

Water District 27
Advisory Board Meeting
March 26, 2008 – 2:00 p.m.
IDWR – Idaho Falls Conference Room

Larry Hinderager, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 2:08 p.m. Those present were: James Cefalo, Wendy Murphy, Harvey Coffman, Neal Powell, Keith Hunsaker, Lyle Swank, Alan Oliver, Leland Miller, Clifford Buckskin, and Patrick Taney.

Lyle Swank provided information on the current water supply. The Snow Water Equivalent of the Willow Creek and Blackfoot area are 96% of average today at five sites. Year-to-date precipitation is 102%. The reservoirs within Water District 1 are currently 56.6% full, with the river flow at Heise of 1200 cfs. Winter releases were 800 cfs, the lowest since 1988. Lyle doesn't currently anticipate flood control operations to occur although it could still be a possibility. The USBR is planning to provide a Freshet release close to the peak runoff; in 2007 this was around Memorial weekend.

The Blackfoot Reservoir was 27% on March 15th with 93,000 acre-feet of the 413,000 acre-feet capacity. This is currently ½ of the fill from 2007. Lyle felt we needed approximately 2-3 good years to fill the reservoir. Tribal water use is approximately 270,000 acre-feet with ½ coming from the Snake River and the other from the Blackfoot River.

James Cefalo indicated the billing was sent out and there were some people who received bills they had not received in the past. Idaho Code §42-612 indicates assessments are based off of water use even though some water users indicated they would like the assessments based on acreage. There was then some discussion regarding the minimum charge and how to define water user. Is it a person, water right, or point of diversion? One person has 6 water rights listing 15 points of diversions, but he claims only 4 are active. Keith Hunsaker said the adjudication located all active POD's with gps. He thinks it is fair. Larry Hinderager moved to approve the process adopted by Water District 1, Neal Powell seconded the motion. And the motion was approved unanimously.

James provided a 2008 measurement plan. Discussion took place regarding the fluctuations from the Fort Hall North Canal and looking at possible solutions to stabilize the water flow. In the past the Fort Hall North Canal of the tribe was measured once a month. A weekly measurement might be better. This diversion has been set between 40-50 cfs. James proposed mailing a bi-weekly water report similar to Water District 1. This could include the Reservoir contents and flows. Alan Oliver indicated he would be able to call in changes. Fort Hall asked if they could be notified by the Stevens Ditch when they shut down for mowing. James also provided a graph of the fluctuations on Sand Creek near the Wolverine Road, and the precipitation in the Shelley area. There is a correlation between Sand Creek flows and the precipitation received in the area.

A draft letter requesting measurement device installation was distributed. James asked the board's opinion regarding the mailing of this letter. He said allowances could be made on a case by case basis, the ASCS or other local programs may be able to assist, and funding may be available through the USBR Water Conservation Matching program. Alan Oliver recommended a three year time frame with the Watermaster as the contact person. Until the adjudication is completed the Steven's Decree is being applied.

Neal Powell asked for a map of the Water District 27 delivery system. Lyle said James has been working on putting it together.

The next board meeting will be towards the end of the season unless one is needed prior to that. The meeting adjourned at 4:34 p.m.