

GWMP Goals Update,
August 21, 2024 Advisory Committee Meeting

When Sharon and Cooper wrote these goals they tried to make them few, focused and simple. While these goals will guide the plan at the highest level, they will be supported and made more specific by the strategies and actions presented in later sections of the plan once those actions are negotiated and agreed to.

These goals were written in late June and then paused on July 5 because the senior surface water users and the ground water users' understandings of the characteristics of the Wood River Aquifer differed substantially. Specific aquifer characteristics may affect the strategies and actions much more so than the goals. Now that additional technical information is available and forthcoming to the Advisory Committee, we present these goals to the Committee for its consideration and discussion.

GOALS

- Manage “the effects of ground water withdrawals on the aquifers from which the withdrawals are made and any other hydraulically connected sources of water.” Idaho Code § 42-233b.
- Provide seasonal predictability of available surface and ground water supplies for all users such that they can develop practical plans to optimize their use.
- Establish safe harbor from curtailment under Idaho Code § 42-233b for BWRGWMA ground water users who participate in and abide by the terms of this Management Plan.

The expected benefits of achieving the above goals through management of ground water and hydraulically connected surface water include:

- Stream flows that serve senior water rights
- Access to ground water resources
- Reduced conflict around water delivery
- Water to support stream and riparian habitats

STRATEGIES

- Develop and implement a suite of methods for ground water users to mitigate for the impacts of their water use on senior water rights.
- Vary management plan actions to account for the differences in aquifer conditions and hydraulically connected stream flows in wet years and dry years.
- Develop and distribute funding for local water conservation, efficiency, and infrastructure improvements.
- Encourage continual improvements in water supply forecasting for the Wood River Valley.
- Incentivize all ground water users in the ground water management area to implement the management plan and abide by its terms.