

MID SNAKE WATERSHED ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting Minutes

Department of Environmental Quality
650 Addison Avenue West, Suite 110, Twin Falls, Idaho
Wednesday, January 20, 2016, 2:00 p.m.

Attendees

David Anderson – DEQ, Twin Falls Regional Office
Jason Brown – City of Twin Falls
Sonny Buhidar – DEQ, Twin Falls Regional Office
Jaquelin Fields – City of Twin Falls
Gary Fornshell – University of Idaho
Shell Howard – DEQ, Twin Falls Regional Office
Randy MacMillan – Clear Springs Food
Gary Marquardt – SeaPac of Idaho
Andy Morton – Clear Springs Food
Richard Parrott – Salmon Track Farmer
Sue Switzer – DEQ, Twin Falls Regional Office
Craig Thomas – DEQ, Twin Falls Regional Office
Mike Trabert – Chairman
Jeff Williams – Rancher
Rob Wright – City of Kimberly
Jim Younk - Idaho Power
Louis Zamora – Twin Falls Canal Company

Welcome

The meeting was convened at 2 p.m. Mike Trabert, WAG chairman, lead the meeting. The attendees introduced themselves. It was noted that the meeting is being recorded.

There is a change in the agenda. Ryan Fosness of USGS was unable to attend the meeting, so his presentation will be skipped.

WAG Business

- Minutes for the August 12, 2015 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Andy Morton to accept the minutes of the August 12 meeting as written. The motion was seconded and approved. The minutes for the November 12, 2015 meeting were also reviewed. A motion was made by Randy MacMillan to accept the minutes of the November 12 meeting as written. The motion was seconded and the minutes approved.

- It was agreed that there will not be a WAG meeting in February. The next meeting will be May 11. The USGS presentation on bathymetric mapping, sediment coring and seismic surveys will be scheduled for the next meeting.

Pertaining to the next meeting, Andy Morton requested a presentation from DEQ on the study DEQ conducted that is referenced in the 2012 Integrated Report as discussed in the November 12 meeting. Sue gave an update of her conversation with the DEQ State Office. That study was done to develop numeric criteria on nutrients. There is not a draft document yet. They are considering doing a second contract with Tetra Tech for further research. Randy suggested that the WAG see a draft report first and then receive a presentation and discussion. Sue will try to coordinate it.

City of Twin Falls NPDES – change in Phosphorus Limits

The City of Twin Falls was up for renewal of the NPDES permit in 2014; the application was submitted in April. Jason Brown presented an overview of the NPDES permit renewal process the City of Twin Falls has undertaken. In October 2015, EPA provided a general outline of a compliance schedule: 9 years and 11 months to comply with a new phosphorus limit of .075 mg/l. This is approximately a 98% reduction of phosphorus going to the river. This is a substantial reduction that took the City off guard. They are concerned about what the outcome could be for the watershed, and they feel this has a broader reach than just the City of Twin Falls.

The City has several concerns that they wanted to bring up for discussion before the WAG:

- EPA has not defined what legal basis they have for such a substantial reduction in the allocation.
- How does mixing come into it? How does seasonal variation come into play?
- What defines a nuisance?
- The data is starting to become outdated and things have changed over the course of time.

There was much discussion among WAG members on these topics. There was also discussion comparing other states and other point sources in Idaho, specifically Boise. There was concern as to EPA's decision process, the implications this might have for all point sources on the Snake River, and whether the TMDL would be opened.

City Of Twin Falls will be meeting with EPA on February 11. The City wanted to get this information out to the WAG and get some support and feedback. At some point, they might ask the WAG to support additional data collection.

DEQ update

An agenda to the Water Quality Workshops was handed out. The meeting is at BSU the first week in February. WAG members were encouraged to attend.

Adjourn

Following a motion and second, the meeting was adjourned by Mike Trabert at approximately 3:55 p.m.



WAG Chairman



Approval Date

