

# **Big Wood River Ground Water Management Area Advisory Committee**

## **March 3, 2021 Meeting Materials**

1. Review of Interests from Parties and Committee Members (Tim Luke, IDWR)
2. List of Common Interests and Potential Ideas for Immediate/Near Term Implementation (Tim Luke, IDWR)

**BWRGWMA ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
REVIEW OF INTERESTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS/PARTIES**

**Table 1. List of Interest Items from Parties that may be Common Interests (as identified by IDWR based on homework responses)**

	<b>Common Interest Item</b>	<b>Item as stated by BWLWUA/BWCC</b>	<b>Item as stated by Ground Water Districts</b>
<b>1.</b>	<b>Reliable Water Supply</b>	Having reliable year-round stream flows such that senior surface rights are valid through the length of the irrigation season.	A healthy reliable surface and ground water system which will support our goals.
		Groundwater that supplies Silver Creek and the lower Big Wood River is a critical supply of irrigation water for us all the time because surface flows are hydraulically connected with groundwater.	An affordable water supply which will ensure crop production as well as raising and feeding livestock. We do not believe we can do this without surface and ground water throughout the irrigation season.
		Groundwater is a critical supply of irrigation (storage) water for Magic Reservoir when surface flows dry up because upper valley stream surface flows are hydraulically connected with groundwater.	Enough reliable water supply to power the economic engines that enrich and provide employment to residents of Blaine, Gooding and Lincoln counties.
		Filling Magic Reservoir consistently to provide an ample, season-long supply of irrigation water.	Water to make necessary supplemental snowpack on Baldy and Dollar mountains.
			Water security for present and future economic vitality and growth. (Sun Valley Co.)
<b>2.</b>	<b>Healthy River Systems</b>	Our rivers are more than just sources of irrigation water—our rivers sustain our rural way of life: our rivers provide spaces for our communities to gather, they create an oasis of life in an otherwise harsh land, and provide important recreation and tourism opportunities. i.e., land with water is worth more in a monetary sense, aesthetic sense, and spiritual sense than land without water.	Sufficient water in the Big Wood River and Silver Creek to ensure that the fisheries are not being damaged.

**Table 2. List of Interest Items from Parties that are not Common Interests (identified by IDWR based on homework responses)**

	<b>Interest Item</b>	<b>Item as stated by BWLWUA/BWCC</b>	<b>Item as stated by Ground Water Districts</b>
1.	<b>Priority/Seniority of Water Rights*</b>	The seniority of surface water rights is currently not being honored. i.e., groundwater rights that are junior to surface rights should be curtailed accordingly.	
2.	<b>Supplemental Ground Water Rights*</b>	Upstream water rights originally designated as “Supplemental groundwater” rights are being utilized as primary sources throughout the irrigation season.	
		Upstream water rights designated as “Supplemental groundwater” rights are being utilized as supplemental to surface rights while more senior surface water users of hydrologically connected water are cut during times of surface water scarcity.	
3.	<b>Local Water Bank*</b>	The operation of a proposed local surface water rental bank will not be transparent and will instead be used in dry times to maintain the status quo of junior groundwater rights having access to water while senior surface water users go without.	
4.	<b>Water Use Measurement &amp; Monitoring*</b>	GW users don’t receive the same level of oversight or scrutiny about their use (semiannual recording) as do surface water users (3x week).	
5.	<b>Ground Water Recharge*</b>	“Recharge” is really reallocation—you are temporarily storing water underground so you can pump it out later. It’s basically ASR (aquifer storage and recovery), unless you commit to specific target stream flows that derive from the aquifer to mitigate your consumptive use	
6.	<b>Safe Harbor from Delivery Call</b>		Safe harbor from the continual threat of a water call.

	<b>Interest Item</b>	<b>Item as stated by BWLWUA/BWCC</b>	<b>Item as stated by Ground Water Districts</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Reasonable Use of Water</b>		Reasonable use of surface and ground water sources by all water users in Water Districts 37 and 37B as they exist in 2021.
<b>8.</b>	<b>Flexibility to Use Water</b>		Flexibility to decide when and how to use the available water supply.
<b>9.</b>	<b>Cloud Seeding</b>		Ongoing support for weather modification (cloud seeding).
<b>10.</b>	<b>Predictive Runoff Model</b>		Support for a runoff model that can inform all water users in the basin of their water supply early in the calendar year.
			A sufficiently reliable predictive runoff model to help inform planting decisions based on expected water supply.
<b>11.</b>	<b>Repair of Silver Creek at Highway 93</b>		Repair and maintenance of the Silver Creek channel upstream from Highway 93.

\* Item listed by BWLWUA/BWCC as a concern rather than an interest. IDWR handout defined *Interest* as a party's underlying needs, concerns, or goals.

**Table 3. List of Common Interest Items from Draft Ground Water Management Plan (GWDs) & Draft Agreement (BWLWUA/BWCC)**

	Interest Item	Comment
1.	<b>Ground Water Recharge</b>	Both plans support temporary recharge per Idaho Code 42-202A and other recharge strategies that benefit flows in Silver Creek & Big Wood River
2.	<b>Local Water Bank</b>	Both plans support a local bank with some level of IDWR oversight or approval of rentals; both plans advocate for local bank to help facilitate ground water recharge activities.
3.	<b>Irrigation Water Conservation</b>	Both plans support conservation measures; measures may vary or require further detail
4.	<b>Consumptive Use Volume Reductions</b>	Plans vary in terms of scope and extent. SW Users' suggest gw diversion limits in Upper Wood Valley of 40K AF/yr until conjunctive management is implemented; GWDs' Plan suggests pivot end gun removal and drying up some acres.
5.	<b>Increase/Improve Water Use Monitoring &amp; Enforcement</b>	Both plans support increased ground water use monitoring and recording but vary somewhat in detail and scope (example: data loggers vs telemetry). Both Plans support increased reliability and enforcement of water use, water measurement and reporting.
6.	<b>Water Right Moratoriums</b>	Both plans advocate IDWR continue moratoriums on new water right applications (ground & surface sources); both plans suggest allowances for domestic uses. Both plans suggest IDWR notify parties of new consumptive use applications, water right transfers and any conversions.

List of Common Interests and Potential Ideas for Immediate/Near-Term Implementation  
(Derived from Interests Responses & Draft Management Plans – List is Not Comprehensive)

1. Reliable Water Supplies and Healthy River Systems
  - a. Parties may work towards defining “reliable” water supplies, including reliable surface water supply/flows for Silver Creek and lower Little Wood R., and Big Wood R./Magic Res.; develop target flows or deliveries (consider target ground water levels)
2. Water Irrigation Conservation and Consumptive Use Volume Reductions
  - a. Limit ground water use in Wood River Valley to 40,000 af/yr;
  - b. Remove pivot end guns;
  - c. Fallow acres (voluntarily dry up some irrigated acres);
  - d. Set irrigation season start/end dates (surface and ground water) commensurate to BWCC/AFRD2 start dates (May 1/September 25?)
  - e. Ground water to surface water conversions
    - i. Hard conversion: permanent conversion to surface water source
    - ii. Soft conversion: use ground water only when surface water is curtailed/insufficient
  - f. Transactional reductions: compensate users to dry up acres; target acres with both surface and ground water rights to maximize benefits.
  - g. Infrastructure projects.
3. Ground Water Recharge
  - a. Implement temporary recharge if excess water supplies exist;
  - b. Implement shoulder irrigation season recharge using existing surface water rights (before May 1 & after September 25; may require water right transfers or water right permit).
  - c. Implement recharge in irrigation season using deliverable surface water irrigation rights, subject to legal and injury considerations (water right transfer or water bank lease/rental review and approval).
4. Local Water Bank/Transactional Strategies (Reductions + Recharge)
  - a. Transactional reductions and recharge
    - i. Compensate users to dry up acres; target acres with both surface and ground water rights to maximize benefits, and deliver unused surface water to targeted recharge sites or delivery to Silver Creek or Big Wood River;
5. Increase/Improve Water Use Monitoring & Enforcement
  - a. Increase frequency of well meter readings and reporting (short-term, paid by GWDs)
  - b. Implement real-time or near real-time data collection using telemetry equipment or data loggers for wells (long-term, paid by GWDs)
  - c. Improve/update surface water measurement devices where necessary
  - d. Improve enforcement of meter and other measuring device compliance (ground water & surface water diversions).
  - e. Improve enforcement of water right conditions including supplemental use conditions.
6. Silver Creek and Highway 93 Channel Maintenance Repair/Improvement
  - a. Parties & IDWR pursue land owner agreements, proper permitting and plans for channel improvements to limit channel losses.

7. Cloud Seeding
  - a. Parties commit to continue funding for cloud seeding.
  
8. Continue Water Right Moratoriums
  - a. IDWR already maintains existing moratorium, but can consider implementing suggestions to notify GWDs/BWCC and others of new water right applications and water right transfers.
  
9. Water Right Accounting (item added by Tim/IDWR)
  - a. Parties may support water right accounting in WD37 to refine water right priority determination, track delivery of natural flow and storage water, and reach gains/losses.
  - b. Longer term goal to implement.
  - c. IDWR may develop; present conceptual model later this year.