



# Water Planning News

## Wind/Bighorn and Snake/Salt River Basin Plans Underway

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The Basin Advisory Group formation process in these basins was initiated in May. The BAGs have had two additional meetings since the formation meeting in May, and have made many accomplishments. Since their formation the group has prepared their mission statement, established meeting guidelines, and completed the process of identifying the issues important to water resources for their basins. The group has also developed a list of educational presentations that they want to hear at the upcoming meetings. Presentations will include topics such as the Endangered Species Act, water law, power generation, TMDL's and many others. The group will also be

hearing updates from the consultants on current work tasks.

There are approximately thirty people on each BAG representing all the major water user groups. Within user groups, members are geographically distributed over their basins. As with the BAGs in other basins, meeting locations are cycled around the basin to make the River Basin Planning Process more accessible to a wide audience, and, as always, the process is completely open to the public.

The consultant selection process was completed in June with Sunrise Engineering, Afton, selected to complete the Snake/Salt River Basin Plan, and BRS Engineering, Riverton, selected to complete the Wind/Bighorn

River Basin Plan. The two firms are well underway on the information gathering tasks of their respective contracts, and have started work on modeling of the surface water systems.

In August a contract amendment was authorized to add a power study to the BRS Wind/Bighorn River Basin Plan contract. This study will analyze the potential to add hydropower production to existing facilities, as well as determine the feasibility of building new thermal generation facilities. This work will be completed along with the river basin plan, and is scheduled for completion in December 2002.

## Status of the Green and Bear River Basin Advisory Groups and their progress after the plan

### Special points of interest:

- Visit the Water Planning Calendar for events in your area.
- The Governor appoints a State Climatologist.
- Come visit the new Water Conservation Report.

Since completion of the Green and Bear River Basin Plans the "interim" BAGs have adopted a meeting schedule of three times per year, with their next meetings set for November. The interim BAGs have been kept abreast of progress on other basin plans, heard updates by agency officials and others on current activities in their basins, and have initiated discussions on topics of interest to them. At their July meeting, the Green BAG went on

a tour of the High Savery Reservoir construction project, conducted by Water Development Commission project manager Mike Hand. Also at their July meeting the Green BAG decided to investigate the feasibility of forming a public entity to serve as the sponsor for water development projects.

In the Bear Basin the WWDC has attended two meetings with proponents for the Smith's Fork Reservoir project. The proponents are

studying the WWDC Smith's Fork report completed in the 1980's, and considering potential beneficiaries.

The interim BAGs will continue to meet three times per year until initiation of the update on their basin plan. At that time they will likely return to a six meeting per year schedule. It is expected that each plan will be updated about every five years.

## Progress Report from the Northeast and Powder-Tongue River Basins

HKM Engineering is making progress on the Powder/Tongue and the Northeast (Little Missouri, Belle Fourche, Cheyenne, and Niobrara River Basins) River Basin Plans. The water rights attribution effort is currently 90% complete for the Powder/Tongue (PT) and 35% complete for the Northeast (NE) basins.

Personal interviews have been completed for the industrial water use inventory and technical memorandum have been prepared for this task.

Interviews are being conducted with industrial and recreational water users

throughout the NE and PT basins to determine water usage by these sectors. Technical memoranda are being prepared on population projections for the two basins.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data themes have been developed for the various use types and will be available in Decimal Degree and UTM formats. GIS coverages will be available in project and e00 file formats.

Modeling work is well under way in the PT River Basins and is scheduled to begin shortly in the NE Basins. A study period has been selected beginning in 1970 and con-

tinuing through 1999. Model schematics have been prepared for the both basins. Missing streamflow data at numerous gaged sites for the study period has been estimated through relationships to streamflow at other nearby USGS and state gage sites. Natural flows needed for un-gaged model nodes have also been developed.

For further information on this or any river basin plan the River Basin Planning Staff can be reached at [waterplan@state.wy.us](mailto:waterplan@state.wy.us) or visit our website at <http://waterplan.state.wy.us/>



## Water Planning Calendar

**October 8, 2001** – Snake/Salt Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Jackson, WY, 6 p.m.

**October 9, 2001** – Wind/Bighorn Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Powell, WY, 3 p.m.

**October 10, 2001** – Powder/Tongue Basin Advisory Group Meeting & Tour – Harold Jarrard Park, Kaycee, WY. Tour of the Powder River Reservoir, 3 p.m. Meeting, 6 p.m. Topics: Population and demand projections; Powder River Reservoir operations; issues identification.

**October 11, 2001** – Northeast Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Hulett, WY, 6 p.m. Topics: Population and demand projections.

**November 5, 2001** – Bear River Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Evanston, WY, 6 p.m. Topics: Cokeville Meadows Wildlife Refuge, TBA.

**November 8, 2001** – Joint Meeting of the Wyoming Water Development Commission and Legislative Select Water Committee – TBA. Topics: 2002 Proposed Water Development Program.

**November 9, 2001** – Green River Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Big Piney, WY, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Topics: Water development funding and opportunities in the Green River Basin.

**December 10, 2001** – Snake/Salt Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Town Hall, Alpine,

WY, 6 p.m.

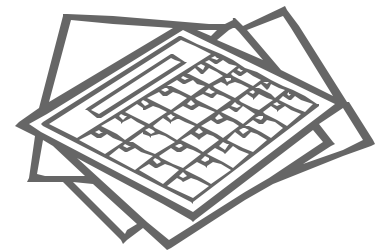
**December 11, 2001** – Wind/Bighorn Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Thermopolis, WY, 3 p.m.

**December 12, 2001** – Powder/Tongue Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Sheridan, WY, 6 p.m. Topics: Preliminary Results of the Powder/Tongue Basin Planning Process.

**December 13, 2001** – Northeast Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Moorcroft, WY, 1 p.m. Topics: Preliminary Results of the Northeast Basin Planning Process.

**January 16, 2002** – Powder/Tongue Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Sheridan, WY, 6 p.m. Topics: Final Powder/Tongue Basin Plan Presentation.

**January 17, 2002** – Northeast Basin Advisory Group Meeting – Upton, WY, 1 p.m. Topics: Final Northeast Basin Plan Presentation.





## Governor appoints Jan Curtis as Wyoming State Climatologist

Gov. Jim Geringer recently announced his appointment of Jan Curtis to the Wyoming State Climatologist position. Curtis will head up the Wyoming Water Resources Data System (WRDS) at the Department of Civil & Architectural Engineering at the University of Wyoming. The WRDS system is the single largest clearinghouse of hydrological and climatological data for the State of Wyoming and responds to hundreds of requests for such information annually. The system also serves as the technical arm for the state's ongoing river basin planning activities and is funded by the Wyoming Water Development Commission.

As state climatologist, Curtis will provide leadership and expertise in the interpretation of Wyoming's climatic events and will work closely with federal, state and local governmental agencies. Similarly, Curtis will be an active participant in Wyoming's Drought Management Task Force and will provide an invaluable knowledge base for the group. "It has been a lifelong dream to be a state climatologist and the importance of water in Wyoming makes this unique position all the more important," Curtis said.

Curtis, who is from Fairbanks, Alaska, plans to start as state climatologist in September after completing his pending obligations. He currently is the

Alaska Assistant State Climatologist where he has been running the Alaska Climate Research Center. His efforts there have included supporting various requests for climate data, writing monthly climate summaries, conducting research on climate change, lecturing to university classes, and co-authoring several successful grant proposals. While in Alaska, Curtis became a renowned northern lights photographer. Some of his work will be published in this November's issue of the National Geographic Magazine.

Prior to his career at the University of Alaska, he served for 20 years as a naval meteorologist and oceanographer with

responsibilities that included program manager for a number of large remote sensing systems, and supervisor of two weather offices. Curtis received an undergraduate degree in meteorology from the City College of New York, and a graduate degree in air-ocean science from the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, California.

Additional information on the Water Resources Data System and the state's river basin planning activities may be obtained by accessing the following websites: <http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu/> and <http://waterplan.state.wy.us/>

## News from Water Resources Data System...

### Digital Landslide Maps Now Available

Western Wyoming has some of the highest landslide densities in the United States. Every year landslides occur in Wyoming, with some causing significant damage or disruption to daily activities. Because of this hazard, the Wyoming State Geological Survey (WSGS) and the Water Resources Data Systems (WRDS) have engaged in a project to increase public awareness.

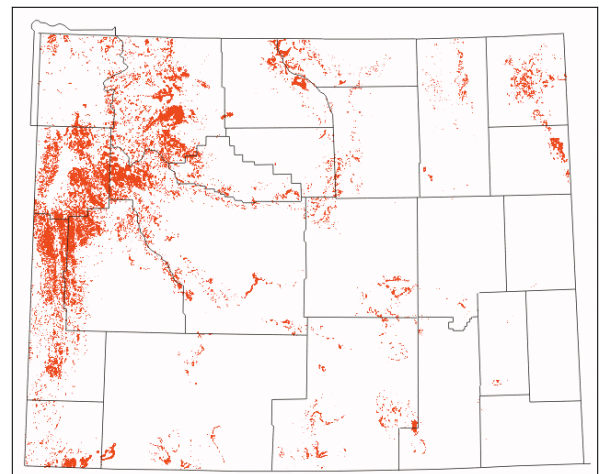
Over the last 15 years the Geologic Hazards Section of the WSGS has drafted landslides onto 7.5-minute USGS quadrangles. More than 850 quadrangles have been mapped for landslides in the state. In order to provide citizens with a means to access landslide data, these maps are now being converted into geographic information systems (GIS) coverages for dissemination over the world wide web. To date, 117 quadrangles in Teton and Lincoln counties have been converted into GIS coverages.

Additional quadrangles from Uinta and Sublette Counties are underway, with an expected completion date of December 2001. With the ability to easily download landslide coverages from the Internet, resource managers and land use planners can make informed decisions on important issues such as road placement and establishment of sub-divisions.

In addition to landslide GIS coverages, WRDS has generated 3-D digital representations of 7.5-minute Quadrangles in Teton County. The 3-D models were created by combining the GIS coverages with the digital orthophoto quarter quadrangles (DOQQs) and draping the image over a digital elevation model. The user may then rotate, zoom and fly over the selected quarter quad, viewing the locations of the landslides from the air.

Completed products can all be accessed from the WRDS homepage at <http://www.wrds.uwyo.edu/> then follow the link to *Wyoming Land-*

*slides*. If you would like more information on this project please contact Tony Bergantino at (307) 766-6651 or e-mail at [wrds@uwyo.edu](mailto:wrds@uwyo.edu), or contact Jim Case at (307) 766-2286 x225 or e-mail at [jcase@wsgs.uwyo.edu](mailto:jcase@wsgs.uwyo.edu)





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## The Water Conservation Report...



The Bighorn River North  
of Thermopolis.

During the last session of the Wyoming legislature, continued funding for a statewide water conservation program was approved. Conditional to this appropriation was that this program would become a part of the Water Development Commission. Subsequently, this program is now included with the River Basin Planning division of the Wyoming Water Development Office.

Preliminary to the outset of river basin planning, a statewide survey was conducted with a high degree of response. This supported the basin planning process and gave direction to have water conservation as a component to this planning process. Survey response indicated a significant interest in conservation. Basin advisory groups, instrumental to the river

basin planning effort, have also identified water conservation as a priority issue for consideration.

Conservation, the planned management of resources, relates to beneficial use and is contingent upon making wise decisions about availability. It also examines the best way to enhance a resource to meet the multiple needs placed against the supply. Water conservation can and should address all uses including agricultural, municipal, industrial, environmental and recreational. There are tools available for conserving, and more are likely to be developed in the future. However, incentives are necessary for adoption of technology and for acceptance and change to occur.

Water conservation information has been and continues to

be delivered to the river basin planning process. Conservation information has been offered in the preparation of plans that describe the water resources within a basin. A water management and conservation program can play an important role in helping local river basin planning efforts evaluate and pursue measures to develop water resources within their basins through creation or enhancement of storage, mitigation of conveyance losses and improving water use and application efficiencies.

If you would like more information about water conservation and river basin planning, please contact Ron Vore at (307) 777-7626, or email at [rvore@state.wy.us](mailto:rvore@state.wy.us)