Water Exchange Collaborative
Agricultural sub-group meeting
October 6th in Picabo
Attendants: Bill Simon, Bill Hazen, Lynn Harmon, Mark Davidson, Pat Purdy, Jerry Bashaw, Brett Stevenson, Justin Stevenson, John Stevenson, Keri York, Dayna Gross, Carl Pendleton, Kristy Molyneux, Donna Pence, Rob Struthers

Objectives:

- Start formulating a list and cost of infrastructure projects below Magic and in the Bellevue Triangle, and prioritize projects for funding
- These projects would reduce demand on the Big and Little Wood Rivers

Dietrich 702 Project

- Two major projects already completed, but not connected to Milner/Gooding (need pumping station to tie into)
- If Dietrich 702 completed, would need 2 additional miles of pipeline to tie into Milner/Gooding and another pumping station
- Would increase 5-7 days of irrigation in whole system (~3,500 acres)
- Scoping already completed, but cost may increase if tie into Milner/Gooding; included in RCPP application but no funding secured yet

Milner/Gooding Canal

- At split in Shoshone, ½ is delivered to Gooding and ½ is delivered to north Shoshone
- Current leakage is ~100-150 acre-feet
- Would need to expand to increase capacity – if looking at increasing water delivery during current irrigation season; could potentially increase delivery when not at full capacity (spring and fall)
- Piping cost/mile would be very expensive
- Could add pumping station to deliver to 4 Bothers Dairy (~1,000 acres); currently difficult to deliver BWCC water to because of high loss in system
- Projects to substitute water from Milner/Gooding to Little Wood users would injure fishery; as attempted last year

Fallowing projects

- Need to look at fallowing acres where we can do agreements not to divert
- Irrigated land in Shoshone and Bellevue Triangle ~7,000/acre or more

Shepherding agreements

- Should we look at delivery flow targets again and how to accomplish? Need policy changes to accomplish
- May have flexibility for shepherding agreements with BWCC because shares get moved around

Bellevue Triangle Recharge Projects

- Need to identify recharge points and available water
- How to shepherd water from Galena GWD to recharge points (if available)?
- Need to understand which recharge points produce best results and timing – how to create recharge projects so that water is available later in the season

- How would spring recharge projects impact the aquifer?

Other ideas

- Farmers need to look at using crop insurance more effectively and make decisions that are more predictable; need to make decisions in February/March
- Better to irrigate 80% of crop area well than decreasing water on 100% of crop area – Bill Hazen research with BWCC