Memorandum

To: Idaho Water Resource Board

From: Helen Harrington

Re: Water Resource Planning Program Update

Date: September 9, 2013

Information; no action necessary

State Water Plan

Since March 2013 when the 2012 Idaho State Water Plan became effective, IWRB members and staff have been reviewing areas which may need amendment. There were several areas of concern which were raised by legislators during meetings. These concerns will be reviewed through the Water Resource Planning Committee at upcoming meetings. Additionally, the Governor requested the IWRB develop a policy on Sustainability. Background research and development of a draft policy for committee review is underway.

Treasure Valley CAMP

At the November 2012 IWRB meeting concerns were raised by some Board members regarding the final draft version of the Treasure Valley Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan (TV CAMP). With these concerns in mind, the Board remanded the plan back to the Water Resource Planning Committee to determine how to proceed forward. The Water Resource Planning Committee met on December 13th 2012 and recommended the Board hold the plan and not submit it to the Legislature in 2013. The Committee recommended that all comments received on the plan will be reconsidered and revisions to the plan will be brought to the Board later this year prior to taking it to the Legislature in 2014.

Board staff is comparing the Advisory Committee recommended plan with the public comments received. Staff will bring a revised draft to the Water Resource Planning Committee this fall based on reconsideration of public comments.

Wood River Valley Planning Activities

The Wood River Valley Groundwater Flow Model Project was initiated to help provide a scientific foundation for the management of aquifers underlying the Wood River Valley. The Idaho Department of Water Resources and the United States Geological Survey (USGS) are partnering to develop a groundwater-flow model of Idaho's Wood River Valley aquifer system. The Wood River Valley groundwater-flow model will be designed to further the basic understanding of the aquifer system and ultimately to examine effects on the groundwater system and its interaction with the Big Wood River due to changes in water use, recharge, or discharge.

Since the initial public meeting on March 19th 2013 to inform the public about the project, a technical advisory committee (MTAC) has been established to provide the USGS and IDWR modeling team with input during model construction. The MTAC has held three meetings (April, June, and August) and is scheduled to meet again in October. The project is anticipated to be completed in late 2015.

Funding for this project is supplied through the Aquifer Management and Planning Fund. Planning staff are providing logistical support for meetings and planning perspective to the technical work.

Other Activities

IDWR staff attended the Colorado Water Congress Summer Conference to discuss the Idaho State Water Plan. The state of Colorado has been directed by the Governor to develop the first Colorado State Water Plan. Staff was asked to present information about Idaho's plan, process, history and suggestions. This panel discussion provided an opportunity to learn about state water planning in other states and assist the state of Colorado with lessons learned through Idaho's experience.