

MEETING MINUTES
Big Wood River Ground Water Management Area Advisory Committee
IDWR State Office at Idaho Water Center, Boise, Idaho
January 22, 2021

The meeting started at approximately 1:30 p.m. Director Gary Spackman and IDWR staff members Shelley Keen and Tim Luke attended at the IDWR State Office in Boise. Other attendees participated via Zoom videoconferencing or telephone. See the attached list of attendees.

After a brief introduction and taking of attendance, Shelley Keen discussed the possibility of recording meetings. Shelley indicated that when the Big Wood River Ground Water Management Area (BWRGWMA) Advisory Committee was formed, it was decided not to record the meetings in order to encourage everyone's participation. However, after further consideration and discussion with some committee members and other meeting participants, there is a desire to at least record technical presentations, if the presenter agrees to the recording of his/her presentation. Question and discussions following the presentations would not be recorded. Recordings would be made available via the committee website with other meeting materials.

Old business items were then discussed. Tim Luke indicated that he was in the process of preparing a report summarizing supplemental ground water use in the BWRGWMA following the supplement ground water right presentation given at the January 5th meeting by IDWR staff. Tim also stated that he had shared the Brockway Report relating to the Silver Creek/Highway 93 crossing with both Connie Jones of the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) and Vic Conrad of Simplot Industries; he anticipates having an onsite visit with Vic Conrad, ITD representatives, a few representatives from the BWRGWMA advisory committee, and perhaps a few others by mid to late February. Tim also gave an update on information related to return flows in the lower portions of the Big Wood and Little Wood systems and indicated that he was working with IDWR's Hydrology section staff to consider development of a water accounting system to aid in water delivery and water right priority determinations on the Big Wood- Malad Rivers below Magic, and the Little Wood – Silver Creek system.

Shelley Keen discussed a process to allow for the updating/correction of meeting minutes. He asked that any edits or corrections to the minutes be sent to Caitlin McCoy at IDWR. After updating the minutes, IDWR will repost the corrected minutes on the website, and inform the committee that the minutes have been updated or corrected.

Sean Vincent of IDWR gave a brief presentation reviewing Allan Wylie's 2019 report concerning ground water conditions in the BWRGWMA. Sean referred to items in the report and the order establishing the BWRGWMA. Key items of note from Sean's presentation were:

- The selection of start and end dates when evaluating potential ground water level trends is important.

- Annual ground water consumptive use has been estimated at approximately 35,000 – 40,000 acre-feet in the Wood River Valley and approximately 10,000 acre-feet in the Camas Prairie.
- Primary objective for the BWRGWMA designation was to address impacts of ground water pumping within the BWRBWMA on hydraulically connected surface water sources, and less on impacts to the aquifers or ground water levels within the BWRGWMA.

Eric Miller then gave a presentation relating to the surface water user's analysis of ground water pumping. Eric's presentation was recorded and is available on the committee web page. Key items of note from Eric's presentation were:

- From a system perspective, ground water pumping is a zero-sum game (gain/loss by someone is balanced out by gain/loss by someone else).
- Current modeling and impact estimate efforts do not quantify pre-1995 impacts from ground water pumping.
- Three year (2018-2020) average pumping is about 45,000 acre-feet for the Wood River area and 11,500 acre-feet for the Camas Prairie with return flows estimated at 10% in each area, resulting in total ground water consumptive use of about 50,500 acre-feet per year. This level of pumping has likely resulted in a depleted equilibrium aquifer system similar to 1905 aquifer system conditions.
- Current "Quasi-injury" estimated to be approximately 36,300 acre-feet per year (combined impacts from both Wood River and Camas Prairie areas).

Bill Simon then gave a presentation relating to agriculture in the Camas Prairie. Bill discussed irrigation methods, cropping patterns, and "well anomalies" in the Camas Prairie. Bill presented an idea that groundwater can flow to the south from the Camas Prairie towards the Bennett Hills and not necessarily just to the east towards Magic Reservoir. Bill expressed a desire that the Camas Prairie should be excluded from the BWGWMA.

Kristy Molyneux then gave a presentation relating to the purpose of the local water supply bank legislation proposal. The purpose of the legislation is to create local control of a water supply bank process for mitigation purposes. The proposal is similar to existing statute authorizing a local bank in the Lemhi River basin. Kristy said the proposed legislation will not likely make it to the legislature this session. Pat McMahon added the legislation is far from final. Both Kristy and Pat expressed interest in working further with BWRGWMA committee on this proposed legislation.

The meeting was then opened up for public comments, questions, new items, and potential discussion topics for future meetings. Senator Michelle Stennett gave an update on various items of interest including an upcoming IGWA meeting involving discussions of the ESPA Settlement Agreement and news from both the Legislature and Governor's Office.

Shelley Keen indicated that we were winding up on technical presentations and would be soon transitioning into the next phases of the process. Cooper Brossy expressed a desire to hear more information relating to the possibility of the Camas Prairie being disconnected from the Magic Reservoir/Big Wood system. Tim Luke suggested that perhaps Ed Squires, the hydrologist for the Camas Prairie Water Users, might present information relating to this topic. Bill Simon indicated he would see if Mr. Squires could present but he was not certain about Mr. Squire's availability. Larry Schoen expressed an interest in more discussion relating to area of common groundwater supply and implications beyond water calls. Sharon Lee expressed a desire for the ground water pumpers to be able to present their information, but indicated that they would like a month to prepare for the presentation (perhaps presenting during the meeting after the next meeting).

The meeting adjourned at approximately 5:05 p.m.

Next Committee Meeting (tentative): February 17, 2021, 1:30 p.m., IDWR State Office at IDWR Water Center – Boise

Note that this is a different date than what was discussed at the meeting.

**Big Wood River Ground Water Management Area Advisory Committee
January 22, 2021 Attendance**

Advisory Committee

Corey Allen
Cooper Brossy
Rod Hubsmith
Sharon Lee
Pat McMahon
Kristy Molyneux
Carl Pendleton
Pat Purdy
Bill Simon
Michelle Stennett
Nick Westendorf
Brian Yeager

IDWR Staff

Remington Buyer
Shelley Keen
Tim Luke
Caitlin McCoy
Corey Skinner
Gary Spackman
Jennifer Sukow
Sean Vincent

Members of the Public

Al Barker
Chris Bromley
Fred Brossy
Jo Ann Cole-Hanson
Mary Beth Collins
Kira Finkler
Kent Fletcher
Sunny Healey
Zach Hill
Chris Johnson
Kevin Lakey
Jim Laski
Sarah Lien
Greg Loomis
Eric Miller
Erick Powell
Norm Semanko
Dave Shaw
Larry Shoen
Jim Speck
Justin Stevenson
Peter VanderMeulen
Keri York