



Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan

Recharge Working Group Meeting

**Draft Meeting Notes
September 16, 2009
1:30 pm
(Teleconference Call)**

Late Season Recharge

Bill Quinn summarized the Draft Late Season Recharge Plan and noted that the Plan estimates 67kaf recharged and that as much as 1500cfs of natural flow water could be realized at Milner. It is likely that the Board's natural flow right would be in priority and that the proposed recharge effort on the North Side and Milner Gooding Canals would use the natural flow, subject to further consultation.

The water source for recharge was discussed including the estimated 49 kaf available in the water bank. While the standard formula for rental pool water is \$6 af, the value may be negotiated given the low value on the water. Rich Rigby noted that from the Bureau's perspective they are paying attention to issues that could impact flow augmentation. The 'last to fill' procedures in the private lease agreements protects against increased competition for water necessary for flow augmentation.

Fremont-Madison leased water to itself last year for the recharge effort and had most of the fees waived, although not the district O&M costs.

Lloyd Hicks noted that the water delivery fees and the risk associated with the 'last to fill' provisions had value for the leased water and that it was unlikely that it could be provided for free. Lloyd is meeting with the Great Feeder canals later this week and will develop a proposal for the lease fees before the September Board meeting. Others encouraged Lloyd to see the 2009 fall recharge effort as an opportunity to get started with the recharge as it has been presented and noted that the choice was on the Great Feeder canals to decide whether they could participate in the program this year.

Peter Anderson expressed concern that the impacts of the late season recharge effort had not been modeled and that consultations with the IDEQ/IF&G have not occurred. Given the lack of data, Peter noted that it was difficult to see where the impacts would occur and what to say about the program. Jeff Raybould mentioned that the Henry's Fork Watershed Group would be discussing the late season recharge effort this week, while Brian Patton noted that they are now expecting almost 3 times the amount of water over Milner than had been predicted a few weeks earlier.

Rich Rigby mentioned that one issue to pay attention to is the impact of the winter water savings agreement. The North Side Canal Company may have limitations due to the

agreement but the other canals projected to participate in the late season effort likely do not.

Dave Blew indicated that from a hydrologic perspective it makes best sense to get the late season recharge effort as far out on the plain as possible and that below American Falls, the Milner- Gooding system is the best place to do so.

Rebecca Casper asked for information about the monitoring program and encouraged IDWR to gather as much data as possible to be able to understand the impact of the program. Brian Patton responded that the ESPA Modeling Committee is doing this.

The Working Group generally supported the late season recharge plan and suggested that it be proposed to the Board, with the discussion points outlined above.

Next Steps

- Coordinate with Lynn Harmon and Albert Lockwood (winter water savings)
- Outline the measurement plan
- Present plan and discuss concerns with Board on September 24.

Constructed Sites

Bill mentioned that discussions with the BLM regarding the MP 31 site had been positive and that the BLM was willing to work Committee on further testing. Bill noted that at the next meeting there will be more cost information about these sites.

Rebecca Casper mentioned the state legislative tour occurring in Idaho Falls sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. The agriculture committee is chaired by Don Dixon and that they want to hear about the recharge efforts of the ESPA Plan. Rebecca will provide an update at the next WG meeting.

Attendees:

Bill Quinn
Brian Patton
Lloyd Hicks
Peter Anderson
Rich Rigby
Steve Howser
David Blew
Rebecca Casper
Stephen Goodson
Lynn Tominaga
Matt Howard
Jeff Raybould
John Chatburn