

SVRP Ground-Water Study MAC Meeting
June 22, 2005 at USGS Spokane Field Office

Attendees: Stoffel, Mangin, Gregory, Anderson, Haynes, Harrington, Lipscomb, Turney, Savoca

Modeling Team Workplan:

The primary concern with the modeling workplan is that there is not enough funding for costs. The problem is that USGS is unable to fund themselves because they do not have direct Federal funding for FY06.

Idaho asked about shifting some of the USGS modeling work to the States. Specifically, in the workplan some time is allotted for Joseph Jones that includes assembling data sets. Idaho noted that USGS hourly costs were more than double those for IWWRI and IDWR and this could be a savings mechanism. USGS noted that they understood Paul Hsieh needed 0.25 of his time and 0.50 of Joseph's time to adequately verify the modeling results and serve as the Modeling Team Technical Coordinator. Paul will be asked to explain more about what Joseph's role will be and if Joseph's time can be reduced.

The overall plan for funding the modeling is that Ecology will fund WWRC, and IDWR will fund IWWRI and Alan Wylie. Now some USGS funding may need to come from States, but it is uncertain how much they can re-direct. Idaho pointed out that the group may need to consider reducing USGS funding and going back to the stakeholders with the idea that the model would be completed by the two States, without USGS involvement.

Conceptually everyone is fine with the rest of the modeling plan, which uses a distributed approach in which several people work on different parts of the model, with understanding and agreement among the team as to how the work is being done. Idaho expressed concern that no one person is working on the model full-time, as would be with a traditional modeling approach. Discussion followed and everyone recognized that the distributed approach might not be as efficient, but it gains buy-in among all participants and stakeholders and a larger number of people familiar with the model.

Lake Flux proposal for IWWRI:

The MAC approved the proposal. IDWR will fund IWRRI using the State appropriation, effective July 1. USGS suggested that IWRRI might consider including stable isotopes in their analysis. They should talk to Dwayne Cecil of USGS at INEEL in Idaho Falls (208-528-2611).

Preliminary Model Proposal for WRRC:

The MAC approved this proposal also. The PTLT actually already decided to fund the work, which is necessary to keep the modeling on track. This was retroactively approved

by the MAC also. The USGS will fund WRRC, using funds from Ecology. The USGS overhead will be 2% (in actuality, we found out this will be 3% because of a change for FY05) because of their agreement with the Water Resource Research Institutes.

FY05 Workplan and Budget:

Completion of the FY05 workplan is highly dependent on FY06 funding. At this point USGS Washington has expended all of their Federal funding, and \$110K of funds from Ecology. USGS Idaho is adequately funded to complete their FY05 work, though some tasks initially assigned to them have been dropped by the PTLT (most notable is a synoptic water level measurement for later this summer.) USGS has conducted much work to date. This includes inventorying wells, collecting synoptic water levels, establishing and running a well monitoring network, conducting seepage runs, conducting a literature search, updating the hydrogeologic mapping, assembling water use data, writing a draft summary retrospective report, overall project management, Technical Coordinator of the modeling team, and modeling team activities. USGS Washington still needs \$176.9K for FY05 to complete tasks they have presently been assigned, including continued involvement in the modeling, project management and coordination, and completing the report. If funding is not available, USGS involvement will be limited to Mark Savoca on PTLT conference calls only, and maybe some limited involvement of Paul Hsieh on the modeling team.

Without USGS funding in FY06, the overall project is about \$500K short. There is some latitude to for the States to fund USGS in FY05 within the EPA grant, but not enough to fund USGS in FY06. Also, to fund USGS in FY06 the grant would need to be changed. Ecology is willing to do this, IDWR is not. The concern is that grant funding that is presently planned for the State tasks would be diverted to support USGS and as a result the overall project would need to cut back on field work, including geophysics, drilling, and gravity work. Is this what was envisioned when the project was initiated? But even if Ecology revises the EPA grant, it would delay the funding until December 2005, too late to help USGS for FY05. If the grant is not revised and USGS is funded by Ecology in FY05, it leaves Ecology short in FY06. One possible solution is to find funding within Ecology to fund USGS for the remainder of FY05. Keith Stoffel will look into that.

At lunch Bob Haynes called Jeff Sele who says there is indeed another \$500K (this was subsequently reported to be \$300k) in EPA's FY06 appropriation for States to apply for grants. If so, it is possible the States could get that funding with an amendment to the existing grant. This funding could be used to fund USGS at some level in FY06. USGS would need to supply detailed planning and expenditure information. Hal Anderson will verify the FY06 funding with Senator Craig's office, Guy Gregory will check with EPA.

For now, the plan is to assume the FY06 funding is available. If this holds, the States would get USGS a Letter of Intent for FY05 to avoid USGS having to stop work. Keith will still look into funding within Ecology. If no revisions are needed, the earliest the

EPA grant would get to the States is around August 1. The States need only to submit a revised joint QAPP to complete the grant application funding.

There was also a question about a \$100-150K grant to the Chamber of Commerce. No one was sure what it is for. Bob Haynes will check with Jeff Sele.

Stakeholder Meeting:

The need for a stakeholder meeting was discussed. For now we should plan on having it in January, along with the public meeting, assuming the project continues as planned. If USGS involvement is significantly diminished because of funding, then we should have one sooner. We should leave the ultimate decision to the PAC.

April/May Progress Reports:

See the handouts from the meeting. TAC meetings are to be held every 6 months. The next one will be held once data collection activities have been finalized, around September, 2005. We also should have the TAC review the USGS geohydrology report. Proposals for the geophysics and drilling work should be available by mid-July. The Field Team working on water level map report has submitted it for USGS approval. The report will also be sent to the States for final review. (Steve Lipscomb will have copies sent to Helen and Guy.) The PTLT and Modeling Team have decided the proposed collection of synoptic water levels in August-September 2005 is redundant with last years and not needed. Linda Davis of the Data Team is waiting for meta-data from some groups for their data sets. The Modeling Team asked for all GIS coverages to be in a different projection, so they needed to be converted. The previously approved data policy needs to be changed to reflect this new requirement.

Miscellaneous:

Everyone agreed to keep in touch via email regarding the funding issue. A conference call will be held if needed. In any case, a tentative MAC conference call was set for July 20 at 9:00 am Pacific (10:00 am Mountain) to check status. Ecology will arrange the call, but first we will check with all MAC members to see if it is needed.