

**Platte River Basin Advisory Group (BAG)
Meeting Record
Casper, WY
December 9, 2003**

Welcome

Facilitator Sherri Gregory was not able to attend the meeting. Barry Lawrence agreed to serve as the facilitator in her absence and the meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. Barry provided an overview of the meeting agenda (attached) and he indicated that the Issues Identification topic would be postponed until the next meeting. A sign-in sheet was passed around to record attendance and everyone introduced themselves to the group. Barry also announced that the next regular BAG meeting is scheduled at 10:00 am on February 10, 2004 in Saratoga.

Jon Wade announced that an informal meeting regarding the Cooperative Agreement has been scheduled at 1:00 pm on Tuesday, January 20, 2004 in Casper. Mr. Mike Besson, Director of the Water Development Commission will lead the discussion. Jon invited members of the BAG to attend.

Planning Team Issues

Overview of Basin Planning Activities: Barry provided an update on the status of basin planning activities in Wyoming's other river basins:

- Bear River Basin The most recent iBAG meeting was held on November 3, 2003 in Evanston. Presentations were made on water quality (TMDL) by the Bear River Watershed Group and Mr. Jade Hendersen, Superintendent of Water Division IV, who spoke to the group about the past season's operations. Dave Kennington addressed the Cokeville Reservoir Level I Study conducted by Sunrise Engineering. Mr. Besson and Mr. Harry LaBonde, Deputy State Engineer attended the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for March 22, 2004 in Cokeville.

- Green River Basin An iBAG meeting was held on November 4, 2003 in Pinedale. Mr. John Shields, Interstate Streams Engineer, discussed Colorado River issues. Mr. Larry Hicks and Mr. Dan Birch discussed the potential for joint WY-CO water studies. Tom Frieders with the National Weather Service (NWS) also made a presentation about the NWS in the basin. Mr. Besson and Mr. Harry LaBonde also attended the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for March 23, 2004 in Rock Springs.

- Snake/Salt River Basin..... An iBAG meeting was held on November 5, 2003 in Afton. The NWS gave a presentation on their agency in the basin and the Wyoming Game and Fish discussed instream flows. WDEQ talked about subdivision reviews. The next meeting is scheduled for March 24, 2004 in Alpine.

- Wind/Bighorn River Basin An iBAG meeting was held on November 18, 2003 in Cody. A presentation was given by Lowell Anderson on

the Shoshone Municipal Pipeline and the National Forest Service provided an update on their watershed inventory. The next meeting is scheduled for April 6, 2004 in Lander.

Powder/Tongue River Basin..... The most recent iBAG meeting was held on November 19, 2003 in Story. Discussion topics included Lake DeSmet, and, presentations were given by the Rocky Mountain Oil Field Testing Center on applications for CBM water and the State Historic Preservation Office. Mickey Steward also provided an update on CBM activities in the basin. The next meeting is scheduled for April 7, 2004 in Buffalo.

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Northeast River Basin An iBAG meeting was held on November 20, 2003 in Newcastle. Presentations were given by Nolan Doesken, with the Colorado Climate Center, and Myron Brooks, with the USGS, on statewide stream flow statistics. The next meeting is scheduled for April 8, 2004 in Sundance.

Briefing Books: Briefing notebooks were distributed and Project Manager Jodie Pavlica informed the group that an overview of the information provided in the book would be presented at the next meeting by Vicki Beckman. A roster was also distributed and Jodie asked the members to insert the roster under Tab A of their notebook.

Consultant Update

Joel Farber of TriHydro Corporation provided an overview of consultant activities since the last BAG meeting. Joel told the BAG that TriHydro was continuing work on the first three tasks of the project, as follows:

Basin Water Use Profile: The Wyoming Attorney General's Office and State Engineer's Office are providing copies of information requested from files maintained from the litigation with Nebraska on the North Platte River. He anticipated that copies of some of the requested information would be made available this week.

Demand Projections: Harvey Economics, a sub-consultant to TriHydro, has completed preliminary work on this task and will be giving a presentation on their work later during this meeting.

Available Surface and Groundwater Determination: Joel told the group that work was progressing on modeling and that he and WWDC had met with the personnel with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR) in Casper yesterday afternoon to discuss work under this task. The USBR was most helpful and provided a variety of ideas on information that could be incorporated into the Educational Tool. Joel told the group that he wants their input on information that would be beneficial to include as part of the Educational Tool. Juan Reyes suggested that information on the topics the group had requested educational presentations would be a good source of information to include as part of the Educational Tool. Debra Cook displayed an outline of the topics that the BAG had requested information for on the projector and Joel led a discussion on how the information might be incorporated in the Educational Tool. The following topics were discussed:

- SEO or Attorney General Office to give overview of the settlement.

- Managed Timber harvest for Water Development
- Forest Management – impact on stream flows
- Reservoir Management – presentation on wildlife habitat – would like to see the number of registered boat owners and anglers.
- US Fish and Wildlife – future demands on the North Platte for endangered species
- Platte River Resource Management plan- BLM Casper
- Connectivity of surface and groundwater throughout the basin
- Current wildlife habitat created by current irrigation practices
- Availability of water in the basin for future basin usage.
- Irrigation and municipal return flows, good (how it has developed), bad (water quality), amounts, effects on downstream users – how much is there (include links to connectivity),
- Increasing the water supply (cloud seeding, storage, trans-basin diversion).
- WWDC – projects that are currently being worked on in the basin. Level 1,2 and construction projects,
- Wyoming Drought taskforce – current status (link to webpage),
- Information on the selenium issue in the Casper Area – Alcova Irrigation District,
- Minimum and expected stream flow level to protect endanger species (environmental theme on ET, cross reference to Cooperative Agreement), and
- Recreation use – from Grayreef reservoir through the town of Casper (recreational theme for the entire drainage including resource usage such as bird watching, swimming and water fowl (include links to Platte River Parkway and Wyoming State Parks).

Economic and Forecasting Issues

Mr. Ed Harvey of Harvey Economics talked with the group about the task of water demand forecasting and the approach that will be taken on economic and demographic analysis. He told the BAG that the purpose of his presentation was to get their reactions to the preliminary data he had compiled and identify potential data sources.

Ed brought a power point presentation that he followed to describe how water demand projections are used in basin planning and the objectives of demand forecasting. He also presented a flow chart showing an overview of the methods that Harvey Economics will follow to develop demand projections. Much of Ed's presentation was devoted to providing the BAG with preliminary economic data for the Platte River Basin, such as population trends, personal income by county and economic sector, and employment. Ed noted that income and employment are key evaluators of each sector. He also provided preliminary information on the agricultural sector based on U.S. Census of Agriculture Data.

The time allotted for the meeting ended as Mr. Harvey concluded his presentation. Barry reminded everyone that the next meeting would be held in Saratoga on February 10th and confirmed that the Group wanted to continue having the meetings from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. The BAG agreed to continue with the adopted meeting time.

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The next Platte River Basin Advisory Group Meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2004 at 10:00 am in Saratoga.

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The meeting was adjourned shortly after 1:00 pm.