

# Upper Snake Basin Advisory Group

Meeting Minutes  
October 7, 2015

Department of Environmental Quality  
900 N Skyline, Ste. B, Idaho Falls Id 83402

## Attendees

Chris Banks – Conservation Basics LLC  
Jay Barlogi – Twin Falls Canal Company  
Pauline Bassett – Caribou SCD  
Tom Bassista – IDFG, Eastern Idaho  
Roger Blew – BAG, Representative at large  
Sonny Buhidar – DEQ, Twin Falls Regional Office  
Tina Dean – Teton SCD  
Jon Goode – BAG, Mining Proxy for Katie Bergholm  
Clint Hall – DEQ, Idaho Falls Regional Office  
Justin Hays – BAG, Recreation  
George Hitz - ISWCC  
Cali Johnson – PSWCD  
Gary Marquardt – BAG, Non-Municipal Permittee  
Ralph Myers – BAG, Hydropower  
Brian Olmstead – BAG, Irrigated Ag  
Andy Olson – DEQ, Idaho Falls Regional Office  
Ray Peterson – Private Landowner  
Dave Pisarski – DEQ, State Office  
Brian Reed - ISWCC  
Troy Saffle – DEQ, Idaho Falls Regional Office  
Greg Shenton – BAG, Local Government  
Steve Smith – DEQ, Pocatello Regional Office  
Laurie Stone – BAG, Forestry  
Lynn Van Every – DEQ-Pocatello Regional Office  
Amy Verbeten – Friends of the Teton River  
Louis Washenski – Hydrologist, Caribou Targhee National Forest  
Matt Woodard – BAG-Environmental, Chairman

## Welcome and introductions

The meeting was brought to order at approximately 10 a.m. by Matt Woodard, BAG Chairman. Everyone in attendance was welcomed and each introduced themselves and whom they represented at the meeting.

## Bag business

- A motion was made to dispense with reading of the minutes and accept them as currently drafted. The motion was seconded and the minutes for the July 16, 2015 meeting were approved as written.

- The next meeting will be Wednesday, January 20, 2016 at 10 a.m. It will be a video conference meeting from each regional office. TMDLs that will be ready to submit to EPA will be presented to the BAG.

### Upper Portneuf River Project

The Upper Portneuf River Project was presented by Chris Banks on behalf of the Caribou Soil & Water Conservation District. The goal of the project is to install 4 off-stream watering systems with 4 different land owners near the Chesterfield Reservoir. It will include 25 acres of riparian use exclusion and about 2.5 miles of riparian fencing; both buck and rail and barred wire fencing will be used. It will also reduce the impacts of about 400 head of livestock to the Portneuf River.

The exclusion is for 3 years and then they will have a grazing plan where they can choose a brief flash grazing either in the spring or the fall. That will protect the investment as well as provide weed control.

Estimated load reductions are about 35 tons per year of total suspended sediment, 4 tons per year of phosphorus, and about 1 ton per year of nitrogen. Estimated total cost of the project is about \$417,000. Estimated matching funds are about \$173,696, most of that coming from the land owners. The amount asking for in 319 funds is \$243,000.

### Lava Hot Springs Urban Project

Chris Banks handed out copies of the grant applications and support letters for 3 projects to the BAG attendees; because of problem with the mail, they did not arrive at the Boise office. Representing the Portneuf Soil & Water Conservation District, Chris Banks presented the Lava Urban Project. This project will be working on the river as it flows through the city of Lava Hot Springs. The problem is that from Memorial Day to Labor Day 60,000 people (666 people per day) tube that river. As they go up and down the bank dripping wet, it causes a severe erosion problem losing as much as approximately 3" per year of topsoil due to recreational pressure. .

One thing that would be done is the increase of signage for education and information. Signage would include that this is a water quality improvement project, talk about soil erosion reduction, weed control, and the importance of protecting riparian areas. Another aspect of this project is to fence the riparian area above the river and direct people to access points along the river. Engineered steps will be made for access points. The banks will be put back, reshaped and vegetation planted.

The project will eliminate approximately 30 tons of sediment per year. The estimated cost of the project is \$331,004 with matching funds of \$140,861 and 319 Grant \$190,143. The match monies would come from City of Lava, \$10,000; The Lava Foundation, \$26,000; the Soil Conservation Districts, 66,000; Tube rental stations, \$5,000, Bannock County Civitan will do the upkeep on all the fencing, and Bannock County Weed department will control the weeds as a private program.

Chris entertained many questions and discussion concerning control and maintenance of fencing, trails, and access points.

### Middle Portneuf River Streambank Stabilization

George Hitz presented this project. The main scope of this project is to stabilize approximate 1 ½ miles of the Portneuf River streambank with bank reshaping, excluding livestock from the Portneuf River on the main stem, and installing off-stream watering facilities. There are stretches that can be fixed all along the 6 mile area; however, this project will be working with 4 specific land owners.

The estimated load reduction for this project is 30 tons per year of sediments. The estimated cost of the project is \$445,000; \$195,000 matching funds and \$250,000 of 319 Grant.

### Dempsey Creek

Chris Banks presented the Dempsey Creek Ditch to Pipe and Fish Screen and Diversion Project sponsored by Portneuf Soil and Water Conservation District. The focus of this project is to install a new diversion structure which will be able to screen Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout from entering into the canal. The canal is able to divert 6 cfs and it terminates; it does not enter the river at any point. Therefore, the Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout that go into the canal system never come back up.

It is estimated that about 30 tons of sediment will be reduced per year. We are asking for \$249,000 of 319 Grant with a match if \$166,000 for a total cost of right around \$416,000.

Dave Pasarski referenced some errors to the grant application that should be corrected and emailed to him in Boise.

### Teton Watershed Soil Health Initiative

Amy Verbeten presented this project on behalf of a partnership between the Friends of the Teton River and the Teton Soil Conservation District. This project is a soil health initiative. The proposal includes the purchase of a no-till drill and utilization on agricultural lands throughout the Teton watershed. The TMDL Implementation Plan has identified cultivated field erosion as the number one source of sediment. Cover crops and no-till technology has been identified as an effective way to deal with cultivated field erosion.

Goals of this project are to reduce soil erosion; improving water quality and addressing sediment issues, nitrogen issues, and temperature issues; protecting drinking water sources; and promoting an increased adoption of agricultural best management practices. These goals will be met by raising funds to purchase a no-till drill and then renting it out at a very low cost to agricultural producer throughout Teton County. They will also be recruiting folks to take the risk to be the first users of this technology and use their farm as a demonstration. We propose to recruit 4 producers to put into production 200 acres total in the first year.

The project is estimated to have a 55% reduction in sediment, a 44% reduction in phosphorus, and a 75% reduction in nitrogen. Estimated cost of the project is \$148,682 with \$73,682 matching funds and 75,000 from 319 Grant.

### South Fork Snake River Bank Stabilization Project

This project was presented by Matt Woodard. He is recusing himself from voting on any projects presented at this meeting.

The project is located upstream on the north bridge at Twin Bridges on the Archer Highway. The property is owned by Ray Peterson. The project goals are to stabilize the project area, build in a fisheries and wildlife habitat component, eliminate the sediment loading and improve the water quality. The designer of the project is Louis Washenski. The design includes 6 rock barbs incorporated on the bank with some big cottonwood trees that are going to be keyed back into the bank about 80 feet. There is a bioengineering component added for fish habitat. Bank armoring is part of that component.

The funding estimate is \$250,000 from DEQ, \$170,000 match (Jackson Hole One Fly Foundation, \$25,000; Snake River Cutthroats, \$75,000; and Ray Peterson, \$70,000) for a total cost of \$420,000.

Matt entertained many questions and comments concerning all aspects of this project and its relationship to the north bridge.

### Mud Creek/Silo Creek water Quality Project Phase II

This project is sponsored by the Balanced Rock Soil Conservation District and presented by Jay Barlogi. Silo Creek drain parallels the canyon for 4 or 5 miles and collects all the waste water and all the sediment in the waste water before it dumps into the Snake River just below Kanaka Rapids. Silo Creek drain actually spills into Mud Creek and then into the river.

The project will include a wetland complex consisting of two smaller cleaning cells and two larger finishing ponds to remove sediment prior to the water entering the main drain and the river. The wetland complex will be located where the Lateral 23 intersects with the I-1 and J-1 coulees.

There is an expected 60% reduction in TSS and 50% reduction in TP. The cost of the project is estimated at \$135,000 with estimated matching funds of \$54,000 and 319 grant funds of \$81,000.

### BAG Rankings

1. Mud Creek/Silo Creek water Quality Project Phase II
2. South Fork Snake River Bank Stabilization Project
3. Upper Portneuf River Project
4. Teton Watershed Soil Health Initiative
5. Lava Hot Springs Urban Project
6. Middle Portneuf River Streambank Stabilization
7. Dempsey Creek

Adjourn

The BAG members were thanked for their attendance and participation. A motion was received to adjourn the meeting. The motion was second and Matt Woodard adjourned the meeting at approximately 2:55 p.m.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Approval