

ESPA Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan

Facilitation of a Framework for Presentation to the 2007 Idaho Legislature

Report to the IWRB by CDR Associates
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Outline

- Public Involvement Plan
- Anticipated timeline
- Outreach to stakeholders
- Themes from initial interviews
- October Public Meetings

Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

- Purpose
 - Outline factors related to public input
 - Discuss decision-making responsibilities
 - Review opportunities for public involvement during the Framework development process
- The PIP is a living document, and will be periodically updated

Public Input – Key Factors

- Active stakeholder groups
- Need for greater public awareness
- 2004 Settlement Framework
- Funding mechanism critical
- Focus on management
- Start of Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan
- Aggressive schedule

Link to Decision Making

- Framework decisions
 - Identify goals and alternatives
 - Enough existing information?
 - Determine level of management
 - Funding strategies
 - Interim implementation measures
- Decision makers – the Board
- Role of the facilitation team
- Role of stakeholders

Feedback from the Board

- *Framework document should be a short document with appendices*
- *Timing of document will depend on legislative action required*
- *Focus on areas where the Board has authority*
- *Framework should anticipate economic and environmental impact analysis and water conservation measures in Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan*

Feedback from the Board

- Outstanding Question: Role of Department in developing the Framework?
- Intention of the Board: Raise issues or concerns as they arise to facilitation team – won't wait until final review

Anticipated Timeline

- Project Launch in August
- Initial interviews with stakeholders in September
- Public meetings in October
- October/November: Facilitation team drafts Framework with stakeholder input
- Public meetings in December to get reactions and comments
- Presentation to Legislature in January

Outreach to Stakeholders

- **Contacted over 60 individuals and groups**
 - Water users: spring, surface, groundwater
 - Groundwater districts, canal companies, irrigation districts
 - State and federal agencies
 - Local government/municipalities
 - Water-dependent industry
 - Environment and wildlife
 - Tribes?
- *Feedback: Further outreach to business community, municipalities, INL*

Themes from Interviews

- General areas of agreement
 - Widely held but not unanimous opinions
- Divergent views
 - Issues with a range of opinions and outstanding questions
- Emerging Framework elements
 - A first glance at possible issues to be addressed in the Framework

Emerging Framework Elements

- Goal: Sustainability
 - Water Budget: Balance supply and demand?
 - Economic sustainability for the region?
 - Keep aquifer level from declining further?
 - Keep spring discharges from declining further?
 - Funding for long term programs? Buying water rights?

Emerging Framework Elements

- Goal: Some degree of predictability and equivalent treatment
 - Domestic wells: Monitoring? Ensure continuity/protection of water supply?
 - New residential and industrial development interdependent with existing agricultural and other uses
 - Ensure new development water sources make sense given surrounding uses

Emerging Framework Elements

- Increasing stakeholder confidence in the model for planning purposes through participatory review
 - Model assumptions
 - Model scenarios

Emerging Framework Elements

- Funding: Something from everyone
 - Statewide sales tax? Political hurdles?
 - State surplus funds?
 - Per acre/share levy for water users in the Eastern Snake Plain?
 - Appropriate State percentage and local percentage?

Emerging Framework Elements

- Potential interim measure: recharge
 - Important and supported, but won't solve the problem
 - Interest in exploring opportunities for recharge within the coming year

October Public Meetings

- Objectives for Public Meetings
 - Introduce facilitation team
 - Discuss interview themes
 - Explain Framework process
 - Solicit feedback from stakeholders & build contact list
 - Provide opportunity for public education and involvement

October Public Meetings

- Tentatively scheduled in Pocatello for Thursday, October 12th
- Tentatively scheduled for Idaho Falls and Twin Falls for October 18th and 19th
- Public comment opportunities throughout
- Significant outreach through press, mailing, email, website, and personal contact

Proposed Meeting Format

- 6:00 p.m. Doors open
- 6:30 p.m. Introduction by Board
- 6:45 p.m. Facilitation team presentation
- 7:15 p.m. Comments from the public and facilitated discussion
- 8:00 p.m. Meeting ends