

**Wind/Bighorn River Basin Advisory Group Meeting**  
**March 3, 2009 - 6:00 p.m.**  
**Thermopolis, WY – Hospitality Room, Big Horn Federal**  
**Meeting Record**

I. Welcome

Jodie Pavlica, Wyoming Water Development Office, called the meeting to order at approximately 6:00 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 Thursday, June 18, 2009 at 6:00 p.m. in Lander. The location is to be determined.

II. Basin Plan Update Presentation

Pete Carlson, SEH, and Jerry Gibbens, MWH, were introduced as being part of the consultant team that will be preparing the surface water portion of the Basin Plan Update. Steve Gray, Wyoming State Climatologist, was introduced as giving an update on the groundwater portion of the Basin Plan Update and water planning and BAG internet resources.

Surface Water Hydrology Update

Mr. Gibbens gave an overview of the surface water portion of the basin plan update scope of services. SEH is serving as the overall contract manager, while MWH is serving as the technical lead on the project. The consultant team also includes Harvey Economics, which will be completing the economics task, Williams and Weiss, which will be assisting in the WyoMOD modeling portion of the hydrology tasks, Kara Brighton with Hageman and Brighton, who will be assisting with water law, and Earl DeGroot, who will provide facilitation when necessary. The basin plan update will focus on updating planning tools with the most recent years of information (including drought conditions), develop strategies for meeting needs of the basin as identified by the BAG, and to promote and enhance stakeholder dialog through BAG meeting. Mr. Gibbens then reviewed the 10 tasks that are included in the scope of services, which will culminate in the Basin Planning Report update. These task include the following:

- Task 1. Meetings
- Task 2. Literature Review
- Task 3. Surface Water Profile Update
- Task 4. Available Surface Water Determination
- Task 5. Demand Projections
- Task 6. Future Water Use Issues and Topics
- Task 7. Strategies
- Task 8. Presentation Tool
- Task 9. Discretionary Task
- Task 10. Basin Planning Report

The analysis and update will focus on information that is new or has changed since the previous Basin Plan. The consulting team has started to collect reports

completed since the previous Basin Plan, review water survey reports for updating the surface water use profile, and update hydrologic and diversion data for use in the hydrologic models. A draft Basin Plan Update report is due in December 2009, while a final report is due in February 2010. The full PowerPoint presentation is provided at <http://waterplan.state.wy.us/BAG/>.

#### Groundwater Update

Mr. Gray provided an overview of the groundwater portion of the basin plan update, which is being completed by the Wyoming State Geological Survey (WSGS) in conjunction with the WWDO, Water Resource Data System and the U.S. Geological Survey. Keith Clarey, formally of WSGS and now with WWDO, was initially the primary investigator for the project and remains available for assistance with the work. A new primary investigator will be identified when his position is filled. The groundwater study will update and expand on information in the previous Basin Plan, and includes the following tasks:

- Identify and inventory the aquifers
- Determine the three-dimensional configuration (outcrop areas, geological structure and depths)
- Estimate aquifer recharge rates, storage quantities, and discharge rates
- Identify areas with groundwater and surface water interaction
- Assess the quantity and quality of groundwater available in the aquifers
- Investigate the usage of groundwater within the basin.

The groundwater team has collected aquifer information and prepared maps, and is currently working to update groundwater permits in the GIS layer through 2008 (preliminary data was through 2007). A draft report is due in October 2009, while a final report is due in December 2009. This report will be incorporated into the overall Basin Plan Update report being prepared by the consultant team. The full PowerPoint presentation is provided at <http://waterplan.state.wy.us/BAG/>.

#### Data Resources

Mr. Gray provided an overview of internet-based water planning and BAG resources. This information includes several state agencies as listed below.

- Wyoming Water Development Office – <http://wwdc.state.wy.us>
- State Water Plan – <http://waterplan.state.wy.us>
- Statewide IMS Web Mapping – <http://ims2.wrds.uwyo.edu/Website/Statewide>
- Water Resources Data System – <http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu>
- State Climate Office – [http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu/sco/climate\\_office.html](http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu/sco/climate_office.html)

Mr. Gray stated that the basin plans and associated updates are the current pathways for updating GIS layers on many of these websites.

### III. Planning Team Discussion

Jodie Pavlica and Phil Ogle provided an overview of basin issues that were identified during the previous Basin Plan effort. General categories of issues were as follows:

- Water Development/Economic Development (includes storage projects)
- Current Use/Future Uses
- Recreation
- Groundwater
- Agriculture
- Environmental
- Tribal Issues/Concerns

There was a question on the potential compact with the Crow Tribe. Loren Smith, Division III superintendant, indicated that the compact is currently being considered in Congress for ratification. The federal reserved rights in this compact would have an 1868 water right that is senior to the 1868 federal reserved rights for the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho Tribes. Contact the State Engineers Office for further information on this topic.

#### IV. Public Comment

The following public comments were provided:

- The basin plan should address ways that sugar beet acreages can be preserved. Farmers can be penalized if minimum requirements in contracts with processors are not met.
- The impacts of the West Side Irrigation Project on water availability should be addressed.
- The plan should identify entities that could sponsor projects.
- The plan should include industrial water uses.
- Any impacts on Big Spring in Thermopolis should be avoided.
- The BLM is in the process of developing a resource plan, which is currently in the NEPA phase. This plan included information provided in the original 2003 Basin Plan and Framework Water Plan.
- The Tribal Water Engineer's Office should be consulted during the process. Mitch Cottenoir is the acting Tribal Water Engineer.
- The plan should address water law, and in particular, how water law addresses drainage issues (i.e. who is responsible for drainage issues that may arise from canal leakage or overtopping).

The meeting adjourned at approximately 8:00 pm.