

Wood River Water Collaborative subcommittee and other updates: April – May, 2017

NRCS Subcommittee meeting notes by Keri York: The group discussed the need to communicate more in depth and more frequently with the NRCS to understand the snow forecasting and how to use that information to predict water supply. The state NRCS can help with these analyses if they come through the local field office. There is interest in developing a framework similar to what is available in reservoir systems. This information could help with water management for crops and planting decisions.

We also discussed recharge projects in the SVGWD and the need to help monitor wells that will provide data for our collaborative efforts. To address mapping needs, it would help to have a map of the delivery water system for each farm, that is not shown on the ditches and canals layer. This will help us better understand how water is distributed throughout the system.

Water call update by Peter Anderson: The first prehearing conference (May 11, 2017) on the water call was limited to discussions regarding procedural issues. The hearing is set for February, 2018 which allows for discovery (fact finding) by all parties. Motions for dismissal have been filed and decisions on these motions could issue this summer. Those decisions might be appealable to the District Court.

County and Flooding Update by Mark Davidson: There have been a number of emergency stream alteration permits issued to protect property and infrastructure. The county is continuing to monitor the situation and respond as necessary to problem areas. Information is being updated frequently on the following website, <http://www.co.blaine.id.us/>. The website provides information on how to receive assistance for flooding, stream alteration permits, river information, and more. Check the site frequently for updated information. There will be opportunities for the WRWC to help the county shape its policies regarding floodplain management and river restoration activities once the flooding has abated.

In anticipation of the high flows this year the south valley groundwater district and district 45 has ramped up diversion as much as possible to help alleviate high flows. At the agriculture sub-committee participants agreed that additional water management infrastructure is needed to better gage recharge efforts.

Wood River Valley Ground Water Flow Model meeting by Patti Lousen: IDWR hosted a meeting on May 24, 2017 updating the group on model. Current model information comes from data from 1995-2010 and is sporadic both spatially and temporally. IDWR will be incorporating data from 2010-2014 to improve transient model forecasting. With more data points they will have more confidence to determine seasonal water availability more accurately. They are currently receiving data from 44 wells. 25 have transducers and record data 2x/day. 19 are hand measured and recorded 2x/year. They anticipate Model 1.1 will be finished and calibrated in early 2018.

Upcoming:

This summer, the NGO's will be working with the SVGWD to map the surface water delivery system and recharge areas. This information will help inform recharge opportunities in the coming years and allow for better management of surface water.

