

## **PBAC CAG** meeting of October 12, 2006

### **Attendance:**

Members present:

Michael Echanove	Ben McLuen
Jim Mital	Jerry Fairley
Joe Spoonemore	Earl Bennett
Helen Harrington, IDWR, ex-officio	
Keith Stoffel, DOE, ex-officio	

Members Excused:

Kirk O'Reilly

Members Absent:

Dan Boone	Bill Brock
George Grader	

Guests:

Steve Robischon, PBAC	Mark Storey, PBAC
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### **Approval of minutes:**

The minutes were approved as corrected.

### **PBAC Report & Update** (September 14 meeting): by Steve Robischon.

- PBAC agreed to keep the technical member position open, but leave it in tact in case of a future need or more interest in the position.
- Dale Ralston summarized the IDWR project, where four new monitoring wells were completed. The project was generally deemed as a successful project.

### **Open Forum:**

Jerry Fairley reported that he had presented the Hydro-Geologic Characterization Report to the Latah County Commissioners on October 11, 2006. Fairly stated that the study basically showed the Wanapum basalt is not recharging from Moscow Mountain. Recharge is essentially hampered by a unit of clay overlying the basalt layer. The study further shows that the top of the basalt material is of low permeability. There is a Hypothesis that recharge may be occurring more toward the middle of the basin, as the basalt rock is nearer to the ground surface there. The report is linked to the PBAC website, including a summary page. Fairly also suggested that future research should include things such as testing for caffeine in shallow wells, or monitoring near the park or farm to look for recharge via stream gauge data.

Earl Bennett reported on the water summit held in Moscow. This year's summit was not as well attended as last year's, but appeared more focused on the area's issues. The afternoon session included seven breakout groups, five of which decided to continue to meet throughout the coming year. Overall the water summit was deemed a success. One

of Bennett's conclusions was that most people don't know what the CAG is for. It is his belief that the CAG needs to be more accessible and more widely known to the public in the future. The PowerPoint presentations are posted to the PWCN website. There is also currently a big push for surface water storage studies, which appear to be gaining popularity over time. They will likely become more popular yet over the next year.

Jerry Fairley suggested that Fritz Fiedler be considered as a possible addition to the CAG. After discussion, the CAG decided not to ask Mr. Fiedler to serve on the CAG.

### **Business:**

Michael Echanove examined the proposal summary for a large scope study of the Palouse Basin. After much discussion, Michael made the suggestion that either CAG develop a full scope, or that PBAC develop a full scope for a large research project for the basin. Michael stated that the only way to get PBAC on target to understand the basin's needs is to conduct a large scale multimillion dollar research project. There was a great deal of discussion about what would be involved in a project that large, and who would serve PBAC in the technical advisory role. Fairly suggested that it is more important to understand the relative importance of issues so that we can prioritize research, rather than to just have a large database of the facts. He also stated that WOW will be doing just this over the next year or so, by ranking the level of importance of all of the uncertainties with respect to the basin. He suggested that PBAC approach WOW and let them know that they will back WOW with a plan for funding, specifically for federally earmarked funds. A motion was made to write a letter to PBAC letting them know that the CAG supports initiating a dialogue with WOW to find out how they can be of mutual benefit on basin studies. The CAG agreed by consensus to let Michael Echanove write a letter to PBAC regarding this issue

Keith Stoffel suggested that either CAG or PBAC write a proposal to submit to Washington state elected officials, in an effort to obtain funding to collect, synthesize and characterize all existing hydrogeologic and water use data from the Pullman-Moscow basin, and to publish that data in a summary document. This proposal should include definite deadlines and deliverables. It should include a compilation of existing work, synthesis of the data, a summary of unknowns, and a prioritized list of work that needs to be accomplished in the future to fully characterize the hydrogeology of the Pullman-Moscow basin, as well as to support wise water management decisions. Keith stated it is possible that funding for this effort could come by either earmarking a portion of Ecology's hydrogeologic investigations funding that is included in the agency's proposed FY 07-09 budget, or by asking Washington state elected officials (Representative Buri and Senator Schoesler) to propose specific funding for the study during the upcoming Washington legislative session. He also stated, however, that PBAC probably cannot be the recipient of the funds to conduct the study. Instead, he suggested that the money may be routed through one of the PBAC entities, such as Pullman, Whitman County, or through the Water Resources Research group at Washington State University. Jerry Fairley suggested that the group identify a possible project manager to set up the scope and detail the proposal for the Ecology money. Jerry also said that he would unofficially

approach Joan Woo at Washington State University about working on a proposal for the money.

Keith Stoffel reported that he met with Washington State Representative David Buri and talked about the potential for future funding of studies in the Palouse basin. Keith suggested that the CAG invite David Buri and Senator Schoesler to the December meeting, to present them the project proposal for them to advance during the Washington legislative session that begins in January 2007. Helen Harrington suggested that we use a proposal to further leverage the Idaho legislator (Senator Schroeder) for additional Idaho funds, and possibly even federal funds.

It was moved by Michael that the December meeting be moved up to December 7. It was approved by the group.

Next meeting is scheduled for November 9.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00 p.m.