

Meeting Minutes
Big Wood River Ground Water Management Area Advisory Committee
IDWR State Office at Idaho Water Center, Boise, Idaho
October 20, 2021

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

After a brief introduction and taking of committee attendance, a couple of old business items were discussed. Tim Luke updated the group on Zach Hill's recent Wood River Valley Data Summary presentation, which has been posted to IDWR's website. Questions remain on how the data Zach compiles will be updated and shared with the public. The minimum stream flow water rights on Silver Creek are 99 cfs year-round at Sportsman's Access and 74 cfs further downstream.

Sean Vincent then presented updates from the Technical Work Group (TWG). The TWG is leaning toward using Kendra Kaiser's model as the tool for predicting stream flows. Kendra, BSU, has obtained two years of grant funding for continued model development. Since Kendra's model is not yet ready, the Technical Working Group recommends using the SWSI in the interim. Sean has reached out to the NRCS about the development of a SWSI for the Camas Creek Basin. Sean also indicated that the USGS is increasing the frequency of manual measurements at the Sportsman's Access gage due to significant shifts in measurements attributed to macrophyte die-off. During follow up discussion, Pat Purdy mentioned that recent work on an upstream diversion may have also caused some recent flow changes at the Sportsman's Access gage.

Dave Shaw then reported about the South Valley Groundwater District's (SVGWD) mitigation proposal. As a test case, SVGWD identified approximately 1,100 acres to fallow at various locations across the Bellevue Triangle. The fallowed acres have water rights from different sources including ground water (primary and supplemental rights), Big Wood River and Silver Creek tributaries. SVGWD proposes that water diverted from the Big Wood River under water rights appurtenant to some of the fallowed acres be converted from irrigation to recharge. Water rights for fallowed acres from any Silver Creek tributary will not be diverted but left in the creek. Jennifer Sukow then presented an analysis of the modeled impacts of fallowing these acres. Jennifer's analysis showed that fallowing the acres would increase water availability by roughly 3 – 4 cfs in Silver Creek and 1 cfs in the Big Wood River during August and September of the driest years, and it would generate a modest increase in aquifer storage. Jennifer also indicated that significantly increasing the fallowed acres would likely provide significantly larger benefits to the hydrologic system.

Shelley then led a discussion among committee members about additional ideas/proposals for the GWMA Management Plan. Pat McMahon reported that Galena GWD is working with the South Valley GWD but is running into roadblocks and not making great

strides. Brian Yeager (Wood River Valley cities) and Corey Allen (Sun Valley Company) reported they are studying data and working on strategies. Bill Simon of the Camas Groundwater Users indicated that they do not believe Camas Prairie groundwater pumping affects Camas Creek or Magic Reservoir. Kristy Molyneux indicated the South Valley GWD is looking for more acres to fallow, more water rights to convert to ground water recharge, and funds for basin-wide infrastructure improvements. SVGWD will present an expanded plan by October 29, 2021. Carl Pendleton and Cooper Brossey, representing the surface water users, reported they will also have additional proposals by October 29. Their proposals may include target stream flows in various locations, funding for basin-wide efficiency improvements, priority administration of water rights, and measures to improve aquifer health.

Dean Stevenson and Brian Olmstead of the IWRB offered some advice and encouraging comments to the committee. Some additional discussion ensued concerning cloud seeding in the Wood River drainage. Carl Pendleton offered to reach out to Idaho Power representatives to see if a cloud seeding presentation could be arranged for the group.

The meeting was then opened for public comment and discussions relating to the next meeting. Sara Lien wanted to emphasize that the minimum stream flow rights on Silver Creek should be viewed as enforceable rights. She advocated for a management plan to support minimum flow rights.

The meeting adjourned at 4:43 with the next advisory committee meetings being scheduled for the afternoons of November 3rd and November 10th.

**Big Wood River Ground Water Management Area Advisory Committee
October 20, 2021, Attendance**

Advisory Committee

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

IDWR Staff

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

Idaho Water Resource Board Members

Brian Olmstead
Dean Stevenson

Members of the Public

Dave Shaw

Jim Speck

Sarah Lien

Kent Fletcher

Neil Crescenti

Michael Lawrence

Kira Finkler

Zach Hill

Eric Miller

Greg Loomis

Chris Bromley

Ashlynn Goody

Justin Stevenson

Candice McHugh