

**Wind/Bighorn River Basin Advisory Group
Meeting Record
Powell, WY
October 9, 2001**

Welcome

The facilitator opened the meeting at approximately 3:10 pm and reviewed the agenda to set the expectations for the meeting. Participants introduced themselves by stating their name, affiliation, and place of residence. The facilitator then sent a sign-in sheet around the room.

The next three Wind/Bighorn Basin Advisory Group meetings were then scheduled as follows:

December 11th, Thermopolis, 3 p.m.
February 12th, Dubois, 3 p.m.
April 9th, Cody, 3 p.m.

Consultant Update – BRS Engineering, Inc.

Doug Beahm, BRS, discussed the progress of the attribution of water rights and the profiling of water uses in the basin. Doug detailed the processes that would be followed. Doug indicated that the first stage was to check infrared maps for water use and to compare them to previously mapped lands. The second stage was to send this information to Frank Carr in order to better define the water rights and ownership. The third step was to review the maps a final time, then they would be sent to Tri Hydro Corporation for digitization.

Irrigated Lands in the Bighorn River Basin – Lee Craig, Park County Executive Director, FSA/USDA

Lee Craig gave a presentation on the irrigated lands and associated crop production in the Bighorn Basin. He began by passing out a handout showing statistics which detailed the amount of irrigated land (by crop) which existed in the basin during crop year 2000. He also pointed out that according to the Wyoming Agricultural Statistics 2001; 361,200 acres of land are irrigated, with a crop production value of \$118.4 million. He further stated that agriculture was the top industry in the area. Lee concluded his remarks and the BAG then engaged in further discussion on the topic.

Water Requirements for Crop Production – Dr. Alan Gray, Director, UW Extension and Research Center, Powell

Dr. Alan Gray gave a presentation on the water requirements for crop production in the basin. He detailed various crops and their respective water requirements. Dr. Gray then went on to discuss the pros and cons of using sprinklers and gravity flow for irrigation.

He also discussed methods for efficiently monitoring soil moisture, and detailed characteristics of various soil types. According to Dr. Gray, several factors are influencing crop production in the United States, including: the dairy industry, bottled water, corn silage replacing alfalfa, and the production of alfalfa moving west.

Agricultural Issues in the Basin – Bryant Startin, Shoshone Irrigation District

Bryant Startin opened the discussion by stating that there were 36,000 acres in his district. He noted that the majority of their water was obtained from Buffalo Bill Reservoir storage. He then said that the district's first concern was water conservation. In order to achieve such savings, he indicated that they focus on accurate water measurements being taken. Bryant stated that there were 705 individual farm turnouts and 260-miles of open drain in the system. He also stated that they are actively doing what they can to avoid seepage in open laterals, and also trying to keep as much return flow as possible. Bryant further stated that they recently completed a 15 million dollar rehabilitation project, which yielded 27 miles of pipe, reconstructed 10 drop structures, and gave them 116 new measuring devices.

Planning Team Issues – Barry Lawrence, WWDC

Barry Lawrence distributed a current BAG membership list. He stated that there would be a few more additions before the list is finalized. Barry then discussed the progress of the other basin planning efforts ongoing across the state. He invited attendees to participate in any of the other basin planning activities in which individuals had interest.

Governor's Drought Management Task Force – Grant Stumbough, Wyoming Department of Agriculture

Grant Stumbough opened his talk by detailing the current status of the dry conditions across the State. He went on to mention that fourteen counties had already applied for disaster designation and twelve had been designated. A copy of the Wyoming Drought Plan was then handed out for the group's review.

Grant focused the remainder of his presentation on the Governor's Drought Management Task Force and detailed the purpose and principles of the group, and defined the term "drought". Grant indicated that the majority of the committee's work takes place in the six subcommittees which exist, including: monitoring; drinking water, health and energy; wildfire protection; tourism and economic implementation; communications; and agriculture and natural resources. Grant went on to state the role of each of the subcommittees and their current activities. Following Grant's presentation, the BAG entered into a discussion of how the task force could operate in order to better assist water users in the basin.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m.