

# Upper Snake Basin Advisory Group Meeting

## MEETING MINUTES

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality  
900 N. Skyline Drive, Suite B  
Idaho Falls, Idaho 83402

Wednesday, April 4, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

### Attendees

Jay Barlogi – Twin Falls Canal Company  
Roger Blew – BAG-Representative at large  
Gary Marquardt – BAG-Non-Municipal  
Don Mays – BAG-Recreation  
Katy McKinley – BAG-Mining  
Ralph Myers – BAG-Hydropower  
Troy Saffle – DEQ-IFRO  
Greg Shenton – BAG-Local Government  
Laurie Stone – BAG-Forestry  
Aaron Swift – DEQ-IFRO  
Sue Switzer – DEQ-TFRO  
Craig Thomas – DEQ-TFRO  
Jordon Tollefson – DEQ-TFRO  
Lynn Van Every – DEQ-PRO  
Matt Woodard – BAG-Environmental, Chairman

### Welcome and introductions

The meeting was brought to order 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 by Laurie Stone to approve the minutes of the October 5, 2011 meeting. It was seconded by Greg Shenton. The motion passed and the minutes were approved as written.
- The next meeting is scheduled for July 11, 2012, for a field tour at the Simplot facility in Pocatello. Everyone will meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Pocatello DEQ office.
- The 319 review meeting is scheduled for October 3, 2012 at 9: 00 a.m. in Twin Falls. Hopefully at the Idaho Fish and Game office in Jerome.

### **Super bag meeting updates on 319 projects**

Matt Woodard presented information from the last Super BAG meeting. Assuming that they receive the same amount of funding as last year, the top two 319 projects from each BAG will be funded for this year. The top 2 from this BAG were the Pebble Creek project and the Twin Falls Coulee Project. The announcements will not be sent out until the funding is actually received. There is a lot of competition and a lot of really good projects. Matt emphasized the importance of 319 anticipated load reductions be included with the project. Matt also suggested that applicants consider presenting their projects to the Super BAG. Greg Shenton made the motion that a letter be drafted from the Upper Snake BAG to Barry Burnell and Dave Pisarski recommending applicants have the opportunity to present to the Super BAG and inquiring as to the policy of presentation options. The motion was seconded by Gary Marquardt and passed by the BAG.

There was discussion on phasing large projects allowing for more projects to be funded, designated criteria for ranking projects, and consideration be given in the TMDL implementation timeframe to account for the funding cut in the 319 program.

### **Review of WAG's and their status**

Troy reported that the Idaho Falls region WAGs are struggling because of lack of involvement. Unless someone is trying to get a 319 grant or get monitoring done for them, they don't feel the need for involvement.

Lynn reported that the Pocatello region WAGs are really in the same condition. They are mostly doing implementation, noncontroversial. The American Fall WAG members have been kept engaged in the edits of the TMDL.

Sue reported that the Big Wood and Lake Walcott WAGs have a similar lack of involvement. The Mid Snake WAG has a lot of point sources that have vested interest in how the TMDL matures; therefore, that WAG is active and a good source of information.

### **Upper snake dam reconstruction updates**

- The Bureau of Reclamation decided that people traveling over Palisades Dam were a security risk, so they decided to build a 375 foot long bridge in the campground below Palisades. Troy gave a presentation on the progress of the project. It is a 2-lane bridge. This is not pedestrian bridge; if you want to fish both sides of the river, you will have to backtrack. There is not much water quality concern. It should be open within a month and a half.
- Troy presented a report on the progress of the Chester Dam. Chester Dam is a road to river dam with a small fall line. It was up for FERC relicense requiring them to discuss both permitting and mitigation. Both DEQ and Army Corp of Engineers issued permits for this project. There are not many concerns from DEQ's perspective.
- The Ashton Dam Rehabilitation Project has been going on since about 2008. It developed sinkholes on top of the dam, and PacifiCorp decided to take on the project. Army Corp of

Engineers did not issue a permit because it is considered a masonist project; they have no involvement in this project. DEQ negotiated a Voluntary Consent Order with PacifiCorp allowing them to violate DEQ standards significantly during construction. Troy showed a presentation of the history and progress of the project. DEQ was really pleased with the pre-construction work that was done. The project is on the tight schedule. PacifiCorp intends to be up and operating with normal power and access by November 15 of this year.

- Balthasar Buhidar who was on the agenda to present was unable to attend the meeting. Jordan Tollefson presented the history and progress of the Minidoka Dam Spillway Replacement Project. Information on the Minidoka Dam project was handed out to the BAG attendees.

### **Idaho Falls collaborative monitoring projects, summer 2012**

Troy Saffle talked with the BAG about what is going on in the Teton Watershed. The TMDL was written for the lower Teton River. The upper Teton River was not included because it was not listed on the 303 (d) list. Friends of the Teton River (FTR) and others submitted their research and requested that the upper Teton River be listed and begin the TMDL process. DEQ did not list the upper Teton River at that time. DEQ made a commitment last winter to continue with Friends of the Teton River monitoring network on the upper Teton River.

### **Updates on Portneuf River TMDL's and implementation projects**

Lynn Van Every presented information from the Portneuf TMDL relative to Simplot's commitment to dissolved phosphorus reductions. In 2008 Simplot Company signed a Voluntary Consent Order (VCO) agreeing to remedial actions and timelines to meet water quality goals set in the TMDL for the Portneuf River. They needed to achieve a 50% reduction by the end of next year and a 75% reduction by the end of 2015. The major elements of the VCO were 1) control sources of phosphorus in the plant, 2) major environmental upgrade of lining the gypstacks, 3) continue to extract groundwater downgrading of the gypstacks in the plant area, 4) monitor groundwater and surface water to assess their remedial actions. Lynn discussed the remedial projects that have been or are being implemented by Simplot.

### **Updates on Idaho Falls Regional Office TMDL's**

Aaron Swift gave an update of the Palisades TMDL and the projects that have been implemented in the Palisades area.

Troy presented an update on the Big Lost HUC 5-year reviews and TMDLs. He discussed temperature proposal for the Mackay Hatchery.

### **Setting a BAG strategic plan for funding priorities**

The BAG discussed areas relative to priorities for funding 319 projects. It was suggested that temperature is going to be a big issue and the BAG should be looking at temperature in 319 projects going forward. The basin is too diverse to set priorities on 319 parameters. Quality of

the presentations makes a big difference. Support letters are good; but support people are better, have them come and give input to the presentation. The applicants should work closely with DEQ for assistance. There was support for lowering the funding cap on the projects. It was suggested that Dave Pisarski attend a future BAG meeting and discuss this topic with the BAG.

**Adjourn**

Gary Marquardt made a motion to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by Laurie Stone. The meeting was adjourned by Matt Woodard at 2:15 p.m.

Matt Woodard  
Chairman

10/3/2012  
Date of Approval