

**Wood River Water Collaborative**  
 Meeting summary: August 27, 2015  
 The Nature Conservancy Office, Hailey

Present: Kevin Lakey, Pete VanderMeulen, Remington Buyer, Wendy Pabich, David Sias, Judd McMahan, Mike McDonald, Matt Engel, Pat Purdy, Pippin Corso-Harris, Rod Hubsmith, Carl Pendleton, Andrew Bushnell, Nina Jonas, Justin Stevenson, Pat McMahan, Mark Davidson, Kristy Molyneux, Donna Pence, Carl Pendleton, Keri York, Dayna Gross, Michelle Stennett, Mariel Platt and Patti Lousen

Phone Callers: Marie Kellner, Peter Anderson, Lynn Harmon and Neeley Miller

Meeting Overview: The water usage and needs of specific interest groups (municipal, homeowner associations, conservation, small agriculture, Galena ground water district) was the initial focus. Subcommittees were deemed necessary to expedite the efficiency for the large group meetings and Remington Buyer (IDWR) concluded the meeting discussing the Interim GW Rental Policy.

Specifics:

Pat McMahan compared the Galena GWD (GGWD) water usage against the total water rights on file with IDWR. This data was broken down into major groups (see below) using Kevin’s 2014 water usage for the GGWD. The supply data comes from IDWR’s water rights list for the GGWD.

Galena Ground Water District 2014 Usage Summary			
<b>USAGE</b>		Acre feet	
Total reported usage (Lakey)		12,535.15	
Estimated annual usage (Lakey)		14,000.00	
All municipal		6,965.00	49.75%
HOA		990.00	7.07%
Agriculture		1,830.00	13.07%
Estate/other		4,215.00	30.11%
<b>WATER RIGHT - IDWR</b>		CFS	
<b>Total Right CFS (Supply)</b>		231.67	
All municipal		65.28	28.18%
HOA		18.59	8.03%
Agriculture		39.19	16.92%
Estate/other		108.63	46.89%

There is 25% of GW use that is still not metered (Lakey) and data for the 2015 year will be forthcoming to fill in some of these data gaps. Usage and supply will not match up easily as usage is in acre feet and supply is in cfs. Additionally, some uses are seasonal while others are year round (municipal). Remington Buyer cautioned the group to look at the usage (acre feet) as flow rate (cfs) is a less valuable parameter. Pat will continue to work on breaking down this data for the Muni/HOA/GGWD subcommittee.

Discussion on whether a fragmented or unified mitigation approach illuminated that the State is looking for a “water plan” between the users that resolves the issues and that groups come together under the plan. It has been expressed to us that the state wants to work with users through the umbrella of the ground water districts.

Municipalities identified the following needs as priorities: Domestic/potable use, fire protection, parks, schools, landscaping predictability and future growth opportunities. Cities are not allowed to make money on their utility billing and highlighted:

- Conserving water has financial consequences
- Disconnect between landscapers who don't pay the water bills and the consumer
- Billing has been quarterly so the user is unaware of their monthly use and difficult to effect behavioral changes (Hailey is monthly. Ketchum/Sun Valley are quarterly)
- Cities are limited to 4.9% annual billing increases unless they go through the public hearing process
- Cities are continually working on paying for and predicting future infrastructure
- Each city will be different (like HOA's) in their approach
- Cities differ in how they charge: flat (Bellevue), tiered (Hailey and Ketchum) and per gallon (SV)
- For municipal growth, cities work with IDWR to approve new water rights based on reasonable and accepted growth estimates
- City growth does not necessarily increase consumptive water use. The Treasure Valley Comprehensive Aquifer Management Plan found that frequently agriculture is taken out of production and conversions are implemented (Peter Anderson).

The need to work within subcommittees was discussed to expedite needs and solutions so that the large group meetings could move more quickly. Separate meetings have been scheduled to address this with three large groups identified: Agriculture, Conservation and Muni/HOA/GGWD/Recreation. These subcommittees might break down into smaller sub-groups.

Remington Buyer (Coordinator , Water Supply Bank) notified the group that the Water Supply Bank is taking public comment until September 18, 2015 on the Interim Ground Water Rental Policy for the WR Valley. This policy identifies zones where rental water can be leased easily so long as it stays within a zone. If transferred between zones a hydrologic study would most likely be required. The policy is being proposed to be extended for another year while the model is finished. Currently, all ground water

rentals out of the bank for the WR Valley are for a one year period versus the typical five year lease period in the rest of the state. Rental agreements can be reduced or cancelled if the bank changes its policy after one year. This notice was short and he mentioned asking for an extension for the comment period was possible on an individual basis.

Miscellaneous: Pete Vandermeulen noted that we are over-adjudicated now and in the future and that Magic/BWCC cannot serve their area as water needs are typically met only three out of 10 years. We should start working with our legislators to appropriate federal funding to be matched by state funding to bring water in from the Snake River system via the Milner Gooding canal. This would take pressure off of the upper part of the basin.

Next meeting: **Tuesday, September 29 at 10 am – 12 noon** (we will not take 2 hours if not needed)

Location: The Nature Conservancy office Hailey, Idaho, 116 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue North

Call in number: 866-385-9623 code 6239780454