

Meeting Minutes
Big Wood River Ground Water Management Area Advisory Committee
IDWR State Office at Idaho Water Center, Boise, Idaho
April 15, 2021

The meeting started at 1:02 p.m. Director Gary Spackman, Tim Luke, Sean Vincent, Cherie Palmer, and Shelley Keen attended at the IDWR State Office in Boise. Other attendees participated via Zoom video conferencing or telephone. See the attached list of attendees.

After a brief introduction and taking of attendance, Sean Vincent of IDWR updated the committee on 2021 hydrologic conditions and the predicted water supply. Sean stated that the NRCS has now published the April Snow Water Supply Index (SWSI). He indicated that the anticipated water supply continues to decrease, and it now appears that 2004 might be a more appropriate analog year for 2021. Previous discussions used 2002 and 2014. Sean stated that in 2002 and 2014 the Magic Reservoir was empty in mid-July, and the current forecast suggests the water supply will last two weeks less than suggested by the last forecast. In 2004, Magic Reservoir was empty on July 1st. Magic Reservoir currently has a storage volume of 38,549 acre-feet with predictions indicating 50-70 days of water supply.

Cooper Brossy then provided an update on the lower valley surface water users' projected 2021 shortfalls. He indicated that they estimate a system injury of 38,850 acre-feet, with injury to individual users totaling 18,210 acre-feet (11,460 acre-feet for Big Wood Canal Company/Magic Reservoir and 6,750 acre-feet for decree users, including 3,000 acre-feet for Big Wood River decreed rights, and 3,771 acre-feet for Little Wood River decreed rights). Ground water users asked Kevin Lakey, Water District 37 watermaster, several questions about how he estimated the 2021 shortfalls.

After Cooper Brossy's presentation, the meeting transitioned into discussions about the proposed actions by the groundwater districts for the 2021 irrigation season. Since the last (April 7th) committee meeting, the South Valley Groundwater District increased its offer to a 17% reduction in pumping and monitoring of pumping on a bi-weekly basis. The Galena Groundwater District also proposed a 17% pumping reduction, \$50,000 for the purchase of water, and an additional \$10,000 for a Big Wood Canal Company (BWCC) project engineering feasibility study. Discussion among committee members followed on how the money offered by the Galena Groundwater District could be spent. One idea was to use the money to pay for renting water, infrastructure costs, and power costs for a project to use Snake River water in the Dietrich area. Carl Pendleton indicated that the BWCC has recently received a \$10,000 grant from another funding source for the BWCC project and inquired about the possibility of using the \$10,000 offered by the Galena Groundwater District for other purposes. The committee also discussed surface water flow targets in Silver Creek or the Little Wood River. The groundwater districts expressed reluctance to agree to flow targets, but they are open to the idea of monitoring and reporting of surface water flows. After discussion of these offers, Carl Pendleton stated that he thought that the Big Wood Canal Company would be on board. Cooper Brossy indicated that he would need more time to discuss the offers with other lower valley surface water users.

The meeting was opened for public comment and discussion. Robin Lezamiz and Fred Brossy expressed concerns about the 2021 water supply and suggested the groundwater districts' proposals might not be enough to help surface water users.

Director Spackman also spoke. He stated that he is ready to act and that further delays will not help in the 2021 season. He also provided clarification on the percent reduction amounts that have been proposed. He stated that the groundwater-flow model of the Wood River Valley Aquifer system will likely show that the impact of groundwater pumping on surface water flows varies by location, with some pumpers impacting surface flows more than others. Consequently, some groundwater pumpers could be required to reduce their pumping much more than the amounts that have been proposed by the groundwater districts

The meeting wrapped up with Cooper Brossy stating that the lower valley surface water users would have their response to the groundwater districts' proposal by mid-day on April 16 (next day).

The meeting adjourned at 3:47 without a follow up meeting being scheduled.

**Big Wood River Ground Water Management Area Advisory Committee
April 15, 2021 Attendance**

Advisory Committee

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

IDWR Staff

Tim Luke
Cherie Palmer
Corey Skinner
Gary Spackman
Sean Vincent
Jennifer Sukow
Shelley Keen
Nathan Erickson
Alex Moody

Members of the Public

Kevin Lakey
Mary Beth Collins
Zach Hill
Al Barker
Chris Bromley
Dave Shaw
Eric Miller
Jim Speck
Judd McMahan
Chris Simms
Travis Thompson
Sunny Healy
Pete Van Der Meulen
Greg Loomis
Kira Finkler
Justin Stevenson
Chris Johnson
Norm Semanko
Fred Brossy
Robin Lezamiz
Kent Fletcher