

Green River Basin Advisory Group Meeting Record
Lyman, Wyoming
March 19, 2002

Welcome

River Basin Planner Barry Lawrence welcomed the group and the meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. All attendees introduced themselves, followed by a review of the overall meeting agenda. A sign-in sheet was passed around to record attendance. Meetings are scheduled July 16 in Kemmerer and November 18 in Green River.

Water Development Commission Report

Jon Wade, River Basin Planning Administrator, indicated both the planning and construction bills were uncontested during the legislative session. 32 planning projects are currently in the consultant selection process. Opportunities in the basin include: Alpine Raw Water, Alta Master Plan, Bairoil Master Plan, Pinedale Intake, Little Snake River Small Dams Phase II, Baggs Master Plan, Church Reservoir (Green River ASR), Pinedale Hydropower, North Alpine Water Supply, Viva Naughton Enlargement, and Green River Supply Canal projects. Also, supplemental funding of \$1 million for the Groundwater Grant Program was received.

Barry Lawrence updated the BAG on the status of the plans for the other basins. The BAGs for the Snake/Salt and the Wind/Bighorn Basins will be meeting April 9 in Cody and April 10 in Jackson; whereas the BAGS for the Powder/Tongue and Northeast Wyoming Basins will be meeting March 20 in Buffalo and March 21 in Newcastle. The Bear BAG met March 18 in Cokeville. Barry discussed the status of these interim basin studies, and schedule for future meetings.

The Green River ASR final report is available. Project Manager Jodie Pavlica indicated the study, which identified Church Reservoir as an additional site, would continue with States West Water Resources. The Viva Naughton study will evaluate the proposed enlargement of the existing reservoir as well as Dempsey Basin. 39,000 acre-feet are available, with 10,000 acre-feet dedicated to agriculture in the proposed enlargement of the reservoir.

Water Development Case Studies

John Jackson, Planning Division Director, presented a High Savery Dam and Reservoir project history and status report. The project took approximately 20 years to obtain a 404 permit at a cost of \$8M. The lesson learned from the lengthy process was the necessity to identify the purpose and need for a project and identify all solutions to meeting that need.

On April 18, a meeting has been scheduled at 1:00 p.m. at the Green River Courthouse with Uinta, Sublette, Lincoln, Carbon, and Sweetwater Counties of the proposed Green River Basin Joint Powers Board.

David Little of the Denver Water Board presented the parameters and history of the proposed Two Forks Dam. EPA denied the permit 12 years ago; \$40M was spent on design and permitting.

Water Resources Data System Report

Robin Gray gave a brief overview of the current activities of the Water Resources Data System (WRDS). She also reported that as of March 18, the Snotel average for entire state ranges from 57% in Laramie County to 84% in the Yellowstone area. The snowpack average for the Green River area is 78-81%.

The state drought task force is meeting March 19. New online data includes a monthly climate report, drought monitor/studies, and links to other regional and national data sources. Of special interest is:

- Surface water supply index for March, which ranges from -2.25 to -3.9. Drought maps and forecast products are also available.

The water library is acquiring part of State Engineer's Office collection. The 2002 municipal system survey study will be available in another month or so. The Green River Basin report, including the GIS products, is 99% online with the Bear River Basin report due to be online by mid-April.

Watershed Planning to Address Impaired Waterbodies in the Bear

Chuck Harnish, Department of Environmental Quality, stated that the purpose of the 303(d) list is to

- Notify individuals where credible data supports either a pollutant or a threat to beneficial use of a stream;
- Prioritize development measures;
- Schedule TMDLs or watershed plan; and
- Locate funding

Segments which are on the proposed 303(d) listing include: Bitter Creek Green River to Killpecker; Killpecker Bitter Creek to 14 Mile; Blacks Fork Hams Fork upstream; Smiths Fork Blacks Fork upstream, Hams Fork above and below Diamondville; Reardon Draw lower 3 miles; Willow Creek Blacks Fork upstream; and East and West Fork Smiths River mouth up to state line.

Factors contributing to 303(d) list development include waterbody classification, state standards, credible data, and weight-of-evidence. According to water quality standards, there are 4 types of streams 1) outstanding waters, 2) fisheries and drinking water, 3) aquatic life other than fish, and 4) agriculture, industry, recreation, wildlife.

Watershed plans typically are locally led, are activity specific, have multi-pollutant considerations (habitat, sediment, etc.), and have a monitoring plan. In addition, there are three phases in developing a watershed plan. Phase I identifies concerns, inventories resources, analyzes resources and determines goals/objectives. The formation, evaluation, and selection of alternatives are the main components of Phase II, with Phase III implementing and evaluating the plan.

There are currently watershed plans in progress for 16 creeks/ivers around the state.

Lower Colorado River Basin Activities

Pat Tyrrell, State Engineer, addressed several issues, which included:

- Seven Party Agreement, or 4.4 Plan. The State of California needs to sign the Quantification Settlement Agreement (QSA) by December 30, 2002 for the Imperial Irrigation District and Coachella Valley Water District to continue receiving interim surplus water. Under the QSA, California is given 15 years to meet 4.4 MAFD, which is California's apportionment of the Colorado River Compact.
- Salton Sea Restoration/Mitigation. Due to a pending water transfer between the San Diego County Water Authority and the Imperial Irrigation District under the QSA, the development of programs to continue the beneficial use of the Salton Sea have become vital.
- Colorado River Delta. The United States is honoring the terms of the Mexican Water Treaty to help Mexico in meeting certain environmental issues; however, support is being provided through technical assistance to develop water through irrigation improvement measures. The 7 states are forming a Delta Issues Technical Work Group, which is meeting March 28, 2002 in Las Vegas.

Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program

From March 13-19, John Shields is in Washington D.C. visiting with members of the congressional delegations from Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming to develop support for federal funding for the USBR and USFWS Recovery Program. On December 6, 2001, the governors from Wyoming, Colorado and Utah signed an extension of the Upper Colorado Recovery Program Cooperative Agreement. An update on the recovery of the 4 endangered fish was presented.

Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program

The 2002 Triennial Review of Water Quality Standards for Salinity in the Colorado River system is underway. The Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Forum is focusing on BLM efforts to minimize salt loading to the Colorado River

system. President Bush is proposing +\$10M for the USBR Colorado River Salinity Control Program in FY03; however, the forum and advisory council recommended \$17.5M.

State Engineer's Office Report

Jade Henderson, Division 4 Superintendent for the State Engineer's Office, indicated the basin is in better shape than last year. The office is writing an operating manual for regulation in the Smiths Fork drainage for water users; the draft will be available in April.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.