

Bear River Basin Advisory Group
Meeting Record
Evanston, Wyoming
July 19, 2004

Welcome

Facilitator Sherri Gregory welcomed the group and the meeting was called to order at 6:06 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 October 11 in Cokeville.

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 20 in Savery and July 21 in Jackson. Barry discussed the status of all basin studies, and agendas for future meetings. Handouts from the prior meeting were distributed.

Uinta County Economic Development/Uinta County Wind Farm

Joe Locurto, Director of the Uinta County Economic Development Commission, indicated that the Wyoming Wind Energy Center is an 80 wind turbine, 144 megawatt electrical generation facility which was completed in December 2003, and ties into the Naughton power plant. He went on to detail the history of permitting and construction of the facility, which is owned by Florida Power and Light. From a water use perspective, 4,800 gallons of water per year are used to clean the turbine blades. The project has a 25-year life expectancy. Discussion followed.

Joe indicated that the Uinta County Economic Development Commission works with existing and new business owners in the area as well as recruits new county businesses.

Bear River Water Quality Task Force Update

Mitch Poulsen, Bear Lake Regional Commission, indicated that the Bear River Water Quality Task Force grew from a water quality symposium held in Logan, Utah in the early 1990's. The task force acts as a grassroots water quality group for the Bear River Commission Water Quality Committee. Mitch indicated that the group supports 2 EPA regions, various federal agencies, and various departments for the states of Utah, Wyoming and Idaho. Mitch mentioned the various accomplishments of the task force, which include TMDL training in the basin and related TMDL work in Utah and Idaho. Future plans include coordination and technical assistance to the Utah State University watershed initiative.

Painter Reclamation Project

Ryan Erickson, Sunrise Engineering, indicated that the project area includes facilities for fractionation and separation of natural gasoline on BLM managed lands. Northern Natural Gas, Kinder Morgan, Amoco, and Chevron own the facilities. As part of the lease agreement with BLM, reclamation activities will need to be implemented after each company's facilities are no longer operational. The reclamation plan is two phased, the first involving data collection, inventory of facilities, and the identification of all regulatory requirements and environmental clearances necessary to complete the plan. Phase II included the creation of engineering plans and designs for project site reclamation. Ryan discussed the proposed earthwork to create natural site contours, the subsequent re-vegetation, and the proposed monitoring and management plan. Discussion followed.

Bear River Watershed Research

Fee Busby, Utah State University, stated that research is being conducted to help train graduate students with wider perspectives for decision making and to work actively with shareholders to provide access to data, modeling, education and outreach for more effective watershed management in the Great Salt Lake watershed. Fee went on to discuss the Utah State University Water Initiative and related Bear River Laboratory Watershed Information System and other proposals for research in the Bear River watershed. Fee stressed bioregional planning and the need to think in an ecosystem perspective (i.e. – across borders, etc). Discussion followed.

Testing of Hydrologic Models for Estimating Streamflow in Mountainous Areas

Bruce Brinkman presented the research that was used to test models that are used to estimate stream flows in Wyoming. This research looked only at the portion of these existing equations that covered the snow-covered months of October through March. Physically measurements were made mid-month, every month, through the October to March time period during the winters of 2000-2001 and 2001-2002. The study sites consisted of eleven sites in the Brush Creek area, six sites in the Rock Creek area, six sites in the Douglas Creek area, and eight sites in the Encampment area. The measured data collected was then compared to the projected data of existing equations to determine their accuracy in this area of Wyoming. The data was then used to produce new equations for these flows in mountainous areas during winter conditions. The research resulted in new monthly equations for estimating monthly winter discharge. These equations are a function of the basin area and the range of the segment's basin elevation: $\text{discharges} = f(\text{basin area, elevation range})$. Once the new equations were determined, their projections were compared with measured values around the State of Wyoming. They were found to fit well with seven of nine sites tested. The two sites that did not fit were found to have special geologic conditions that need additional research. Discussion followed.

The meeting adjourned at 8:39 pm