

Bear River Basin Advisory Group
Meeting Record
Kemmerer, Wyoming
July 7, 2003

Welcome

Facilitator Sherri Gregory welcomed the group and the meeting was called to order at 6:09 p.m. All attendees introduced themselves, followed by a review of the overall meeting agenda. A sign-in sheet was passed around to record attendance. The next meeting is scheduled for November 3 in Evanston.

Water Development Commission Report

Barry Lawrence updated the BAG on the status of the plans for the other basins. The BAGs for the Green and the Snake/Salt Basins will be meeting July 8 at the Seedskaadee National Wildlife Refuge and July 9 in Jackson, whereas the BAGS for the Wind/Bighorn, Powder/Tongue and Northeast Wyoming Basins will be meeting July 15 in Thermopolis, July 16 in Kaycee, and July 17 in Lusk. Open houses for the Platte River Basin were held June 2 – 4 in Saratoga, Douglas and Pine Bluffs. Barry discussed the status of all basin studies, and agendas for future meetings.

He concluded by introducing Jodee Pring of the State Engineer's Office and Debra Cook of the Water Resources Data System. Both individuals have recently taken positions as members of the water planning team.

Water Resources Data System

Debra Cook announced that irrigation surveys had been mailed the prior week. If an entity has received one in the past, and has not yet received the current one, please contact her.

Bear River Commission Activities

Dee Hansen, Chairman of the Bear River Commission, presented an overview of the Bear River Basin system. He indicated that there are seven storage reservoirs on the Bear River, which include Sulphur Creek and Woodruff Narrows Reservoirs in Wyoming. The annual maximum and minimum elevations of Bear Lake over the past century, particularly the time frame of 1998-2002, were presented and discussed. The provisions of the Upper Division Compact of 1958 and Lower Division Compact of 1980 for Bear River were reviewed. A brief question and answer period followed, including a discussion of Bear River Commission activities.

Bear River Water Quality Task Force/Bear Lake Regional Commission Activities

Mitch Poulsen, Chairman of the Bear Lake Regional Commission, indicated that the commission is currently w More information on the drought in Fremont

County can be found at orking on the adoption of new land use ordinances around Bear Lake and the Thomas Fork project. Mitch also discussed the activities of the Bear River Water Quality Task Force of which he serves as secretary. The task force is working to improve the overall water quality and stream integrity of the Bear River and its tributaries, including lakes and reservoirs, to support beneficial uses and development. Mitch indicated that the membership of the task force is multi-state, and includes special interest groups and the public sector. Future projects include continuation of the Thomas Fork project, which entails fencing out livestock from the river and the continuation of current Best Management Practices (BMP); Big Spring Creek, which will address strong nutrient loading and sediment and relocation of the stream to restore a Bonneville cutthroat spawning area, and the placement of a roadside TMDL information display in Idaho. Additionally, seven smaller meetings are planned to address local water quality issues by sub-basin. These stakeholder meetings will be held in January and February.

Conveyance Losses, Travel Times, and Re-diversion Proportions along the Bear River

Drew Johnson, University of Wyoming, indicated the research would determine Bear River conveyance losses between Woodruff Narrows Reservoir and Cokeville, Wyoming. Also, irrigation return flows; relative portions of natural flow and whether a steam reach is gaining or losing water will be determined. Study components will include bank storage, channel storage, evaporation, groundwater inflow reduction, i.e. reduced gradient, and inadvertent diversions, i.e. fixed gate settings. The project schedule for this three-year project was then discussed.

Current Bear River Operations

Jade Henderson, Water Division III Superintendent, went through the current conditions in the basin. Specifically, he walked the group through the upper and central division worksheets, which his office prepares weekly. The ensuing discussion centered on Idaho diversion amounts and border gage data collection.

Kirk Heaton, Western Wyoming Resource Conservation and Development Area Council, announced that a grant writing workshop would be held November 17-20, 2003 in Jackson.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.