

Laramie County Control Area Steering Committee
Meeting Summary
September 21, 2015
Herschler Building, Cheyenne, WY

Draft for Review

Approved

Participants:

Bill Bonham, *Laramie County Stock Growers*
 Jim Cochran, *LC Conservation District*
 Bill Edwards, *Southeast Wyoming Builders Association*
 Dennis Ellis, *Industry*
 Dan Frank, *Laramie County Stock Growers*
 Greg Gross, *Ag/Irrigators*
 Kristi Hansen, *University of Wyoming*
 Jim Hastings, *Alternate*
 Gary Hickman, *Cheyenne/Laramie County Health*
 Judy Johnstone, *Small municipalities*
 Rick Kaysen, *City of Cheyenne*

Jim Lerwick, *Ag/Irrigators*
 Leslie Mead, *South Cheyenne Community Development Association*
 Kate Noble, *Industry*
 Joe Patterson, *Southeast Wyoming Builders Association*
 Bonnie Reider, *South Cheyenne Community Development Association*
 Lisa Tabke, *Cheyenne Board of Realtors*
 Troy Thompson, *Laramie County Commissioners*
 Tim Wilson, *Cheyenne Board of Public Utilities*
 Scott Zimmerman, *Rocky Mountain Farmers Union*

Facilitators:

Steve Smutko, *UW Ruckelshaus Institute*
 Shannon Glendenning, *UW Ruckelshaus Institute*

Agenda:

1. Welcome; Steering Committee member introductions; Agenda review & approval; Announcements
2. Review and adoption of the 08/31/15 meeting summary
3. Economic Analysis Update
4. Discussion of Groundwater Management Plan Guidance Document Sections 1—3
5. Adjourn

Handouts:

1. 9/21/15 Draft Agenda
2. 8/31/15 meeting summary
3. Map of Laramie County “2060 Management #4 Drawdown Distribution”
4. Map “Figure 1 Order of the State Engineer Laramie County Control Area April 1, 2015”

Action Items Completed:

Letter of support signed for Kristi Hansen’s proposal for an economic analysis of groundwater management in Laramie County.

Summary:

Q=Question R=Response C=Comment

1. Welcome; Steering Committee member introductions; Agenda review & approval; Announcements

Shannon Glendenning opened the meeting and introduced the agenda. Committee members introduced themselves.

Q: Is this group making progress?

Several responded that that group is making progress.

C: We may have set our expectations too high in the beginning, but I think with the management plan guidance document there is great promise that we are making headway.

2. Review and adoption of the 08/31/15 meeting summary

No changes to meeting summary.

3. Economic Analysis update

Kristi Hansen presented an update about a grant to conduct an economic analysis on water management in Laramie County.

She had asked for letters of support from County Commissioners and from this committee and circulated a letter to the Process Subcommittee. The steering committee signed a letter of support of the grant proposal.

Kristi asked for a study advisory committee. A sign-up sheet was circulated to create an advisory committee consisting of the Process Subcommittee and other volunteers from the Steering Committee.

Kristi reported that she will learn whether the proposal is accepted in December with funding provided in March.

4. Discussion of Groundwater Management Plan Guidance Document Sections 1—3

Discussion about each section is summarized by section.

1.2 Background

C: I want to make sure that this plan is forward looking and not reactionary.

C: The law this refers to is not correct, it should be SS41-3-915

1.3.2 Groundwater Management Areas

Comments from Pine Bluffs: Strongly in favor of expanding the Control Area; want to remain adamant about the protection of Lodgepole Creek drainage; do not agree with the AMEC Study.

C: I agree completely with those statements.

C: If we accept that the SEO has identified these drawdown areas, we should use these and then define other areas, such as drainages, as we see need through this process. There is a place for each in this plan. This will become important when we need to address drainages and when we discuss a buyout.

C: I agree. When we talk about needed to define other management area boundaries, beyond what the SEO's Order establishes. The AMEC report is a valuable piece of science that we cannot ignore or brush off. This is the science that we need to rely on.

C: We need a better map to start with. We need drainages (watershed boundaries) and pivots shown on the map.

C: We have to decide whether we are going to make a plan that respects the drainages.

C: Let's respect the work that has been done. We need to marry the AMEC report with the knowledge from people on the ground, who see this day to day. What kind of monitoring wells are out there now?

R: There are 33 monitoring wells in the county, and 18 in the Control Area. We don't use private wells anymore because of the risk of high costs if something fails.

There was a discussion on what criteria should be used to define management areas the list includes:

- Class of use
- Recharge of the area
- Longevity of use in that areas

C (Ross Dahlgren): Something that might help this discussion is Green Zone maps. They have been developed in the Platte River adjudication. They show locations of groundwater and surface water interaction. There is no existing data that can make these maps at this time.

C: It seems like there could be places in this plan for "Section 1.3.3 Drainage management area", And "Section 1.3.4 Green Zone Maps" that show connectivity.

There was a discussion about what a map of management boundaries would look like. It was concluded that using watershed boundaries would establish four areas, and within those areas the drawdown areas, conservation areas, unaffected areas, and underlying areas would be maintained as established by the April 1, 2015 Order. The watershed areas would be: Crow Creek, Lodge Pole Creek, the Albin Area, and Horse Creek.

There was a discussion about what local control looks like.

There was discussion about how the Albin area is isolated and that decisions should lie within the people of the Albin area.

C: You can't do the same with the other areas because of the interactions between surface water and groundwater. You have to work with all the people in that drainage.

Q: Doesn't everyone have to have input because of the language in the statute, that is an action is detrimental to any party non-signatory to the agreement?

C: We need to have people who are affected by water use decisions to be part of a management decision, and that includes the decision-making body.

C: We need to redefine the control area board districts that more accurately reflect physical interaction of water.

R: Those areas are established by the legislature and we can't change the district boundaries.

There was agreement that management areas defined by this committee, or the State Engineer, can overlap the district boundaries. The Advisory Board will need to approve the management plan.

There was discussion about the meaning of local control in the development and implementation of a groundwater management plan for the Control Area. It was generally agreed upon that there needs to be input from groundwater users and appropriators in each of management areas during the development of a plan. It was suggested that the Control Area Advisory Board representation be changed. The Advisory Board was established by statute and is unable to be changed. Additional discussion on public participation is needed.

There was discussion about the role of this group in the development of the plan. It was agreed that this group will define the overarching objectives for the entire Control area that will guide the decisions made by the people in the management areas.

Next Meeting

Date: October 5, 2015

Location: Herschler Building, Room 1699 "Hearing Room," 122 West 25th Street, Cheyenne, WY