

Meeting Notes: Organizational meeting, Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer Management Committee, 1/11/2008

The meeting began at about 1:30 PM PST in IDWR office in Coeur d'Alene. Present were Guy Gregory and Keith Stoffel (Ecology), Bob Haynes (IDWR), while Helen Harrington, Alan Wylie, and Ken Neely of IDWR joined by videoconference.

We proceeded along the lines of the implementation plan dated 11/25/07.

Meeting procedures:

Locations are to alternate between IDWR/Coeur d'Alene and Ecology/Spokane office. They will be held at a minimum every 6 months, either group has the right to call a meeting more frequently as necessary. The hosting office will chair the meeting, prepare agendas, circulate notes, etc. Notes will be issued in draft, circulated by email, and finalized by email acknowledgements.

Agency representatives:

Idaho: Bob Haynes, Ken Neely, Helen Harrington, Alan Wylie

Washington: Keith Stoffel, Guy Gregory, John Covert

Responsibilities of Committee

1. Establish commonality in how and when we use the model.

All agreed this will be easier once the spreadsheet tool is prepared. All feel there is probably some deminimis impact result, i.e. a 0.3 cfs water right near Athol may not have a significant affect elsewhere in the domain, but for the time being, once the spreadsheet tool is available, we will use it to assess impacts of all decisions in the model domain.

All agreed that work may result in a series of legal questions, i.e. "impact and impairment". We agreed that once we had some of those questions in mind, we should attempt to engage legal advice in a meeting between us.

The main discussion ended with a willingness of all to begin using the model in decisionmaking and see where it goes. We all have little experience with this framework, but as we also believe all are working in good faith, it is important to begin working.

Ex-officio membership was discussed, and though we agree that for many reasons our meetings will be open, it is unclear at this point what role an ex-officio member might take. Again, we agreed to move forward and keep this option open without establishing anything firm right now.

Update Status

Both Guy and Ken are in the process of preparing a semi-annual report for EPA. Status of the current projects is as of now unclear but resolvable soon. Ecology indicated the spreadsheet tools should be available in the very near future. The EPA semi-annual report will be prepared and circulated to the committee.

Future upgrades

All agreed this discussion is premature.

Senior Management Meetings

Ecology agreed to proceed on an as-necessary basis, but most decisions IDWR indicated senior management approval was necessary are in fact decisions at the regional level of Ecology.

Other issues:

Press releases:

The team indicated a joint press release regarding the MOA is desirable. Guy will refer Janis Gilbert of Ecology to Bob McLaughlin at IDWR for preparation.

Additionally, Bob indicated a willingness to work with Guy in regional outreach presentations and such, to ensure that regionally, water users and others understand that IDWR and Ecology are working closely on decisionmaking.

Information, committee notes, and other issues

IDWR will develop a website for the committee, linked to by Ecology. A general model of that website will have the agenda and location for the next meeting, the location and notes of the last meeting, links to the model and any tools developed or new technical information generated, and any other announcements deemed relevant by the committee.

Next meeting: Spokane, early July 2008.

Notes final 2/10/08
Guy J. Gregory/WDOE