



Lower Boise Watershed Council

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
USDA Farm Service Center, Caldwell
Thursday, February 12, 2009 - 7:30 p.m.

Attendees: Erica Anderson Maguire, Johanna Bell, Robbin Finch, Henry Hamanishi, Dennis Searle, Lee Van De Bogart, Tom Dupuis, Sherrill Doran, Craig Shepard, Jeremy Aulbach, Larry Bennett, Cyndy Bratz, Jon Gould, Mark Hardy, Jack Harrison, Andy Waldera, Nick Smith, Barry Burnell, Tanya Allemang, Jim Taylor, Brian Hoelscher

Meeting called to order, introductions made. The minutes from the January 2009 meeting were reviewed and approved by the Directors.

Settlement Process Update

Following the January 2009 monthly meeting discussion regarding the Settlement Process, Craig and Barry provided an update. Barry reviewed the Settlement Agreement and the process of how it occurred, including that IDEQ entered into a negotiation process with appellant and interveners to develop language that was suitable to those parties. IDEQ is in the process of the next step, which includes working on evaluating whether the Snake River-Hells Canyon target needs to be modified. They have hired a contractor (Tonya Dombrowski with Newton Consultants) to assist. IDEQ does not believe that the Settlement language specifies that public involvement would be part of this step. If the target evaluation process determines that the TMDL needs to be re-opened, IDEQ would coordinate that with ODEQ and a PAT team.

Larry Bennett also brought a copy of a January 14, 2009, letter from EPA to Congressman Simpson explaining EPA's position on nutrients in the Lower Boise River; a copy of this letter was distributed to the group.

EPA's Approval/Disapproval of Idaho's Final 2008 303(d) List

Barry also handed out copies of a February 2009 report that EPA prepared supporting their 303(d) approval/disapproval process and rationale, including their justification for why EPA has disapproved removing the Lower Boise River mainstem from the 303(d) list for nutrient impairment. Barry indicated that there would be some public notice of this decision, and that if the mainstem river was put back onto the 303(d) list for nutrient impairment, IDEQ would factor that into their TMDL prioritization schedule.

Update on NRCS Conservation Grant and 319 Grant

With respect to the NRCS CIG grant, the workgroup is developing the draft grant application to be distributed for review. Sherrill handed out a status report and a draft letter of support for the LBWC Board to review.

With respect to the 319 grant process, an additional \$500K was available through the 319 program via the ISCC for non-point sources control. We developed a letter of support for Lance Holloway for bringing that money into either the CIG process or the developing 319 program in the Lower Boise River, so that Lance could convey our support to the IDEQ decision group at their February 12 meeting. We learned that this group prioritized providing money to two other watersheds ahead of the Lower Boise (Marsh Creek in the Portneuf basin and the Palouse River). Barry was not involved in that decision process and could not provide information to the group about how the funding priority decision was made.

Status Report of AQUATOX Modeling

Tom Dupuis presented an overview of the AQUATOX modeling project for the Lower Boise River. This project was funded by EPA Headquarters with substantial in-kind support by City of Boise staff. The modeling was initiated primarily to help evaluate potential nutrient criteria that might be applicable to the lower Boise, but also to help evaluate other water quality issues such as how the lower Boise itself would respond to the phosphorus allocations intended to protect the Snake River. A TAC meeting was scheduled for March 2, 2009, to review the modeling results in more detail.

Monitoring Update

In terms of planning for FY2010, Mark Hardy requested input on the next subbasin to target. The group agreed that a prioritized list would be helpful for FY2010 and beyond, and the suggestion of Indian Creek and Dixie were both mentioned. Barry indicated that IDEQ support for monitoring would be cut due to the state budget situation, which means that the FY2010 monitoring budget could be \$80K less than the FY2009 budget. Barry also mentioned that FY2009 monitoring budgets might also get trimmed, but he had no details to share on when that might happen or to what level.

Status of Contributions

Johanna Bell had requested a year-to-date status report on contributions and the LBWC budget. As of February 12, 2009, we received \$86,695 of our annual budget, with additional contributions still expected to arrive. It was agreed that we should dedicate most of the March 2009 meeting to evaluating the budget situation for FY2009 and prioritizing remaining activities in case contributions decrease either in FY2009 and/or FY2010.

Update on LBWC Public Outreach Campaign

This topic was postponed until the March 2009 meeting due to time considerations.

Meeting Adjourned