



**Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA)
Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan**

Demand Reduction Working Group Meeting

**DRAFT MEETING SUMMARY
December 2nd, 2009
Teleconference**

Review of AWEP 2009

Lynn Tominaga, Peter Anderson, Will Whelan, Chuck Pentzer, Brian Patton and Neeley Miller (amongst others) met with NRCS to discuss AWEP programs. At this point, there is not a final list of projects to distribute to members of the Implementation Committee, though the funded projects are related to conversions and the Thousand Springs area.

Demand Reduction Components of AWEP 2010

*As a side note, NRCS calls the components strategies, while IDWR typically refers to the activities as programs.

Aquifer Demand Reduction Incentives

The goal of this program is to utilize AWEP funds to assist property owners transitioning to PERC, and is designed to be wedded to PERC (for activities related to technical assistance). Since the PERC program may not be up and running for a couple of years, the timeline for this program is put into question. So the question posed to the WG is whether or not they would like to see an interim program running prior to the implementation of PERC.

WG members would consider an interim program if it could serve as a standalone program. The group requested data that would help them to make a decision (i.e. how much AWEP dollars could be provided as an incentive? Are there other programs to augment the AWEP funds? How would funds be paid?). If the incentive is adequate, then WG members would like to design an interim program.

One WG member indicated that this program might be great on its own, but the ideal is for it to coordinate with PERC funds.

- Neeley will follow up with NRCS to obtain data for the WG and will report back at the January 6th teleconference.

Conversion to Dry Land Farming

This program is an effort to decrease water use to make more water available for other ESPA Plan-related programs, such as conversions or recharge. Peter Anderson knows of interest in Teton and Wood and he is continuing to hold meetings within those communities to determine what this program might look like for AWEP 2010. Peter also is engaging community members to gain interest in potential downstream transfer projects in: Teton to Egin Bench, Wood to Magic Reservoir and Big/Little Lost.

After these meetings occur, Peter is planning to make a presentation to Teton Valley with NRCS in a potential transaction that could bring a substantial amount of water to the table. According to Peter, if one transaction works, we have the opportunity to meet targets for this program.

Randy MacMillan inquired about AWEP fund allocation and if certain programs receive more funding than others. NRCS has not provided direction on which programs receive more or less funding. They have indicated that there is flexibility for the spending amounts for each program. We can request increases, but they want to know how interest from potential projects warrants the increase. They also support multiparty approaches that work for multiple strategies (i.e. a demand reduction strategy that provides a water supply for a conversion or recharge project).

When it comes to ranking, NRCS will defer to the ranking criteria develop by the WG and the Implementation Committee. They will apply the ranking criteria no matter what (to see how a project weighs in comparison to others, amongst other reasons), but the ranking criteria will be particularly important when there are more applications than funding allows.

- WG members should continue and initiate conversations with property owners to assess interest in this program and to help design a program that will be attractive to property owners.
- Peter Anderson will hold meetings with these various communities and will report back at the December 21st coordination meeting with NRCS and the WG meeting on January 6th.

Crop Mix Modification

This program is designed to pay a producer for income forgone to transition to low water crops (NRCS is willing to make funds available for these activities). Lynn Tominaga anticipates 2-3 different areas that might commit to this program, and will take the lead on engaging these communities. In discussions, he will explore interest, willingness and the potential incentives and sideboards that might be a part of a successful program. He has already set up meetings and believes that each community has farmers that are willing to think about this type of farming.

In conversation, Lynn also is exploring opportunities for conversions and recharge (surface water storage programs, operational spills and electrical use-modifications).

- WG members should initiate conversations with members of their interest to gauge interest in this program and try to work out criteria and sideboards.
- Lynn Tominaga will continue to hold conversations on this program. Neeley Miller and Lynn will update NRCS on December 21st and the WG on January 6th.

Thousand Springs System Improvement Projects in 2010

While the AWEP proposal did not include funds in 2010 for Thousand Springs systems improvements, NRCS is open to continuing this funding. The WG is open to requesting more federal funds for Thousand Springs projects, but would like to hear from Linda Lemmon on the need for any additional funds.

- Linda Lemmon will be at the NRCS coordination meeting on December 21st and Neeley Miller will discuss any possible Thousand Springs projects with her at this point. Neeley (and possibly Linda) will report back to the group on January 6th.

Timeframe for AWEP 2010

Please note the accelerated timeframe for ESPA Plan discussions regarding AWEP 2010.

PERC Recommendation to the Implementation Committee

The WG is recommending the PERC Program to the Implementation on December 16/17. It is a program that has the potential to be the only one during dry years and will complement conversions and recharge programs. With that being said, PERC is going to have to wait until funding mechanism is in place. Since the PERC program is a 10-year commitment, long-term funding needs to be in place.

Budget Requests for 2010

Several WG members are willing to put together a proposal for education and outreach for Demand Reduction programs and will determine how much money is needed to implement this outreach (likely less than \$30K).

Next Steps and Upcoming Meeting

Action	Responsible
Recommend the PERC Program to the IC on December 16/17	Joan Sabott and WG members
Obtain data from NRCS on Aquifer Demand Reduction Incentives	Neeley Miller
Meet with property owners to discuss conversions to dry land farming and downstream transfers	Peter Anderson
Meet with property owners to discuss crop mix modifications, amongst other potential ESPA Plan programs	Lynn Tominaga
Coordinate with Linda Lemmon to assess the possibility of a Thousand Springs project in 2010	Neeley Miller
Propose a 2010 outreach strategy for demand reduction programs	Will, Chuck, Neeley and others

Next Meeting

A teleconference on January 6th from 1:00pm-3:00pm

List of Participants

Demand Reduction Working Group Members

NAME	AFFILIATION
1. Peter Anderson	Conservation
2. Randy MacMillan	Spring Water Users
3. Steven Serr	Counties
4. Will Whelan	Conservation

Ex Officio Members & Other Attendees

NAME	AFFILIATION
5. David Blew	IPC
6. Brian Patton	IDWR
7. Chuck Pentzer	Soil Conservation Service
8. Neeley Miller	IDWR
9. Joan Sabott	CDR Associates
10. Lynn Tominaga	IGWA