

**Green River Basin Advisory Group**  
**Baggs School Music Room**  
**Meeting Record**  
**Tuesday, August 10, 1999**

**Welcome**

John Talbot, facilitator, began the meeting with introductions of the audience that included members of the Basin Advisory Group, Water Development Commission staff, State Engineers Office representatives, States West Water Resources representatives, UW and WRDS personnel, and interested members of the community. Joe Lord, the facilitator that will be replacing Talbot at future meetings, was also introduced. He gave some background on himself and his work history.

Talbot then discussed the expectations for the meeting, and the agenda order was changed to allow the informational presentations to be given first.

**Presentations**

WSGS/WRDS: Ground Water Modeling/Little Snake River Basin - Jim Case, Rod De Bruin, and Tony Bergantino.

This presentation covered the Web-based interactive geohydrologic database for the Little Snake Basin in South Central Wyoming, which is being put together by a joint effort of the Wyoming State Geological Survey (WSGS) and the Water Resources Data System (WRDS) at the University of Wyoming. Information available includes depth to formation tops, generalized aquifer characteristics, scanned state engineer well completion reports, perforation intervals, casing information, etc. The model is an excellent resource for anyone interested in obtaining geohydrologic information for the basin.

States West Water Resources: Water Rights Attribution - Mike O'Grady and Jack Meena

Mike explained the water rights attribution work tasks to be completed by his firm as a part of their contract, and how this information is useful for river basin planning. They pointed out that water rights attribution will be done for both groundwater and surface water, but this is not a comparison of the water rights of record to what is actually being irrigated. There will be no mapping of water right geographic boundaries

States West Water Resources: Hydrology and Modeling - Pat Tyrrell

Pat passed out a handout where he compared spreadsheet modeling to deterministic modeling, showing the similarities and differences. He discussed why States West has chosen to use the spreadsheet modeling in their study, and indicated that other consulting firms have also recommended using the spreadsheet modeling, as it is easier to use for comparison. The need for compatibility among basins was discussed.

## Issues Identification

The group began a discussion of basin water issues to be addressed in the Green River Basin Plan. Thirteen general categories were submitted in response to the statewide Water Planning Survey that was conducted in 1997 as a part of the feasibility study. These topics were suggested as a starting point for the issues identification process.

- Agriculture
- Groundwater
- Economic development
- Downstream claims/compacts/decrees
- Water quality
- Municipal/domestic
- Water conservation/reuse
- Nonconsumptive uses - Instream flows, wetlands, etc.
- Water development
- Federal involvement/regulations/lawsuits
- Recreation
- Industry/minerals/manufacturing
- Drought mitigation/flood control

The group decided that "Protection of Compact Rights" should be added to this list, and they reserved the right to revisit this list at a later date. The group then started to focus in on the issues within each of the topics. The following were identified:

Agriculture -

- Water quality
- Cost per acre
- Trends (irrigated acres)
- Irrigation practices
- Agriculture productivity - changes
- Agriculture water rights - transfers
- Agriculture influences on return flow ratios
- Shortages versus excess on irrigated lands
- Effect of water transfers on local tax base
- Alternatives to irrigated agriculture
- Contributions of irrigated agriculture to wildlife habitat
- \*Preserve existing uses
- Economics of loss of existing uses
- Preservation of Prior Appropriation Doctrine

\*Needs to be included in the other lists

Groundwater: (springs flowing 25 gal/min or less and subsurface water)

- Determine quality
- Yield and recharge
- Well density
- Degradation of groundwater - trend data
- How to protect groundwater

- Use by municipalities
- Groundwater development (potential)
- Economics of expanded use
- Impacts of development on surface flows
- Influence of oil and gas development on groundwater
- Coal bed methane
- Cost of recycling for reuse

Concerns were voiced on the need to protect the Colorado River Compact and the need to keep it from being circumvented. The group requested a portion of the next meeting for bold thinking about the future. Joe Lord, the new facilitator, challenged the group to bring perceived problems and possible solutions to the next BAG meeting. It was requested that Jeff Fassett attend the next meeting if possible. Some members of the group suggested that additional press coverage of the river basin planning process might be beneficial.

### **Next meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for September 14th at 5:00 PM in Big Piney at the Sublette County Fairgrounds. Members were requested to write down significant basin water issues for the groups' consideration in Big Piney, and to explain why there are important.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:40.