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March 4, 2016

Dear Laramie County Control Area Steering Committee Members,

At its February meeting the Board of Control did not approve a proposal to expand the Laramie County Control area westward in a 3-1 vote. Committee members in attendance reported that comments made were indicative of the Board of Control's interest in waiting to make any changes in groundwater policy until monitoring data resulting from requirements in the April 1, 2015 Order are available. In the meantime, in concurrence with the wishes of the Steering Committee, the Laramie County Conservation District (LCCD) has begun meeting with irrigators in the Carpenter area to discuss various options for conserving groundwater in southern Laramie County. Given that the LCCD is beginning its work meeting with local appropriators, plus the Control Board's decision and subsequent discussions at the February 29, 2016 meeting of the Laramie County Control Area Steering Committee, the committee members in attendance agreed to put the committee on hiatus.

Over the past several months the Steering Committee has been working to develop a groundwater management plan for the Laramie County Control Area. These discussions resulted in areas of agreement around dividing the control area into five districts based on the drainages, keeping the April 1, 2015 Order's rules on well spacing with the addition of no new wells that would affect stream flows, and strategies to conduct buyout programs in the control area.

The time, energy, and work that has been spent as a committee can be applied to ongoing and future work in the county around groundwater management. Currently, Laramie County is in the process of developing a Comprehensive Land Use Plan which will include water quantity and quality. Several LCCA committee members sit on the Comprehensive Plan Steering committee where they can incorporate their understanding of groundwater issues in the Control Area and the county into the plan. Additional work has been happening in parallel with the Control Area Committee's work. Appropriators, in coordination with the Laramie Conservation District, have been evaluating their options in developing a watershed improvement district in the Carpenter area.

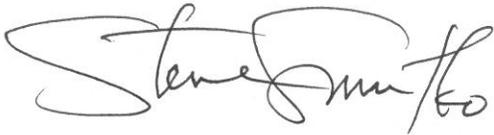
It is likely that the proposed economic analysis will be funded. The study will provide County leaders and residents with information on the economic impact of various groundwater management approaches in Laramie County.

The South Platte River Watershed plan is in early development with a consultant to be hired to write the plan. Scoping meetings will begin to be held in mid-June

to early July. These meetings were suggested to be the next logical time for the Steering Committee to reconvene and assess whether and how to continue.

The Ruckelshaus Institute at the University of Wyoming will continue to serve as a conduit for communication and information for committee members and the interested public. We are committed to seeing this work through should the Committee need our assistance in the future. It has been an honor to have been able to assist the Laramie County Control Area Steering Committee in this important work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Steve Smutko".

Steve Smutko  
Professor, Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Shannon Glendenning".

Shannon Glendenning  
Research Assistant, Haub School of Environment and Natural Resources