

# SOUTHWEST BASIN ADVISORY GROUP

Meeting Minutes  
January, 16, 2013

**BAG Members Present:** Jim Moyer, Sandra Mitchell, Robbin Finch, Dick Rogers, Ralph Meyers (alternate), Herb Malany, Tom Pence

**Attendees:** Lance Holloway, Julia Achabal, Josh Schultz, Troy Smith, Lauri Monnot, Hawk Stone, Nicole Deinarowicz, Michael McIntyre

Meeting was called to order by Chairman, Jim Moyer at 8:45 a.m.

Meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.

## **Integrated Report Update – Michael McIntyre/Nicole Deinarowicz**

Prelude: Every two years DEQ conducts a comprehensive analysis of Idaho's water bodies to determine whether they meet state water quality standards and to determine beneficial use status. This analysis is summarized in the Integrated Report.

Michael delivered a CD of the *Draft* 2012 Integrated Report (IR) to attending BAG members. Recently Michael met with the Lower Boise River WAG and TAG to go over changes in the Southwest Basin. He plans to meet with other WAGS if requested; otherwise they will have an opportunity to comment during the regular public comment period.

The report is expected to go to public comment by March 1, 2013.

The report should be delivered to EPA in April.

The report contains lists showing the classification of all state waters into at least one of five different categories. They are as follows:

- Category 1: Waters of the State Wholly within Designated Wilderness or Inventoried Roadless Area Where Standards are Presumed to be Attained
- Category 2: Waters of the State Attaining Some Standards
- Category 3: Waters of the State with Insufficient Data and Information to Determine if Any Standards are Attained
- Category 4: Waters of the State Impaired for One or More Beneficial Uses but Not Requiring the Development of a Total Maximum Daily Load
  - Category 4a: TMDL completed and approved by EPA.
  - Category 4b: Waters that have pollution control requirements in place, other than a TMDL, and are expected to meet standards within a reasonable period of time.
  - Category 4c: Water bodies impaired by pollution (e.g., flow alteration and habitat alteration) but not pollutants.
- Category 5: Waters of the State for Which a TMDL is Needed
  - \*\*Category 5 used to be called the 303(d) list.

Assessment unit (AU)/cause combinations can be delisted but not without a justification rational.

New AU listings to Category 5 of the 2012 IR cycle include cause and a reason for listing.

Michael passed out a paper listing 4 AUs on the Boise River that are being added to the 2012 IR. All were on the 1998 303(d) list for nutrients. What happened with these AUs?

- One AU: Deletions were made instead of delisting; There was no rationale for removal.
- Three other AUs: Pollutant “unknown” was changed to another pollutant without data to support the change.

EPA has pointed out the errors and asked them to be added back to the list.

**Comment:** Dick Rogers expressed that the IR should account for macrophytes in the reservoirs and rivers. It is important that macrophytes be identified in these reports in order to garner support in funding to address the weed growth problem.

Nicole Deinarowicz asked BAG members to take an opportunity to provide information when DEQ makes the call for data in developing the IR. Photo documentation and other evidence of use impairment are useful in developing the IR.

Additionally, Dick was encouraged to raise the visibility of the macrophyte issue by formally entering complaints to the designated management entities. Photographs are good for documenting the extent of the problem.

### **BURP 2012 – Hawk Stone**

2012 Field Season: Budget cuts limited monitoring to 40 sites.

10 sites on unassessed waters

10 sites to verify the impairment

10 sites not observed in a long time

The field form work was largely improved due to implementation of electronic notebooks.

2009 and 2010 – No assessments, as there was no data collected.

2013 Field Season: Should be much the same as 2012. Plan to focus on sites we haven't visited for a long time.

Field crew training will be held in the Twin Falls area.

### **TMDL Update – Troy Smith**

1. Little Willow Creek (ID17050122SW018\_04 – Indian Creek to the mouth)
  - a. Pollutants are sediment, E. coli, and temperature
  - b. Sediment, E. coli, and temperature data were collected by ISDA in 2007; DEQ collected temperature and E.coli data to verify in 2012 – exceedances found for both.
  - c. Sediment TMDL, 20 mg/L target:
    - i. Similar to LBR tribs, Succor and Bissel Creeks
    - ii. Based on scientific literature and impacts to cold water aquatic life
  - d. Temperature TMDL, Potential Natural Vegetation
    - i. Similar to West Fork King Hill Creek TMDL
  - e. E. coli, Idaho Water Quality Standard, 126 cfu/100 mL
2. Middle Snake River/Succor Creek Tributaries (ID17050103) – sediment is pollutant for all
  - a. Birch Creek (AU021\_03, &\_04) & Vinson Wash (AU023\_03)

- i. Sediment TMDL Target 20 mg/L TSS during critical period (April – September 30)
    - ii. Sediment source likely agricultural runoff
  - b. Hardtrigger Creek (AU008\_02), McBride Creek (AU004\_02 & \_03), & Pickett Creek (AU016\_03)
    - i. Bank stability  $\geq$  80% and lateral recession rates  $\leq$  0.05
    - ii. Year-round targets
3. Lower Boise River Total Phosphorus (ID17050114), Middleton to the mouth, Mason Creek, and Sand Hollow Creek
  - a. Determining local definition of excess nutrients
    - i. LBWC supporting 150 mg/m<sup>2</sup> benthic chlorophyll-a target
  - b. Meeting Snake River-Hells Canyon 70 mg/L TP obligation at the mouth (May 1 – September 30)
  - c. Goal to submit final TMDL to EPA by February 2014

**NPDES Permits Update – *Lauri Monnot***

- 44 NPDES discharges in SW region
  - All but 2 of these permits have expired or are administratively extended
- 9 new certifications since antidegradation rule implemented in mid- 2011
- Antidegradation, impaired water bodies and pollutant trading equity are topics that have resulted in a lot a lot of public comments for permits and 401 certifications
- The office will be busy with 401 certifications of renewed permits

**TMDL Update – *Josh Schultz***

1. Little Salmon River
  - a. East Branch Goose Creek
    - i. E. coli 126 cfu/100MI
  - b. Mud Creek
    - i. Sediment – 80% Bank Stability
2. This is currently at public comment, which closes January 22<sup>nd</sup>. We've received two comments as of yet.
3. Don't anticipate any major holds up. Complete comment response no later than February 19<sup>th</sup>. From this point it will go to the State Office then be submitted to EPA.
4. South Fork Boise
  - a. Smith Creek
    - i. E. coli data ambiguous,
    - ii. Awaiting BURP data on additional Assessment Units with ambiguous data
5. Not high priority. We will likely wait until all the data is in for other listed AU's in this HUC. In the meantime we would like to collect additional E. coli data on Smith Creek to accurately characterize it.

6. North Fork Payette 5 Year Review
  - a. Completed by Leslie and posted to DEQ website
7. Weiser River – 2013
  - a. Possible Potential Natural Vegetation
8. Bruneau River
  - a. Temperature TMDL is being tweaked to include some language for aquiculture facilities and will then be going to public comment.
  - b. Some investigation was put into geothermal influences and WARM biota being considered as an existing use. We may come back to the BAG in the future to have them recommend a use.
  - c. Should go out early 2013.

**BAG Member Interest: Local Government Representative – *Robbin Finch***

Robbin provided the group an update on municipal water quality issues with a focus on monitoring, revisions to beneficial uses, water body assignment to IR categories and programs to improve water quality.

Chairman Moyer thanked everyone for a very informative meeting. He recapped that this group of BAG members can take the opportunity to make records of observations. The group can then formally submit them to DEQ on behalf of the SWBAG.

Dick Rogers echoed the sentiment.

**Motion:** Dick Rogers motioned to get the SWBAG involved observing and recording environmental concerns with the intention of formally submitting them to DEQ. Tom Pence seconded the motion.

Alternates: Each BAG representative was asked to identify an alternate as it is important to fulfill a quorum. If you are unable to attend a meeting please be sure your alternate can be present to fulfill a quorum.

Tom Pence suggested that each BAG representative make sure their alternate is kept up to speed on BAG activities.

Meeting Adjourned