

**Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee**  
**Citizens Advisory Group**  
University of Idaho – Facilities  
Meeting minutes for November 11, 2010

Chair Julie Titone called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

Present:

Dan Boone, George Grader, Michael Echanove, Julie Titone (CAG members)

Steve Robischon (PBAC staff)

Robin Nimmer (guest speaker)

David Hall (guest)

CAG members not present: Ree Brannon, Mark Loaiza, Jim Mital, Jerry P. Fairley, Susan Wilson, Joe Spoonemore

Julie noted that Ree had sent a letter of resignation from CAG this week. Mark and Susan sent regrets that they could not attend.

New Business

The meeting opened with a presentation by Robin Nimmer of TerraGraphics Environmental Engineering, who discussed the draft version of the PBAC Ground Water Framework Project. The goal of the project was to compile, review and evaluate scientific findings related to the Palouse aquifers. Among the highlights of Robin's comments:

The project involved these tasks: administration, compilation, synthesis, data gap evaluation, conclusion and recommendations.

It refers to the Wanapum as the "Upper Aquifer" and to the Grande Ronde as the "Lower Aquifer."

Robin and Dale Ralston of TerraGraphics reviewed 339 documents from a variety of sources, including universities and local libraries. "Documents" ranged from theses to PowerPoint presentations to videos. Hard copies of documents were scanned. A tracking sheet was created to log all documents. The resulting database summarizes, source, original v. non-original research, quality (primary source or not), etc. All of this was put into a searchable database that has 237 key words. The database will be updated annually and be available to anyone.

TerraGraphics looked for gaps in data relating to mass water level measurements and surface-ground water interaction. They identified 37 wells from which to get water level data. They were able to actually get measurements from 15 wells.

Gaps in data were identified and listed as high, medium and low priority for filling. Highest priority was given to the Moscow-Pullman area where most pumping is done.

Conclusions include: Lack of clear definition of the western boundary of the Palouse Basin; lack of accurate water balances for the aquifers (amount of water going in and out).

Draft recommendations include: Investigate area along South Fork of the Palouse River just downstream of Pullman, for its potential as an aquifer recharge area; maximize pumping in the Upper Aquifer to preserve Lower Aquifer; install new monitoring wells at WSU's Knot Dairy Farm, within Wilbur Creek and Union Flat Creek Valleys; evaluate the list of data gaps as a guide to producing future student studies.

Steve said the draft Framework report has been sent to the Washington Department of Ecology, Palouse Conservation District and PBAC. A PBAC steering committee is reviewing the draft, as are major scientists. Anyone wishing to review copies the draft can contact Steve. Comments must be submitted soon. The final report, due to Ecology by the end of January, will include an executive summary.

George noted that CAG was an early supporter of the Framework Project. "It was on our lips in 2003." Michael commented that CAG should "raise the flag about how important the Framework Project is."

Julie thanked Robin for her presentation.

#### Old business

The September meeting minutes were approved by all members present, plus Susan Wilson, who submitted her vote via e-mail.

#### New business

There was brief discussion of CAG's history, and how it arose from discontent with PBAC direction; what its role should be going forward, and whether it is floundering. Does PBAC know what it wants from CAG? Julie asked if there might be more communication between PBAC and CAG after each meeting, more guidance for PBAC about what advice the committee would like from the advisory committee. Julie said she expected to be able to attend the next PBAC meeting.

The next CAG meeting date was set for Dec. 9, 2010.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.

Notes by Julie Titone