



Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan

Recharge Working Group Meeting

**Draft Meeting Notes
October 8, 2009
2:00 pm (Teleconference Call)**

Late Season Recharge Summary

Bill Quinn reviewed the late season recharge summary, including the Water Resource Board's decisions. While earlier late season recharge estimates were higher than what can be expected (maintenance requirements, other obligations, and weather) recharge will likely occur on the Northside Canal, Milner Gooding, Egin Lakes and potentially on the Great Feeder. In addition, Southwest Irrigation District (SWID) is expected to participate in a late season recharge effort delivering water through the new pipeline.

Q: Does SW irrigation benefit the ESPA? A: Most of the SWID service area is in the ESPA, and according to the modelers there is a benefit to the aquifer, albeit not as much as through Milner-Gooding/NSCC.

Q: Can you use the Board's permit to get it to the SWID? A: Delivery will be through the new pipeline and it does lie entirely within the ESPA. The Snake River permit lists Milner Dam as primary point of diversion. The Board would lease the water to the bank with new diversion points that would then be delivered to SWID.

Q: Where is the SW irrigation diversion? A: About three miles downstream of Burley, where the BID drain drops into the Snake River.

Q: Is this part of the late season recharge effort of the Board or something else? A: If they deliver Board water right – then its part of the Board's plan.

Q: What are the costs of the diversion? A: Not as expensive since it is not being delivered through BID, but pump costs are involved.

Comment: This entire transaction must be documented so that it is clear that they are not using the Board's right to provide mitigation water; the accounting must be clear.

Cost Estimates of Constructed Sites

Bill Quinn distributed and summarized the constructed recharge sites cost estimates. The WG agreed to move forward with these sites, in addition to another as of yet unspecified

site on the Wood River system. However, operations and maintenance costs will need to be outlined further. Bill noted that the O&M's would likely be minimal due to the fact that these would be 'remote passive infiltration operations'. Jeff Raybould also noted that once the Egin Lakes site is restored, there will be very little maintenance requirements, probably in the \$1 - \$2 range.

The implementation strategy for Egin Lakes was also discussed. Jeff Raybould indicated that a wider canal approach may be more efficient compared to deeper system (due to soil conditions). Bill Quinn will coordinate with Jeff to determine the best way forward.

Peter Anderson noted that conservation groups might have resources to partner on this effort and will discuss with Jeff Raybould.

Each site has an estimated construction timetable of between 90 days – 100 days; it is theoretically possible to construct before the beginning of next season.

Bill Quinn noted that a BLM ROW permit has been received which allows IDWR to begin access to the site to "start poking holes, testing and developing the system."

Steve Howser noted that \$2 million for two projects is expensive and that he wanted to make sure we get the best bang for the buck. The WG agreed to emphasize that the constructed sites are a key way to achieve the Plan's hydrologic goals and that it is not an unreasonable amount, especially since the O&M costs appear to be manageable. O&M costs will be further defined and reported at the next WG meeting. Also, the need for the constructed sites should be more emphasized.

Liability

A letter from the insurance underwriter has been received that indicates "Recharge activities, in my view, are part of normal operations. Coverage should exist." The letter from the underwriter will be distributed to the WG and handed out to the Implementation Committee.

Next Steps

1. Develop O&M cost estimates with Dale Swenson and others – Bill Quinn
2. Distribute the liability letter from RSDIS/Glatfelter Public Practice – Jonathan
3. Present WG direction to the Committee and obtain feedback – WG

Attendees:

Bill Quinn
Brian Patton
Lloyd Hicks
Peter Anderson
Steve Howser
David Blew

Stephen Goodson
Jim Tucker
Jon Bowling
Jonathan Bartsch
Jeff Raybould
Craig Evans
Rebecca Casper