

# Upper Snake Basin Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

DEQ Pocatello Regional Office  
444 Hospital Way #300  
Pocatello, Idaho

April 6, 2011  
Time: 9:00 am

## ATTENDEES:

Bill Allred - DEQ-TFRO  
Dave Pisarski - DEQ-Boise  
David Goings - DEQ-PRO  
Don Mays - BAG- Recreation  
Gary Marquardt - BAG- Aquaculture  
Greg Shenton – BAG - Local Government  
Jay Barlogi - BAG - Irrigated Ag  
Justin Skinner - BAG- Mining  
Katie Shewmaker – DEQ-TRFO  
Laurie Stone – BAG- Forestry  
Lynn Vanevery – DEQ-PRO  
Matt Woodard - Chairman – BAG Environment  
Roger Blew – BAG  
Sean Woodhead - DEQ-TFRO  
Sonny Buhidar - DEQ-TFRO  
Troy Saffle - DEQ-IFRO

Note: No audio recording of the meeting was done. The minutes were compiled from personal notes taken by Katie Shewmaker and Sonny Buhidar.

### **I. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order by Matt Woodard, BAG Chairman at 9:10 a.m. Each of the attendees introduced themselves and whom they represented as interests in the Upper Snake Basin.

### **II. Bag Business**

- Matt Woodard entertained a motion by Gary Marquardt to approve minutes as sent out, and Don Mays seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.
- The next meeting is scheduled for October 5, 2011, at DEQ Pocatello Regional Office at 10:00 a.m.; the focus will be on the review of 319 projects. An April 2012 meeting was discussed to have three purposes: (1) Review FERC related

projects that may have an impact on the Basin; (2) Update on 319 projects; and (3) the BAG to develop water quality priorities in the Basin.

- Sonny requested further meeting discussion on specific items for future BAG meetings (which included the April 2012 BAG meeting). The ideas included: a review of previously funded 319 projects and status updates; a review of the WAG's and how they are doing; Upper Snake Dam reconstruction updates including Ashton Dam, Minidoka Dam and others; Updates on Portneuf River TMDLs and implementation projects, and setting a BAG derived strategic plan for prioritizing BAG funding priorities by either a geographic or basin/watershed location.
- Funding for WAG/BAG meetings will be decreased in this year's budget by \$10,000 to \$15,000. It is up to each DEQ regional office to determine how to handle the cutbacks for their WAG/BAG's. Some will meet as needed while others may have to decrease the meetings between two to four times per year. Options may also include video phone conferencing.

### **III. Update on the BURP process for FY2010, and beyond**

Troy presented an update on the BURP program which included the following points:

- There will be a BURP season this year, though it has been cut from historic levels by 30%. Each group will have 40 sites to complete, with around a total of 240 sites statewide. These include 10 computer generated random sites from EPA. The last BURP monitoring occurred in 2008; and due to this, DEQ is lacking data to populate the upcoming 2012 Integrated Report.
- DEQ is currently taking applications online for BURP crew positions. All DEQ regional offices will have a 3-man crew.
- DEQ will participate in Quagga Muscle trap deployment in conjunction with Parks and Recreation and the Department of Agriculture. Those agencies will also man wash stations throughout the state. Monitoring of the traps will occur monthly during the summer months.
- EPA-funded wetland quality work and inventory will occur this summer. Parameters and site selection lists have not been released yet.
- Monitoring for Rapid Lake Assessment will occur on 50 lakes this summer. The work will be done by DEQ state office staff.

### **IV. Update on Antidegradation Rulemaking**

Lynn reviewed the information on the DEQ website concerning antidegradation. There are some concerns on how the regulation will affect current DEQ workloads. Guidance is being developed by DEQ with public input. There are still many

unknowns at the present time. The BAG was encouraged to study the website to stay abreast of the current regulation. Contact Don Essig in the DEQ state office with questions.

#### **V. Update on the 319 Process statewide and the process for this year**

- A handout on the 2010/2011 project ranking was given out by Dave Pisarski that included a list of the top 12 projects and their monetary distribution that totaled \$1,899,341. Each BAG region had 2-4 projects funded. The grant funding for the year 2011/2012 projects is expected to be diminished depending on federal funding. There may be a nationwide 319 funding decrease of possibly five percent. This could mean a decrease of \$100,000 to Idaho.
- Idaho has met their commitments with EPA and received positive feedback from the 2010 summer EPA 319 tours.
- DEQ expects to be able to cover the costs of the 2010/2011 319 projects. There were 25 applications in 2009, 47 applications in 2010, and 46 in 2011. Pre-applications for 2011/2012 open Monday, April 11, and continue through July. Dave has already received several inquiries. Dave discussed feedback and suggestions from different BAG meetings throughout the state.
- Due to budget constraints the 319 program has 1.5 vacant positions.
- Funding for 2012 projects will incorporate monitoring costs into the administrative portion, which can not exceed \$10,000. This was incorporated so that more money would go towards on-the-ground BMP's as part of the project. The BAG members voiced concern with limiting funding amounts for monitoring; they thought this would discourage data collecting that is used to gauge whether a project is successful.
- Electronic invoicing capabilities are now available and will go into full use beginning with 2011 subgrant recipients. This new tool will assist in accessing historic information and expedite funding accessibility.
- There will be a DEQ 319 program meeting in June to discuss 319 program implementation. . Comments can be sent in advance to regional office water quality managers or to Dave Pisarski.

#### **VI. 319 "Ranking" – What pitfalls to avoid in the future**

Five issues were presented by Sonny and discussed by the BAG as a result of last year's 319 project reviews:

- The BAG has a challenge on deciding which projects are best for funding. The challenge comes in any project being the best in one area of the Basin not necessarily being the best in another area. Each WAG is very passionate about their 319 projects.

- The number of 319 projects that the BAG has to review and rank has increased substantially each year. This can be a challenge for the presenter and for the BAG. As an example, reviewing 20 projects in one day is the equivalent of 4 hours if you give each presentation 15 minutes. Therefore, it is critically important for the BAG to review each prior to the BAG meeting.
- BAG representation at the 319 meetings is very important. If alternates are not selected and present, then the specific interest for the Basin may not be represented well during the 319 rankings. However, the review of the 319 projects by those BAG members present is thorough. So the more prominent issue is the perception that WAG's have that representation of their particular interest is not well represented.
- The BAG's ranking process raised some concerns by several WAG's and at least one designated management agency. Greater transparency needs to be implemented in the ranking process in future 319 ranking meetings.
- At least one designated management agency raised concerns that the Super BAG Meeting in Boise diluted the effectiveness of the Upper Snake BAG in the projects that were reviewed statewide.

**VII. Adjourn**

The meeting was adjourned by Matt Woodard at 1:30 pm.

*Matt Woodard for Matt Woodard*  
Chairman

10/5/11  
Date of Approval