



Water Planning News

The First Basin Plans are Complete

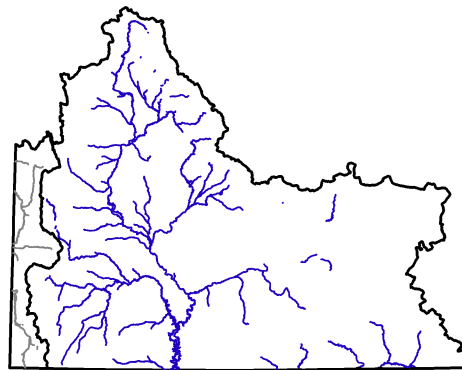


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The draft final River Basin Plans for the Bear and Green Basins were presented to the Basin Advisory Groups in November and January, respectively. The draft final products are currently under review by the Planning Team, and the final reports will be published on the water planning website in the near future. This culminates an 18-month process that has included issues identification, irrigated lands delineation, hydrologic modeling of major streams, current use determinations for all water use categories, future use projections, water development opportunities identification, and related activities. The River Basin Plans will provide an interactive database of water resources information for use by anyone needing decision-making support. This level of detail and ease of access has not been available in Wyoming before now.

The Green and Bear River Basin Advisory groups (BAG's) provided assistance in the development of these plans. The BAG's developed important water resources related issues and reviewed products produced for this project. Upon the conclusion of the plan the role of the basin advisory groups will change. The BAG's will no longer be providing information



only to the Water Development Commission on water planning issues, but will instead be involved in dialogs with many water resources agencies on water related topics important to them and their area. The BAG's will continue to meet three times a year (March, July, November) until it is time to update their basin plan in five years. The first interim Bear River BAG meeting is scheduled for March 19th in the Cokeville Town Hall from 6-9 pm. While the first interim Green River BAG meeting is scheduled for March 20th in Pinedale at the Sublette County Library from 10 am to 4 pm.

The products of the River Basin Planning Process will be available on the Waterplan website: <http://waterplan.state.wy.us> The website will also provide utilities for use in manipulating the databases

located there, and will accommodate users from beginner to advanced abilities. The Water Resources Data System at the University of Wyoming hosts the River Basin Planning website, and will be available to provide assistance in utilization of this data. The county library system in your area will also be able to assist you, as they have recently received state grants to acquire GIS software and training for their staff in its use.

Please visit the Waterplan website in a few months and try out the products of the River Basin Plans. You should find it quite useful.

Special points of interest:

- Open Houses for Proposed Wind-Bighorn and Snake-Salt Basins scheduled.
- Updates from the NE and PT Basins
- Water Resources Data System works to put recently completed Bear and Green products online

Updates From the NE and PT Basins

The Northeast and Powder/Tongue River Basin Plans are moving along at an excellent pace. Both groups are in the middle of issues identification. These basin issues help construct a path for the consultants to follow and will be addressed in the plan. One consulting team was awarded the contract to complete both of the basin plans. The contract is structured very similar for both basins without limiting the flexibility needed to address issues that differ from one basin to the next. Because of the contract structure and the convenience of a single contractor, the tasks simi-

lar to each plan are being worked on simultaneously providing efficiency and consistency. The consultant is represented at each of the bi-monthly BAG meetings, as well as one of the monthly meetings held with the Wyoming Water Development Commission's (WWDC) River Basin Planning Team. These meetings keep both the consultants and WWDC personnel aware of specific basin issues, as well as providing for constant communication between the public, the consultant, and the WWDC.

Since publication of the last newsletter, the consultants

have begun mapping irrigated lands within the plan areas. The Tongue River and Powder River basins are now complete, and the Northeast Wyoming River basins are roughly 40 percent complete. Digitizing of the irrigated lands in the Tongue River and Powder River basins is roughly 75 percent complete.

A compilation of the diversion records for the ditches with headgate capacities greater than or equal to 10 cfs has started, and the consultant has begun coordination with The State Engineer's Office (SEO) Division 3 personnel to gather information necessary

for the development of ditch operation memorandums. The SEO has provided the consultants with surfacewater and groundwater data retrieved from the SEO database. This information will help with attributing irrigated polygons, locating wells and headgates, and this data will be a valuable reference for proofing the consultants' work. All of the aforementioned tasks are being worked on currently.

News from WRDS

WRDS Revamps Water Library Web Site

The Water Resources Data System has a new website for its Water Library. You can conduct an online search in the Water Bibliography, view Water Talk videos, or visit the Picture Gallery. You will find the Water Library website at the following URL:

<http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu/library/library.html>

Statewide Data Inventory Gets a Second Look

The Water Resources Data System and the Wyoming Water Development Commission are committed to maintaining the Statewide Data Inventory and insuring that it remains current. Under the direction of the Wyoming Water Development Commission, the Wyoming Water Resources Center completed a

statewide inventory of water resources data. The inventory was used in the statewide water planning feasibility process to identify and evaluate available resources and estimate costs. The Statewide Data Inventory allows water resource professionals and the general public to access primary data descriptions under specific themes in Wyoming river basins.

You can review the Statewide Data Inventory online at <http://waterplan.state.wy.us/sdi/sdi.html>. If you know of any dataset themes that you think would be appropriate for posting to the Inventory, please contact Robin Gray, Water Resources Data System, (307) 766-6651.

Progress on the Water Plan Web Site

WRDS will maintain all of

the Water Plan products on their server. These products will be made accessible through the Internet in a variety of formats as HTML documents and downloadable in PDF. The products will include:

- Water use inventories and maps
- Water flow data
- Demand Projections
- Future Water Use Opportunities

In addition to the products, the website contains materials generated during the entire water planning process, including briefing books, meeting agenda, meeting records, press releases, and newsletters. The primary goal of the online briefing book is to place all information generated for and from Basin Advisory Group meetings onto the website. Placing the agendas, meeting records, press releases, and newsletters, in a timely manner onto the website is an

ongoing process.

The ultimate goal of this project is to create a website that meets the following criteria:

- User friendly
- Contains information pertinent to water users in Wyoming
- Updateable
- Has reliable data with complete metadata

This requires working with the Water Development Commission, State Engineer's Office, and the planning consultants. To date, the homepage and most of the structure has been completed. WRDS is looking forward to serving the first plans for the Green River Basin and the Bear River Basin as soon as possible.

Open Houses to be held in the Wind-Bighorn and Snake-Salt River Basins

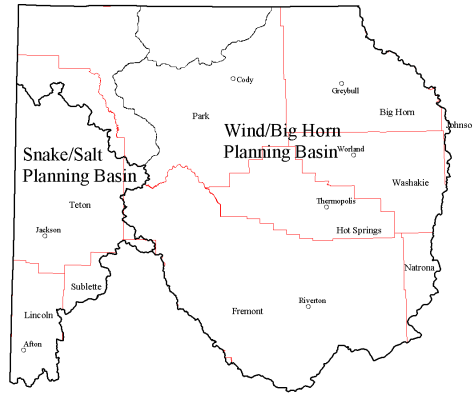
The original schedule outlined by the Water Development Commission for the statewide water planning process dictates that river basin plans should be completed for the entire state within five years. To maintain that schedule the Water Development Commission has submitted a request to the 2001 Legislature for authorization of the next two river basin plans. That request is for a total of \$1,550,000 for consultant services needed to complete the Snake and Salt River Plan as one project, and the Wind and Bighorn River Basin plan as the second project. If authorized by the legislature, the consultants selected to prepare these plans should be under contract by July.

Concurrent with this request to the legislature, the WWDC will hold several public meetings in the project

areas to introduce the state-wide water planning process, and to begin formation of Basin Advisory Groups (BAGs). The first meetings will be in an open house format, and will be held in Thermopolis on January 29th at the Hot Springs Historical Museum from 6-9 p.m., and in Alpine on January 30th at the Civic Center from 6-9 p.m. Displays and presentations are planned from each of the planning team agencies (Water Development Commission, State Engineer's Office, and Water Resources Data System). Other resource management agencies will also be in attendance to explain their respective programs and answer questions.

Over the next few months following the open houses, BAGs will be formed, and then these groups will begin the task of identifying the wa-

ter issues important to each of the basins. Meetings will occur every two months, with meeting locations rotating around the basin. Persons interested in the water resources of either of these two basins are encouraged to attend and participate in this important process.



Water Development Commission Meets with the Select Water Committee in Cheyenne

The Wyoming Water Development Commission met on December 11, 2000 to give final approval to the project recommendations that were tentatively made in November. The project recommendations were presented in the form of draft legislation. The WWDC approved two new Level I New Development projects and increased funding for one existing project, four new Level I Rehabilitation projects, three new Level II New Development projects and increased funding for two existing projects and five new

Level II Rehabilitation projects. The total funding recommended for Level I and Level II evaluations is \$1,130,000 from Water Development Account 1 and \$2,635,000 from Water Development Account 2.

The WWDC approved recommendations for funding for two new Level III New Development Projects and increased funding for three existing Level III projects. The WWDC also recommended funding for thirteen new Level III Rehabilitation projects and increased funding

for two existing Level III projects. The total funding recommended for Level III construction is \$4,488,000 from Water Development Account 1 and \$3,405,000 from Water Development Account 2.

The draft legislation was presented to the Select Water Committee on December 12. The Select Committee approved the draft legislation and agreed to sponsor it. The two proposed bills now await introduction and consideration by the entire Legislature during the 2001 Session.



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River Basin Planning Section

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Water Planning Calendar

January 9, 2001 – Green River Basin Advisory Group Meeting – White Mountain Library, Rock Springs, 1 pm. Topic: Final Green River Plan Presentation.

January 29, 2001 – Wind/Bighorn River Basin Open House – Hot Springs County Historical Museum, Thermopolis, 6-9 pm. Topics: Introduction to river basin planning; proposed planning process for the Wind/Bighorn Basin; presentations and displays by other resource agencies.

January 30, 2001 – Snake/Salt River Basin Open House – Alpine Civic Center, Alpine, 6-9 pm. Topics: In-

roduction to river basin planning; proposed planning process for the Snake/Salt Basin; presentations and displays by other resource agencies.

February 7, 2001 – Powder/Tongue Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Big Red Barn, Ucross Foundation, Ucross, 6 p.m. Topics: Water rights attribution; issues identification.

February 8, 2001 – Northeast Basin Advisory Group Meeting – TBA, Moorcroft, 6 p.m. Topics: Water rights attribution; issues identification.

March 19, 2001 – Bear River Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Cokeville Town Hall, Cokeville, 6 p.m. Topics: TBA.

March 20, 2001 – Green River Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Sublette County Library, Pinedale, 10 a.m. Topics: TBA.

April 11, 2001 – Powder/Tongue Basin Advisory Group Meeting – TBA, Buffalo, 6 p.m.

April 12, 2001 – Northeast Basin Advisory Group Meeting – TBA, Sundance, 6 p.m.

May 1, 2001 – “Water Planning Round Table”, Wyoming State Engineer’s Office Water Forum Meeting, Hathaway Auditorium, 10 a.m. Topics: Water planning activities and coordination among Wyoming State and federal agencies.

June 13, 2001 – Powder/Tongue Basin Advisory Group Meeting – TBA, Dayton, 6 p.m.

June 14, 2001 – Northeast Basin Advisory Group Meeting – TBA, Lusk, 6 p.m.

July 9, 2001 – Bear River Basin Advisory Group Meeting – TBA, Kemmerer, 6 p.m.