

Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee (PBAC) – Citizens Advisory Group (CAG)
Meeting of February 21, 2008

Introductions:

Attendance:

Name	Representing	Present	Excused	Absent
Michael Echanove, Chair	Municipal Provider - WA	X		
Vacant	Municipal Provider – ID			
Dr. George Grader	Petitioning Group	X		
Dr. Jerry Fairley	Petitioning Group	X		
Dr. Jim Mital	Water Conservation Group	X		
Joe Spoonmore	Rural Interests – WA		X	
Vacant	Rural Interests – ID			
Dan Boone	Developer/Business – WA	X		
Mark Loaiza	Developer/Business - ID	X		
Vacant	Technical Representative			
Ree Brannon	Other	X		
Dr. Bill French	Other	X		
Keith Stoffel	WSDOE, ex-officio		X	
Ken Neilly	IDWR, ex-officio	Phone		

Guests:

Wayne Krause, Moscow City Council
 Fritz Fiedler, U. of I. - WOW
 Julie Titone
 Allyson Beal, U. of I. - WOW
 Steve Robischon, PBAC
 Mark Storey
 David Hall

Approval of minutes:

The January 10, 2008 minutes were approved as amended to reflect minor corrections.

Idaho DWR Report – Ken Neilly. (by phone)

- Ken does not have anything new to report regarding the Palouse Basin. Ken is talking to representatives of the Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer currently. Ken said a short letter to IDWR Director Tuthill might help the proposed funding of Idaho aquifers studies, currently being considered by the governor.

PBAC Report & Update (Steve Robischon): The last PBAC meeting was held in about 2 hours ago.

- Discussed a new “Participatory Modeling Project” to be facilitated by Allyson Beall. The project will begin sometime in March and is being support by Waters of the West (WOW) at the University of Idaho. Participation by some of the CAG members is encouraged by PBAC. See additional discussion below under “presentation”.
- PBAC reviewed the 2007 Pumping and Water level data collected by the PBAC entities.
- Walter Steed discussed the Moscow-Hawkins water supply agreement. There was some discussion about the agreement representing a net water savings to the Palouse Basin. Bill French asked about whether the water rights would be retired or relinquished once the development hooks up to Moscow’s water system. Wayne Krauss confirmed that the water rights purchased by the Hawkins Group would be retired, and not be available for future acquisition and transfer. French said it would have been nice to make sure the retirement is in writing. Wayne also discussed the fact that the Hawkins water will increase the Moscow’s pumping quantity by about 2%, which exceeds the targets set forth in the 1992 Ground Water Management Plan.
- A research proposal was considered for future Grande Ronde Aquifer Monitoring and Testing (which is a continuation of current work).

Washington DOE Report– Keith Stoffel (not present)

Conservancy Board Report - Joe Spoonemore (not present)

Presentation: Fritz Fiedler and Allyson Beall of the U. of I. program, Waters of the West.

- “Participatory Decision Support using System Dynamics”
- WOW is proposing a pilot project on the Palouse Basin.
- Funding for the pilot project is coming from the internal University of Idaho WOW initiative.
- If the pilot project is successful, WOW will seek additional funding to complete a full sized modeling project for the basin. The pilot will take about 6 months. A “future” full modeling project may take 18 months or more.
- The pilot project will start as soon as feasible, and will entail monthly meetings by a group of volunteer “stakeholders”.
- Robischon relayed PBAC’s position that they would like to encourage CAG to participate in the pilot project. Steve will coordinate and set the first meeting for sometime in March.
- Michael Echanove asked for a motion to participate in the project. Motion by Mark Loaiza to participate, second by George Grader. Motion passed unanimously. CAG will seek participants from its membership.
- At the time of discussion, CAG volunteers included Michael Echanove, Jim Mital, Julie Titone, Mark Loaiza, Ree Brannon, and George Grader.

Goal Setting Session for 2008 (lead by Michael Echanove):

- Motion by Jerry Fairley and seconded by Ree Brannon for a vote of confidence in Michael Echanove to retain chairmanship of the Citizens Advisory Committee. There was a great deal of discussion regarding Michaels’ competent leadership. The motion was approved unanimously to retain Michael as Chair.

- Michael is continuing his discussions with Evan Sheffels, and is continuing to push for assistance from the Washington Department of Ecology. Evan is still thinking there may be additional DOE funding once the legislature is out. We have the projects in mind and just need to continue efforts to secure future research funding.
- Mark Loaiza suggests that we need to press for the north Idaho adjudication process. This would be especially important if the Rathdrum and Bonner County people keep delaying their approval of the process in their area. Ree reinforced this issue.
- Jerry Fairley would like us to step up our efforts to engage the local and state government representatives in solving our aquifer issues. We need to try to engage the Pullman people to become more involved in solving our ground water issues. It appears the Moscow people are more engaged at this time.
- Jim Mital would like to look more at conservation strategies and education programs in conjunction with development. This would require a closer look at sustainable growth.
- Ree Brannon said we need to spend a little more time on public outreach. She suggests that the CAG could play a key role in the outreach and education of the community. Jim added that this is especially true of the student population and student housing areas.
- One question raised is “is there a way to reach the owners and managers of the lower priced rental unit areas around town”, to reduce water waste. Mark suggests that it will be nearly impossible to reach renters. We need to target the owners instead. Fairley suggests we look at developing “water savings” credits to developers of new units, if they help upgrade the units which don’t currently use water savings devices. This concept was advanced at the water summit a couple of years ago by the gentleman from Santa Fe, NM. Mark said the only problem is that the proposal would make the process of development that much more difficult and expensive. Also, the City cost (in permit fees, water hook-up fees, etc.) and process will possibly kill some future development. Moscow permits and fees are currently around \$10,000 per single family home. Jerry Fairley suggests that even though costs will go up, it represents an investment in the community. The down side is the effect on “affordable” housing.
- Ree thinks these are all creative ways to get costs and benefits into the model proposed by WOW. These are examples of social reaction to differing ways of investing in our water supply.
- Bill French suggests that we need to examine the effects of growth on our infrastructure and financial systems. Are we at a point of using all of our resources because all of our financial models are based on unlimited growth? We need this to be reflected in the model. We need to be responsible to future generations.
- Michael wants to resume the discussions regarding conservation. He wants a multi-jurisdictional, regional approach to conservation. Jim Mital says the Forest Service has taken an approach to regional weed management through districts. This has worked across different areas, and may work in our region regarding water supply across political boundaries. Mark Loaiza says we may want to break down the approach into smaller areas, and then tackle them one at a time across the region. An example might be to focus on low flow toilets in the region first, then move on to the next priority. Julie thinks we need to develop a conservation priority list.
- Bill French says the water summit group is talking about forming a regional water authority that would have influence across the state line.

- Mark Loaiza suggests we start a letter to the editor campaign in the CAG. We should continue to submit to the papers regularly, informing people of the water issues.

Open Forum Discussion:

- Bill French announced his resignation from the CAG. Bill intends to continue to serve as backup for either Julie Titone or Jerry Fairley. His proposed replacement is Julie Titone, who lives in Pullman, and works for WSU. She has an extensive background in journalism. She is a member of the Palouse Water Conservation Network. Julie has spent a great deal of time following our local water issues, and wants to get more people involved in water issues, especially in the Pullman area. Motion by Jim Mital and seconded by Jerry Fairley to accept Bills resignation and forwarding Julies nomination on to PBAC for her membership. Motion was adopted unanimously.
- Steve offered up the conservation portion of the newly completed Pullman Water System Plan. These were extra copies, available for anyone who wants to review it.

Next Meeting: March 27, 6pm, at the Jacks Creek Room, U of I Facilities.

Agenda Items: Conservation, membership, leadership.

Adjourned at 8:07 pm.