

## **WR Water Collaborative**

Meeting summary: January 25, 2016  
The Nature Conservancy Office, Hailey

**Present:** Carl Pendleton, Brett Stevenson, Pat McMahon, Mark Davidson, Kristy Molyneux, Keri York, Dayna Gross, Chad Chorney, Pepin Corso-Harris, Greg Loomis, Judd McMahan, Larry Schoen, Lynn Harmon, Justin Stevenson, Mariel Platt, Rusty Kramer, David Sias. and Patti Lousen

**Phone Callers:** Peter Anderson, Wendy Pabich, Kevin Lakey, Dani Mazzotta and Doug Megargle

**Meeting Overview:** Miscellaneous updates, Galena GWD 2015 water use review, term sheet group forming and next steps for the collaborative.

**Meeting specifics:** Underlining in following section denotes action item.

### **Miscellaneous updates**

-Peter Anderson discussed the USGS grant opportunity with Sean Vincent (project manager for the groundwater flow model). Jim Bartolino (USGS hydrologist) told Sean that this was an extremely competitive internal grant within US Geological Survey and didn't feel there was opportunity to be funded for modeling needs.

-The Landon Group is interested in returning for more climate planning work in the WR watershed further using John Stevenson's three year climate model for our region.

-Anna Pakenham, PhD candidate from Oregon State approached our group to use a survey to characterize the community understanding, opportunities, solutions and challenges associated with water issues. Patti will ask for further clarification on her goals and how the results would help the community. The group was mixed about this survey and yet generally felt that all tools for identifying missing information and bridging diverse needs could help. NGO's will work with Anna to formulate a survey that meets our needs for sending out to diverse community members.

-The County Commissioners are looking for input on the Blaine County Local Public Interest Water Policy to help guide our community with water right transfers, potential ordinances, and water applications that could affect the public interest. There will be a meeting in February regarding this policy to take comment. Individuals can comment before or after the meeting. Please send comments to Larry Schoen.

### **Projects and grants**

-The Water Resource Board (WRB) awarded two grants for municipal level water conservation in the Wood River valley. Sun Valley Water and Sewer District received ~ \$12,000 and the City of Hailey was awarded \$18,000. The deadline for municipal water conservation grants has been extended to April 15, 2016 as the Water Resource Board had set aside \$200,000 and the above two grants were the only applications received.

-Dayna Gross shared a spreadsheet (see attached for criteria information) for compiling various water conservation projects that will be prioritized for funding, timelines, water savings, and cost benefit. A list of projects could help ground water users provide solutions for obligations of a future term sheet agreement. These projects could be confidential or shared; in the future, these projects would become public. Please contact Dayna, Keri or Patti for more information or to get NGO help with potential projects, water rights for sale and or lease.

-Patti Lousen discussed the opportunity for all users to collectively apply for a large Bureau of Reclamation Water Smart Grant of \$1,000,000. These grants are typically at a 50% matching level. This would be a watershed-wide grant proposal that the NGO's would help facilitate to

combine agricultural, municipal, HOA and other projects under one application (likely to be housed under Water District 37). The NGO's will reach out to discover interest to determine if this is an appropriate step forward.

-Keri York proposed applying for Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) grants which funds projects that are concentrated with multiple agencies and overlapping water conservation goals. This involves working with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the state and other agencies.

It was decided that the projects list would be used to identify two different lists (Dayna): One that would be easier to implement and fund, and a second list which requires technical expertise of hydrologists, engineers and grant writers.

#### **Galena Groundwater District (GGWD) water use**

Using information collected by Sun Valley Water and Sewer District and Kevin Lakey, Pat McMahon characterized the overall water demand in the Galena GWD (water use, not water rights). 2014 water use was 11,680 Acre Feet and 2015 use was 13,209 Acre Feet . The district now has metering on approximately 85% of the estimated volume (50-60 smaller users need to be metered). With 2015 being a low surface water year, the ground water totals probably represent a high use year. Within the district 60% of the use is municipal (includes many of the communal well subdivisions: Hulen Meadows, Golden Eagle, Heatherlands, etc). See attachment for GGWD water use information and contact Pat for questions.

#### **Next Steps for the Collaborative**

Carl Pendleton shared that a small work group has formed to begin discussing possible scenarios to be considered related to a settlement agreement to the ongoing water calls in the basin. This group consists of members of the Wood River Water Collaborative including: Pete Van Der Meulen (water board), Michelle Stennett (Senator), Brian Patton (IDWR), Rod Hubsmith (Little Wood surface water user), Carl Pendleton (BWCC), Kevin Lakey (water master), Sharon Lee (Galena GW District), Pat McMahon (Galena GW District), and Mark Davidson (TNC). This group is focused on building off the foundation of the Big Wood River term sheet initially drafted and agreed to by the full collaborative. They are intending to meet again early in March to further conversations among the varied interests represented in the group and identify possibilities for resolution to the water calls. Anything drafted by this group will be shared with the full Wood River Water Collaborative in order to refine aspects of a future term sheet and gain broad support for specific outcomes related to a settlement agreement.

#### **Other steps agreed to by the collaborative:**

- Continue with water conservation and efficiency project identification
- Quantify data and water conservation for cost benefit and prioritization
- Have a small group create a framework for a term sheet using the larger collaborative for ground truthing, information gaps, support and future endorsement of said term sheet.
- NGO's and Brett Stevenson will work with Anna Pakenham survey to discover data, confidence, and understanding gaps of the community. Distribute via the collaborative to the larger Wood River community when appropriate.

**Next Meeting – to be announced, targeting March or April.**