

Green River Basin Advisory Group  
Meeting Record  
Sweetwater County Library, Green River, WY  
January 11, 2000

**Welcome**

Facilitator Joe Lord welcomed the group and the meeting was opened at 1:00 pm. The overall meeting agenda was reviewed, followed by an introduction of all attendees. A sign-in sheet was passed around to record attendance.

Dan Budd and John Zebre made short presentations on the happenings at the recent meetings of the Colorado River Water Users Association and the International Boundry Commission. The presentation, which included a description of their tour of facilities in Mexico, brought several items to the BAG's attention. These included the desire to restore flow all the way to the Gulf of California, and Mexico's intent to file suit for surplus water to accomplish the restoration. Also, lining of the All America Canal was mentioned, along with the side effects the action would have, including potentially drying up the Mexicali wellfield.

**Planning Team Issues**

Jon Wade discussed the ongoing efforts to begin the planning process in Northeast Wyoming, kicking off with Open Houses in Buffalo on January 25<sup>th</sup> (Colonel Bozeman's, 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm) and on January 26<sup>th</sup> in Newcastle (TBA, again 4-7). Green River BAG members are certainly welcome at these meetings to offer their experiences with the basin planning process.

The future meeting schedule for the BAG was discussed. By consensus, it was decided that the BAG would remain on a monthly schedule. The following dates and locations were set:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
February 15, 2000	Farson	1:00 pm	Community Center
March 14, 2000	Rock Springs	TBA	TBA
April 11, 2000	Pinedale	TBA	TBA
May 9, 2000	Baggs	TBA	TBA
June 13, 2000	Marbleton	TBA	TBA

John Shields provided further discussion of the CRWUA meeting and passed out copies of the speech given by Bruce Babbitt, Secretary of Interior.

Jodie Jackson, Wyoming Water Development Commission, to avoid confusion, offered a revised table of contents for recent BAG notebook mailings and instructions on how to follow what is included in it.

## **Consultant Update**

Pat Tyrrell of States West gave a brief project update. Irrigated lands mapping was described as complete, with water rights attribution about half done. Work was beginning on summarizing diversion records. Instream flow applications in the basin had been reviewed (34 applications, 2 permits issued) and will be mapped on a GIS layer. A letter had been submitted to the various canal companies and irrigation districts requesting water use information, but as of the meeting no information had been obtained. Regarding M&I uses, Gary Watts was still working with Don Hartley on a questionnaire to be sent to existing users. Finally, a map prepared by States West showing potentially irrigable lands (from two published sources), as requested at the November BAG meeting, was briefly discussed and passed around for review by the BAG.

### Hydrologic Modeling

Mr. Tyrrell then introduced Meg Frantz of Boyle Engineering. Ms. Frantz discussed the progress of modeling work, in particular the hydrologic baseline work necessary prior to actual model development.

First, Ms. Frantz defined the objectives of the model and how it would be developed. She explained that the model would be developed in four parts (four individual spreadsheets), one from each of the four major hydrographic regions: the Green River above Green River, the Blacks Fork, the Henry's Fork and the Little Snake basins.

Ms. Frantz then explained that smaller individual irrigation water rights would not be modeled but would be lumped into logical "aggregated" points, or nodes, to simplify modeling of operations. Then, the model will be used to recreate historic conditions at points of interest (gaging stations) in the calibration process. The model will ultimately simulate wet, average and dry conditions in the basin. Wet and dry conditions would be obtained by averaging the wettest and driest 20 percent of the record, while average conditions would be represented by averaging the "middle" 60 percent.

Her discussion then moved to determination of the study period. The Green River at Warren Bridge gage was used to assess the use of a 1970-1998 proposed study period (selected in part as post-Fontenelle Reservoir construction for consistency in Green River data) against the entire 1932-1998 record at the same gage. The 1970-1998 period was deemed satisfactory because it held all three of the three highest years of record (in terms of annual flow) as well as two of the three driest years on record. In addition, the average flow of this period was within 1.2 percent of the average of the longer period. The 1970-1998 record also contains the most persistent drought period of record, defined in this case as the most consecutive years with total annual flow less than the long-term average. Based on the foregoing, the 1970-1998 period will be used to determine the wet, average and dry conditions described earlier.

An interesting finding of Boyle's work is that a review of "Index Gages" in the basin, which were selected in each major hydrographic region according to length of record and relatively "unaffected" nature of their data, is the variety of conditions reflected by year. Some regions would reflect average conditions in certain years, while other would reflect wet or dry. One year, 1976, even included years interpreted as wet, average *and* dry, depending on the subbasin. Because of this finding, differing years will be used to calculate wet, average and dry conditions, depending on location within the larger basin.

Ms. Frantz also provided a preliminary schematic diagram of the upper basin showing major diversions, gaging stations and tributaries.

Questions asked of Ms. Frantz were as follows:

One questioner wondered if a previous concern voiced over the contribution of glaciers in the Wind River Range had been addressed. On further discussion, it was determined that the glacier issue was more directed toward the eastern flank of the Winds and as such was not considered a major issue in the Green River basin.

Another questioner asked if water quality as well as water quantity would be modeled. The answer is that water quantity only was the subject of the surface water model, but that a GIS layer of water quality data, as available, would be provided as part of the plan.

Another questioner asked if the choice of period of record might not overemphasize either wet or dry conditions. The response is that the chosen period does not appear to overemphasize either wet or dry periods intentionally, but does include them both. Whether the period chosen reflects similar conditions in downstream upper basin states is not known.

A question was asked how irrigated lands in "no man's land" east of Flaming Gorge on the state line would be handled. Responding, it was noted that satellite imagery for this area had been ordered but not yet received, and that how this area would be addressed in the model was not yet determined.

**Break** – Robin Gray gave a Water Plan Web Site demonstration for interested members of the group, and provided a handout that described the content of the site.

### **Local Presentations**

#### Sweetwater Economic Development Association (SwEDA)

Ms. Pat Robbins made a brief presentation on behalf of the Wyoming Business Council in the absence of Lynn Wooley. The 5-year strategic plan for the WBC was handed out.

Ms. Robbins then discussed the role of the Sweetwater Economic Development Association. This association has as its primary objectives the retention and expansion of existing businesses in the area as well as the attraction and recruitment of new business and industry.

The four primary goals of SwEDA are:

1. Preparing a vision for Sweetwater County and the region;
2. Retention and expansion of existing business;
3. Target and recruit new business;
4. Address infrastructure needs required for economic development.

Goals relevant to the water plan are nos. 3 and 4, recruitment and infrastructure. Successful recruitment of business requires access to sufficient quantities of good quality water and the infrastructure to deliver it to points of use. Also, it is important to research the long-term impacts of development on the long-term water supply.

To meet the goals, SwEDA is advocating the following steps:

1. The state should encumber water resources for future development;
2. Removal of water from the state, such as through sales, should be offset by development of a similar quantity in-state; and
3. Keep local entities, such as SwEDA, informed and abreast of decisions relative to water resources.

Ms. Robbins said one of her primary concerns is being able to show a prospective industry or business that water is available at the site they are looking to build upon. Regarding who might be looking to move to the area, Ms. Robbins said they first look for business and industry with a value-added approach that complements existing business.

#### Rock Springs – Green River – Joint Powers Water Board

A second local presentation was made by Mr. Ben Bracken of the local Joint Powers Water Board. Mr. Bracken went through the history of the Board, including the funding history of various infrastructure improvements.

The most recent activity of the Board has been construction of a new 32 MGD water treatment plant, which was toured following the BAG meeting. The plant, which diverts directly from the Green River, uses ozone in the disinfection process to improve the treatment results and reduce the use of chlorine for maintenance of residuals. Construction of the new river intake required placement of a diversion dam which resulted in creation of side-channel habitat along the river not present before construction.

The plant has been online only since July of 1999, a time prior to which the cities of Green River and Rock Springs had experienced rationing regularly. Mr. Bracken showed a schematic layout of the plants, described the treatment process, and prepared the group for the features that would be seen on the facility tour.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 pm so that the water treatment plant tour could commence.