

Bear River Basin Advisory Group
Meeting Record
Cokeville, Wyoming
October 11, 2004

Welcome

Facilitator Sherri Gregory welcomed the group and the meeting was called to order at 6:05 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 April 4, 2005 in Evanston.

Water Development Commission Report

Barry Lawrence updated the BAG on the status of the ongoing planning process in the other basins. The BAGs for the Green and the Snake/Salt Basins will be meeting October 12 in Lyman and October 13 in Jackson. Barry discussed the status of all basin studies, and agendas for future meetings. Handouts from the prior meeting were distributed.

“Bear Lake Watch”

Claudia Cottle with Bear Lake Watch, discussed how the group got started and the group’s primary mission and objectives. She indicated that they were not an extreme environmental group, rather that they try and represent the folks that are concerned about Bear Lake. Membership in the group has grown steadily, including their merger last year with the group, “The Friends of Bear Lake”. Claudia indicated that during the early 1990’s the power company and the downstream irrigators were the only voice, yet, they felt there should be a third voice, a voice “to speak for the lake”.

Claudia continued her remarks by discussing the Bear Lake Settlement Agreement, and how there was an irrigation season this past year because of it. She further discussed the group’s education efforts, including their website, and email distributions. She concluded her remarks by stating that they “want to be part of the solution” with regards to Bear Lake issues.

Water Year 2004 Recap

Jade Henderson, Water Division IV Superintendent, went through last season’s operations and regulation activities in the Bear River Basin. Jade provided a spreadsheet to the attendees that detailed the water accounting in the basin. He discussed storage restrictions, unbuilt storage opportunities, and regulation activities in other areas. A considerable amount of discussion followed Jade’s remarks.

Idaho State Representative Eulalie Teichert Langford noted the importance of the Smiths Fork Reservoir project to help with flooding situations, thereby capturing the increased flows, rather than allowing Bear Lake to spill and not capture such

events. She asked to speak to the Bear River Basin Advisory Group at its next meeting scheduled for April 4, 2005.

Lincoln County Conservation District/NRCS Activities Update

Demont Grandy with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Lincoln County Conservation District went through the numerous projects completed or underway which showcased the conservation efforts in the Smiths Fork River Watershed. Demont discussed the wide range of conditions that have been experienced, from floods to drought conditions. He further talked about manipulation of the river through dikes, railroads, water control structures, and channel straightening efforts. He detailed water use in the watershed, including agricultural operations, recreation, etc.

Demont highlighted the importance of the USDA's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) and the installation of riparian forest buffers, which has improved and enhanced river stability. Demont went on to discuss the positive impacts of additional conservation activities, including those accrued through rangeland tours, riparian zone management, rangeland cross fences, brush management, and off channel stock water development. He concluded his remarks by focusing on the future plans for the program.

Conveyance Losses, Travel Times & Re-diversion Proportions of Reservoir Deliveries Along the Bear River

Drew Johnson, Department of Civil & Architectural Engineering at the University of Wyoming, discussed the project objectives, including performing a water budget analysis to determine losses or gains (natural and return flow) from the system, and determining the timing of losses or gains associated with each reach. Funding for the project was received from the Wyoming Water Development Commission and US Geological Survey through the University of Wyoming water research program.

Drew went on to discuss the definition of conveyance losses, and encouraged the group to consider the various components of such, including bank storage, channel storage, evaporation, inadvertent diversions and groundwater inflow reduction. Drew detailed various loss relationships and discussed the additional new gages which were necessary and installed as part of the project at specific sites on the Bear River between Woodruff Reservoir and Cokeville. He concluded his remarks by outlining the remaining project schedule. A brief discussion followed Drew's presentation.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm