

NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE:

*****Afternoon Meeting*** Wednesday, April 15th, 2009, 4:00 PM – 6:00 PM, at Lincoln County Public Works Department in Davenport.**

Minutes from the WRIA 53 Monthly Meeting
LOWER LAKE ROOSEVELT WATERSHED PLANNING UNIT
Lincoln County Public Works
Davenport, WA
March 18th, 2009 10:30 AM – 12:30 PM

IN ATTENDANCE: (19)

Gene St.Godard, WNR Group	Jaime Short, Ecology
Courtney Harder, Lincoln County Planning	Lois Aldrich, Landowner
Scott Hutsell, Landowner	George Livingston, Deer Meadows
Jim DeGraffenreid, Lincoln Co. Planning	Greg Behrens, Columbia Springs
Roger Savage, Campbell Bay Water Users	Eddie Johnson, Landowner
Dennis Maier, Landowner	John Watson, Landowner
Fred Bell, City of Davenport	Molly Reid, GSI Water Solutions
Loren Brown, Whitestone Land Development	Richelle Brown, Resident
Penny Rosenberg, Land Owner/Farm Bureau	Bill Guhlke, Lincoln County Farm Bureau
Rex Harder, Lincoln Co. Water Conservancy Board	

SESSION CALLED TO ORDER:

Gene St.Godard with WNR Group, facilitator for the WRIA 53 Planning Group, opened the meeting at 10:40 AM. Gene thanked the group for attending the monthly Planning Unit meeting for WRIA 53. Gene gave a brief overview of how the meeting would be conducted, and then began the meeting by making sure everyone had a copy of the agenda for the meeting and a copy of the meeting summary from the 2/18/09 PU meeting.

Introduction of Participants

Gene opened the floor for people attending the meeting to introduce themselves and who they were representing. Introductions were made around the room. It appeared there was a diversified group of water users who were attending the meeting. The list of participants is presented above.

MEETING DISCUSSION AND COMMENT:

Review and Acceptance of Minutes

Gene asked the participants to review the 2/18/09 meeting summary and provide any comments and/or corrections. Minor grammatical edits were noted on the Meeting Summary and the group accepted them as corrected. Gene also asked if there were any edits and or comments on the proposed agenda. Hearing no comments, he began the meeting.

Update on Funding from Ecology

Jaime gave an update on the current proposals for funding of watershed planning. It appears the budget will be cut approximately 50% for watershed planning, and future funding looks like it will only be directed towards implementation. Our group is in the assessment phase. Jaime will update the group next month.

Presentation by Gene St.Godard on Water Conservancy Boards and Water Right Transfers

Gene St.Godard, who is a member of the Stevens County Water Conservancy Board, gave a presentation on "Water Changes Through Water Conservancy Boards". Rex Harder, with the local Lincoln County Water Conservancy Board, was also present to answer questions for the Watershed Group. In summary, the following information was provided to the group:

- Local Water Conservancy Boards were authorized by the legislature in 1997
- The Boards were formed to assist the local citizens with an alternative path to for water right transfers
- Currently, 21 counties have water conservancy boards
- In our area, Lincoln, Adams, Spokane, Stevens, and Ferry Counties have boards
- Board Members are appointed by the County Commissioners and serve on the Boards as volunteers
- The Boards are independent of state and local governments
- The primary goal of the Boards is to provide a different path to process water right change applications, in a more timely manner
- The Boards are responsible to provide the same level of review as Ecology

- The Boards provide assistance to Ecology and by reviewing the change applications, conducting an investigations, and providing recommendations to Ecology on the approval of the transfer
- Water rights are of interest to property owners because:
 - They are appurtenant to the land
 - They are a property right
 - If they are not used in 5-years, they are relinquished back to the state and are no longer a value to the property interest
 - Water rights are in demand and, in general, no new water rights are being issued
- The Conservancy Boards can:
 - Process requests to change the place of use, purpose of use, point of withdrawal, and season of use;
 - Place water in trust when the action is associated with one of the above changes (however, it may be easier to do this directly through Ecology);
 - The Board CAN NOT grant new water rights or Increase the authorized amount of existing rights
- Generalized water right change /transfer process is:
 - Applicant files an application
 - Board votes on whether to accept or deny application
 - Upon acceptance, a legal notification is published on transfer, Public has 30 days to comment
 - Board conducts SEPA review, if required and Board investigates the change application
 - Board develops recommendations and prepares ROE/ROD for submission to Ecology
 - Ecology has 45 day review period, with potential for 30-day extension (during this time period, public has another chance to comment on the ROE to Ecology)
 - Decision made on transfer, with a 30 day appeal period

Numerous questions were asked by the Planning Unit to Tex harder and Gene. A very informative discussion was held on water right issues, changes, and transfers. Due to the extensive interest of the Planning Unit members, the time allocation was exceeded. Rex noted to the group that the **Lincoln County Water Conservancy Board meets on the Second Monday of Each Month**, meetings are open to the public and any person can attend to ask questions on water right transfers.

Presentation Molly Reid with GSI on Update to Groundwater Study in WRIA 53

Due to the time constraints, Molly gave a general overview of the results of the water well assessment conducted by GSI for the Level 1 Technical Assessment. GSI has conducted an analysis in the well data base, and has divided out domestic vs irrigation wells. In addition, an estimate of water in the aquifers is being conducted. Geology and hydrogeologic units have been deciphered and graphics are currently being produced. Kevin Lindsey with GSI will be able to give a detailed discussion on the geology, hydrogeology, and well use at next months meeting.

Public Comment

After completion of business, Gene opened the meeting to public comment and discussion. Dean White with the LCCD mentioned that he will be submitting an application for a scholarship to the Lake Roosevelt Forum on behalf of the WRIA 53 Planning Unit. The conference will be held in April. If people would like to attend the meeting using the scholarship, please contact Gene. No other public comment was offered.

Setting of Next Meeting Time

A discussion was held on scheduling the next meeting. It was determined that the next meeting will be scheduled for March 18th, 2009 from 4:00 pm- 6:00 pm. The meeting will be held at Lincoln County Public Works Building in Davenport. The May meeting will be scheduled for May 27th, 2009 from 7 to 9 pm at the Deer Meadows Golf Course.

Actions Completed

Acceptance of January meeting minutes

Actions Needed

- Continue work on Phase 2 Technical Assessment;
- Organize speakers.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 12:50 PM. If you have any questions please call Gene St.Godard at (509) 468-4876 or send an email message to Gene at stgod@comcast.net