



Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan

Demand Reduction Working Group Meeting

DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY **September 29, 2009** **Teleconference**

Presentation on Downstream Transfers (*Additional Plan Component*)

Morgan Case, IDWR, presented on projects in the Upper Salmon Basin that have contributed to an increase in instream flows through leases and agreements not to divert. She also provided an overview of the implications that these types of projects might have on the Snake River system.

Discussion Points

- It can be challenging to administer these projects with small amounts of water, unless there is a sophisticated accounting program for efficient and feasible management.
- If implemented the additional cfs could be available for conversions or recharge projects, for which the Board is looking for water.
- There is concern about shepherding the water beyond senior water rights' holders, in order to maximize the benefit of the changes in irrigation practice.
- Leasing tends to be easier to implement if the property owners do not "live off the land".
- It may be best to get a pulse on the community (one specific area mentioned is Big Wood), and see what interest there is in these types of projects.
- The average cost for these projects is \$20/acre foot. The cfs price is unknown at this point.
- The Demand Reduction WG does not want to actively pursue these types of projects, but provide a level of outreach that allows property owners to know about them. Then, if the property owner would like to adjust their irrigation practices for financial benefit, then the project would be considered.

Next Steps

- ✓ Update the Implementation Committee on the WG recommendations to include projects similar to those in the Upper Salmon Basin as part of the Plan, but not actively pursue them.

Updated CREP Incentive Proposal (PERC Program)

Neeley Miller (IDWR) presented the updated PERC program proposal to further incentivize CREP dollars. He highlighted six specific areas in which additional discussion was needed, including: the monetary incentive structure, distance from river option for outside agencies/organizations, approved land area, water rights retirement, contract termination and other items (funding and adaptive management). The proposals included in the six areas were collected through electronic communications since the previous Demand Reduction WG meeting.

Discussion Points:

- Generally, the group agreed to the numbers associated with a monetary incentive structure that is based on a parcel size modifier. In order to incentivize land that is more beneficial to the aquifer, the group would like to see contiguous acres get more incentive than corners and other areas that may not benefit the aquifer as much. For example, someone with 100 contiguous acres would receive a better rate than someone willing to modify use of a total of 100 acres that are at different corners of the property.
- The group agreed to remove any additional incentives to a PERC applicant for distance or proximity from the Snake River. This is best left to other agencies/organizations who would like to incentivize projects that are closer to or farther away from the Snake River. In a way, the Demand Reduction WG views this as a potential “win-win” for project implementation as both project types might be incentivized. If included in the PERC program, only one would be incentivized.
- The Demand Reduction WG agreed to move forward with the proposed land area for PERC incentives, although the group would like input from the Implementation Committee on maintaining the baseline. This information will be introduced at the October 13th Implementation Committee.
- The WG recommends that the total number of acres allowed in the program be evaluated at a later time (3 or 4 years). They recommend that enrollment be left open for a few years to “see how many acres we even get” and then in 3-4 years, the Implementation Committee will evaluate the program and determine the total number of acres allowed in the PERC program.
- Upon discussing the water rights retirement issues, the WG determined that the *participant may* exercise the option to buy the portion of the water right pertinent to land enrolled in PERC based upon the appraised value at the time, not the State.
- The WG is recommending the proposed contract termination stipulations to the Implementation Committee.
- The WG plans to request input from the Implementation Committee on funding for the PERC program, before attaching any numbers to the program.
- Regarding adaptive management, the WG is recommending that the PERC program is revisited at WG and Implementation Committee meetings beyond Year 1 to evaluate the success or limitations of such a program. Additionally, the proposed decision making model that will be discussed at the Implementation Committee meeting might be a valuable tool in managing these projects.

Next Steps:

- ✓ The Demand Reduction WG will present the recommended structure for the PERC Program to the Implementation Committee on October 13th, and will ask for guidance on how to address maintaining the baseline, funds for the program and moving forward with the number of allowable acres.

Demand Reduction Programs in California

Peter Anderson shared some information on the water transactions in the State of California. He explained that a number of water districts are implementing demand reduction strategies to address their water concerns, particularly through the implementation of fallowing. He included a number of links to view project information:

Fallowing Program Summary from the Imperial Irrigation District
<http://www.iid.com/Media/Fallowing-Program-Summary-2003-2008-Presentation.pdf>

Fallowing Brochure from Metropolitan Water District
http://www.mwdh2o.com/mwdh2o/pages/news/at_a_glance/palo_verde.pdf

Water Land Retirement Brochure from Westlands Water District
<http://www.westlandswater.org/long/200201/landretirebro.pdf>

<http://www.cimis.water.ca.gov/cimis/welcome.jsp> This program would be helpful both for ground and surface water conservation. I don't know if Idaho has an equivalent program.

Next Steps

- ✓ Coordinate with Jason Peltier from Westlands Water District to learn more about their demand reduction strategies.
- ✓ Receive more WG updates on what other states are doing. At the next call, Joan Kathol, CDR Associates, will present information from Colorado.

Next Steps and Upcoming Meeting

| Action | Responsible |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Update the Implementation Committee on the WG recommendations to include projects similar to those in the Upper Salmon Basin as part of the Plan, but not actively pursue them. | Neeley Miller and Joan Kathol |
| The Demand Reduction WG will present the recommended structure for the PERC Program to the Implementation Committee on October 13 th , and will ask for guidance on how to address maintaining the baseline, funds for the program and moving forward with the number of allowable acres. | Neeley Miller and Joan Kathol |
| Coordinate with Jason Peltier from Westlands Water District to learn more about their demand reduction strategies and possibly a meeting with members of the Demand Reduction WG | Joan Kathol |
| Receive more WG updates on what other states are doing. At the next call, Joan Kathol, CDR Associates, will present information from Colorado. | As time allows and as needed |
| Gather and prepare information to present on demand reduction in Colorado and on IPC's experience in rotating fallowing | CO: Joan Kathol IPC: Jim Tucker |
| Lynn Tominaga to coordinate with Peter Anderson and IDWR to develop an outreach strategy for AWEP | |

Next Meeting

A teleconference on October 20th from 1:00pm-3:00pm

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Demand Reduction Working Group Members

| NAME | AFFILIATION |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Brian Olmstead | Surface Water User |
| 2. Peter Anderson | Conservation |
| 3. Randy MacMillan | Spring Water Users |
| 4. Steven Serr | Counties |
| 5. Will Whelan | Water District 120 |

Ex Officio Members & Other Attendees

| NAME | AFFILIATION |
|-------------------|---------------------------|
| 6. Brian Patton | IDWR |
| 7. Chuck Pentzer | Soil Conservation Service |
| 8. Dave Blew | IPC |
| 9. Jon Bowling | |
| 10. Joan Kathol | CDR |
| 11. Lynn Tominaga | Groundwater Users |
| 12. Neeley Miller | IDWR |
| 13. Rich Rigby | BOR |