

Green River Basin Advisory Group
Meeting Record
Kemmerer High School Auditorium, Kemmerer WY
September 12, 2000

Welcome

Facilitator Joe Lord welcomed the group and the meeting was opened at 5:15 p.m. The meeting agenda was reviewed followed by an introduction of all attendees. A sign-in sheet was passed around to record attendance.

Planning Team Issues

Jon Wade provided a rundown of the upcoming meeting schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
October 10, 2000	Green River	5:00	TBA
November 14, 2000	Farson	1:00	TBA
December 12, 2000	Rock Springs	1:00	TBA

It is noted that the November meeting was moved back from the 7th, which is Election Day. Jon Wade then updated the group on the progress of the Bear, Powder-Tongue, and Northeast basin plans.

Jon then discussed the dissemination of the various planning products. While products will be available on the Internet, some provision must be made for those without Internet access. In that case, providing the information on CD is a possibility. The planning team is trying to avoid mailing everything as paper copy to the entire BAG.

Mr. Ben Bracken was introduced to the group to discuss the status of Huell Howser's video production on behalf of the Colorado River Water Users Association. According to Ben, only Wyoming and Utah turned in their agendas on time. Absent agendas from the other states, the video will not be created in the near future. Ben isn't sure when the issue will be elevated again. He will be traveling to California next month to discuss the matter further.

Consultant Update

Pat Tyrrell of States West was introduced and presented an overview of the entire plan, in draft form. The intention of this presentation was to give the BAG as much plan-generated results as possible in one meeting, so that they can use the remaining project time to comment on those results. Mr. Tyrrell then began the presentation, which first discussed current uses followed by projected uses, both in reference to Wyoming's allocation under the Upper Colorado River Basin Compact.

To review, Mr. Tyrrell presented current municipal and industrial uses, both using surface and groundwater. Agricultural uses (depletions) were presented after discussion of the use of diversion records, Consumptive Irrigation Requirement data and the estimation of “irrigation days” in wet, dry and normal years. Mr. Tyrrell also explained that basins with storage typically demonstrated longer irrigating seasons. A copy of the dry-year agricultural use calculations was presented. Other uses, including evaporative losses from man-made sources, recreational and environmental uses, were discussed individually. The reason for the relatively large evaporation amount is that Wyoming’s proportion of main-stem reservoir evaporation is included (currently 88,500 AF). This number is not always included in depletion discussions because it is not strictly an “in-state” use.

Following a discussion of current uses, a comparison of those uses to the compact allocation was given. Availability numbers were discussed, with model results given on the screen (and on poster-board). Surface water availability is a determining factor in future water development opportunities.

Mr. Tyrrell then made presentations on projected uses, for low, moderate and high growth scenarios. These uses were broken down by type, i.e. municipal, industrial, agricultural, recreational and environmental.

Agricultural demands are the most difficult among the use sectors to project into the future. Primarily, this is due to elasticity of demand, or the degree of effect cost has thereon. While municipal and industrial uses are relatively inelastic (i.e. when a municipality or industry needs water, they basically “go get it” with cost less of a factor), agricultural demands are heavily influenced by the price of water. Hence, future demands for agricultural water are as much affected by the financing terms for delivering the water as they are by the sheer desire to add irrigated acres to an operation, or firm up a water supply. Therefore, the BAG was asked to review the agricultural use projections carefully.

The presentation also included discussion of institutional constraints on water development as well as a pre-list of items that will be on the first long-list of water development opportunities.

As a homework assignment, Mr. Tyrrell passed out a copy of draft project ranking criteria prepared by the Wyoming Water Resources Center in 1990. The BAG was asked to review these criteria and discuss if these, or some other criteria, were appropriate for ranking the final project list.

BAG Discussion

At the end of the presentation, comments surfaced regarding whether the BAG should contact members of the Joint Agriculture, Public Lands and Water Resources Interim Committee of the legislature to recommend their voting against proposed water law legislation (i.e. the salvage water and temporary use rules discussed by Sue Lowry of the

Wyoming State Engineers Office at the last BAG meeting). After intense discussion, it was decided that the BAG would, if anything, recommend that the legislature not pass this legislation until the basin planning process is complete. Until that time, passage of such legislation would be premature. Joe Lord, facilitator, was asked by the BAG to draft a letter for submittal to the Joint Ag. Committee (on behalf of the Green River BAG members in attendance), which relayed these concerns and suggested a course of action.

Closing

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.