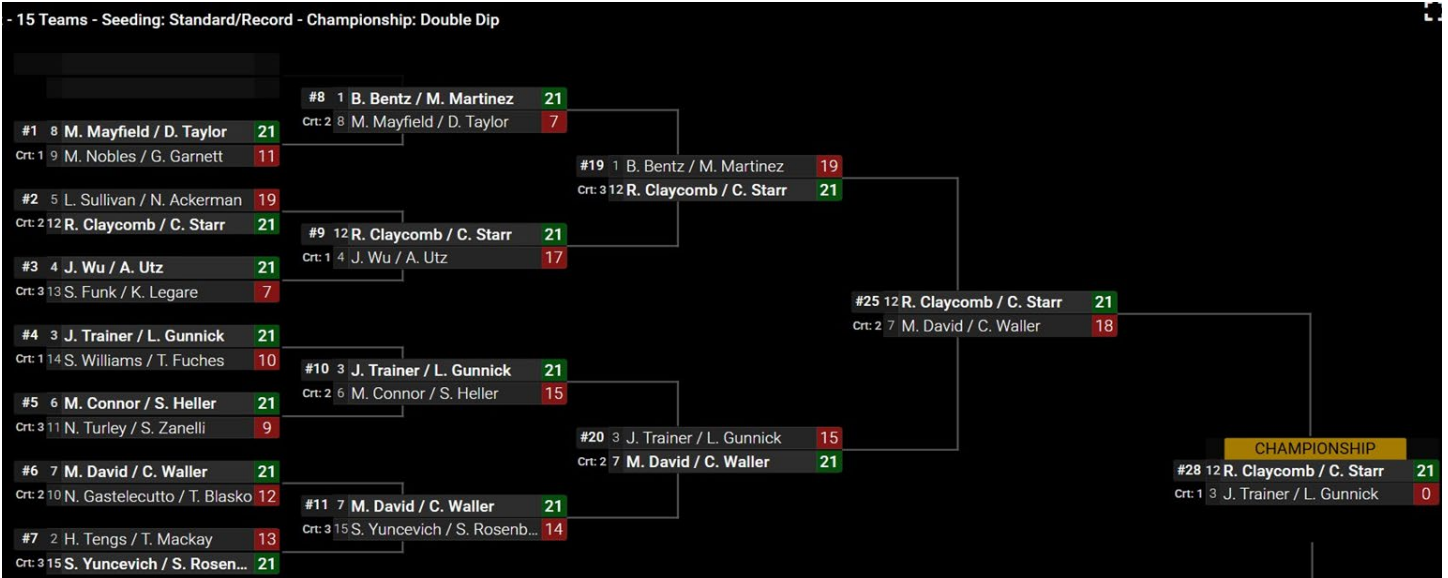
1. Treasury Report: Stuart Rosenberger presented the Treasury Report at the meeting and provided a review of the current state of our finances. The report is included in the meeting minutes below.

- I. APB carried over a balance of \$2,607.68 into July of 2025. Total expenses for the 2025 APB annual meeting was \$4,637.03. At the completion of 2025 the APB treasury holdover balance is \$3,233.01.
 - II. Because we lost the funding from EEI we may need to continue to increase registration costs to cover the cost of the annual meeting, depending on location.
 - III. One option suggested to raise revenue is to produce APB swag that would be available for members to buy. Multiple members expressed an interest in buying APB branded gear.
2. Candidate/New Full Members: Scott Heller read the list of all candidate/new members who submitted completed applications. New member voting was restricted to current APB members only. We had 8 candidates for new membership application. Current education and experience requirement is a bachelors of science education and the applicable term of service with a utility.
 - i. Mariah Mayfield (Douglas County PUD)
 - ii. Leah Sullivan (Bonneville Power Administration)
 - iii. Tholen Blasko (Puget Sound Energy)
 - iv. Rowdy Claycomb (Idaho Power)
 - v. Daniel Taylor (ACOE)
 - vi. Martha Connor (ACOE)
 - vii. Sarah Funk (Idaho Power)
 - viii. Nick Gastelecutto (Idaho Power)

Six out of eight candidates were approved as a full member.

Martha Connor and Rowdy Claycomb were approved as candidate members – will be full members at next meeting they attend since they didn't meet the term requirement.

3. A follow-up discussion around the requirements for APB membership continued from 2024. Scott Heller reported the survey results to the members. Fifteen members had voted to change the education and experience requirements and nineteen members voted to leave the requirements as is. The floor was then opened to questions/statements: Maggie David proposed that those who voted to change it, should get together to propose what the "change" should be to. Once there is agreement of what level/type of experience is adequate to a bachelor's degree, propose that to officers so that it can be voted on at a future APB meeting.
4. Meeting Awards: Voting for best Presentation went to Nick Gastelecutto for his informative and visually entertaining talk on a ten year study on mercury in Brownlee, Oxbow and Hells Canyon reservoirs that Idaho Power participated in.
5. Cornhole Results and Trophy Presentation: Our Cornhole tournament occurred Wednesday and Thursday evenings, following the member presentations and field trip. The tournament bracket was maintained by Jack Wu for the duration of the two day event.



After a grueling 2-night tournament, Rowdy Claycomb and Cory Starr took home the trophy for first place! Rowdy is tasked for ensuring the sacred trophy is returned to the APB in 2026!

6. Plans for a location and hosting utility for 2025 were explored with multiple groups throughout the conference. After discussing logistics which each agencies representatives, we concluded that we would have to wait until the winter to find a host for 2026.
7. Officer Nominations and Elections: Cory Starr (President) and Stuart Rosenberger (Vice President/Treasurer) moved into their respective positions. Leah Jansky of Tacoma Power volunteered, voted in, and assumed the Secretary position.
8. Outgoing President Scott Heller closed the business meeting by thanking Stuart Rosenberger and Jack Wu for coordinating and all the Idaho Power staff for helping facilitate the tours. He thanked everyone for their attendance, excellent presentations, and engaging discussions. He ended with sharing that he really enjoys APB as a safe place to talk with other members, seeing different projects, and the good times he has at APB meetings.

**Cory Starr
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