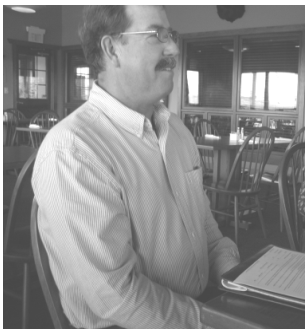
Water News

New WWDO Dam & Reservoir Section

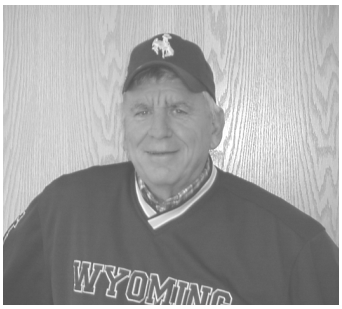
The Water Development Office's Dam and Reservoir Section was authorized during the 2005 legislative General Session. The Dam and Reservoir Section is limited ..."to the administration of Level I and Level II study projects and other assignments that encourage the enlargement of existing dams and reservoirs or the construction of new dams and reservoirs." New staff authorized included a hydrologist, an operation and maintenance engineer for state owned facilities, a National Environmental Policy Act analyst and a scientist.

The first employee hired was Mr. Brian Smith, who resides in Rawlins. Brian provides needed on the ground operation and maintenance services for High Savery Dam and Reservoir, which is owned by the state. He coordinates with other Dam and Reservoir Section staff and relays information concerning mechanical and telemetry issues that occasionally arise at the dam. Smith is instrumental in overseeing mitigation efforts required by the Clean Water Act, Section 404 permit. Other duties include coordinating management issues with Wyoming Game and Fish personnel, the Little Snake Conservancy District, the State Engineer's Office, and local landowners.



The second employee hired was Mr. Steve Muth who hails from Henderson, Nevada where he was employed by the Bureau of Reclamation at their Boulder City facilities. Steve filled the scientist slot and has been instrumental in overseeing the state's wetland mitigation at High Savery as well as managing several ongoing Level I and Level II dam and reservoir studies. He is also developing a data base, which documents past dam and reservoir studies and where they may be obtained. Steve is currently focusing on the Green and Wind/Big Horn River basins and is seeking hard copies of historical dam and reservoir studies to house within the Wyoming Water Development Office.

The third employee hired was Mr. Jason Mead who hails from Omaha, Nebraska where he was employed by a private sector engineering firm. Mead was raised in North Platte, Nebraska and is a cornhusker through and through. Jason fills the hydrologist slot. His responsibilities include monitoring inflows and outflows at High Savery Reservoir, performing engineering tasks as they relate to the dam and reservoir and managing several ongoing Level I, Level II and Level III projects. He is the newest WWDO addition to the professional engineering community. Congratulations Jason!



The last employee hired was the former WWDO Director, Mr. Mike Besson, who hails from Wyoming. Mike is charged with managing the Dam and Reservoir Section. He is a professional engineer and fills the management and National Environmental Policy Act slot. Mike is reviewing new dam and reservoir applications in light of the many past studies to determine how to structure projects that can withstand regulatory scrutiny and eventually be constructed. As you see, Mike demonstrates proper office attire during football season.

Inside this issue:

Special points of interest:

- **As always, look for activities in your area in the Calendar of Water Events**
- **Don't forget to send any address changes to the WY Water Development Office**
  Attn: River Basin Planning
  6920 Yellowtail Road
  Cheyenne, WY 82002
  307-777-7626

News from the WWDO

Green River Basin 2

The Green River Basin Plan 2 is now very close to being underway. The project was appropriated $600,000 in 2007. Because groundwater data can be limited in parts of the state, an emphasis on gathering groundwater data for the second round of basin plans was a logical "next step" for river basin planning. To take this next step, the Green River Basin Plan 2 has been separated into two projects splitting the appropriation equally. One study will emphasize groundwater and the other surface water. A decision was made that the Wyoming State Geological Survey (WSGS) would be the lead on the groundwater study with the Geological Survey (USGS) and Water Resources Data System (WRDS) providing technical support. The WSGS initiated coordination efforts with the USGS and WRDS in June.

The groundwater study will focus on gathering all available data relative to groundwater such as identifying aquifers present in the basin and their associated quality and quantity. An effort will be made to determine recharge areas, recharge rates, and safe yield. Existing reports, models, and other studies will be gathered into a bibliography. With this compiled information, future water use opportunities will be estimated and a planning report prepared. The final product will help WWDO understand what information is needed to better understand groundwater within the basin.

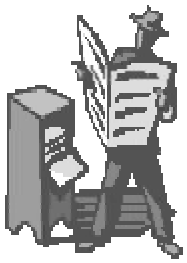
In August, interviews were held in Rock Springs to hire a team for the surface water study. WWC Engineering of Laramie was the team chosen for this duty. WWC is now in the process of completing the Wyoming State Framework Water Plan which gives them important information for their work on the Green River Basin Plan 2.

The surface water study will update portions of the first plan such as: irrigated lands mapping, population changes and projections, future water use opportunities, available surface water, and socio-economic data. Because the first round of basin plans focused on gathering data, the updates can focus on some additional "planning" aspects. One of the tasks focuses on future water use issues and topics including looking at issues affecting future water use opportunities, climate, flow augmentation opportunities, and watershed planning. With this information, input from the WWDO, SEO, and the Basin Advisory Group, the consultants will develop strategies that can help local and state decision makers. It is perceived that some of these strategies could shape future basin planning efforts.

The WWDO will be working with both teams and the SEO very soon to determine when and where the first BAG meeting will take place. A late October or early November date is anticipated. It is imperative to have participation from all of the "stakeholders". These stakeholders help mold the success of the process and include all government and local entities as well as individuals.

Framework Water Plan Update

Winter will be here soon and so will the Final Framework Water Plan Reports. Stay tuned to the Water Plan website because the Presentation Tool should be available soon. The Presentation Tool will allow you to view the Framework Reports online in a searchable format. It will also allow you to access data as it becomes available from future plan updates.



News from Water Resources Data System

Welcome Chris Nicholson

The Wyoming Water Resources Data System (WRDS) welcomes Chris Nicholson as our new Outreach and Technology Coordinator. Chris comes to WRDS from Pullman, Washington where he worked as a Geographic Information Systems specialist in county government. As the new O&T coordinator Chris is responsible for many of the online resources that support the State Water Plan (http://waterplan.state.wy.us/). Chris also brings extensive expertise in internet mapping and web-based services, and his work will be featured heavily in the online presentations of the Framework Water Plan and other forthcoming basin-planning products.

WRDS Library

The WRDS Library (http://library.wrds.uwyo.edu/) is unlike any other in the state. While other libraries focus on multiple subjects, we focus on just one thing: Wyoming water. WRDS is also the sole library in Wyoming (and many surrounding states) with a full-time water librarian, and we offer a growing collection of publications on drought, groundwater issues, and how climate impacts water resources.

Of particular interest to many library patrons is our extensive collection of WWDC reports. The WRDS Library serves as the official repository for publications related to WWDC projects, and this collection is readily searchable online (http://library. wrds.uwyo.edu/wwdcrept/wwdcrept.html). Moreover, many of these reports can be downloaded directly from our website. In an effort make WWDC reports and other water-related publications more widely available, WRDS is working to integrate its collections into WYLDCAT (http://wyld.state.wy.us/), the statewide library database. As a result, patrons can search both the WRDS Library website and WYLDCAT online to find information on water and

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What's Up in the State Engineer's Office...

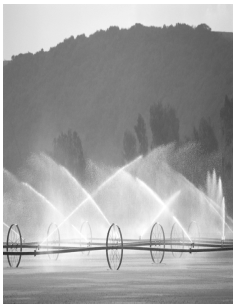
Colorado River Compact Administration Program and Consumptive Use Determination Plan

In the spring of 2005, the Colorado River Basin was in the midst of the worst drought in approximately 100 years of recorded history. Storage in Colorado River reservoirs had dropped from nearly full to near 50% of capacity. Tensions were high among all water users and the basin states. Many felt court battles were imminent.

Driven, in part, by the uncertain situation in 2005, the SEO submitted a budget request to initiate a multi-year effort to improve the agency's water use data collection and analysis capabilities in the Wyoming Green River Basin. In that budget request, the SEO proposed a sustained and phased approach to address water measuring equipment needs and data acquisition, as well as analysis and compilation shortcomings. The 2006 Wyoming Legislature approved the budget request and the Colorado River Compact Administration Program became an official part of the Interstates Stream Division in July 2006.

The primary program goal is to develop, implement and operate a process to monitor the consumptive water use in the Colorado River Basin of Wyoming. The program is needed to address requirements outlined in the Colorado River and Upper Colorado River Basin Compacts, both of which Wyoming is signatory. The mission of the program is simply to ensure Wyoming is the leading authority on its water use in the Green River Basin. The primary responsibility for the program rests with the Colorado River Coordinator.

The initial objective for this program was to develop a plan and associated implementation budget to acquire the tools and data necessary to protect Wyoming's apportionments as outlined in the Compacts, as well meet Compact requirements. The plan has been entitled the Consumptive Use Determination Plan (CU Plan). The CU Plan is envisioned to be the "road map" outlining the steps the SEO and Wyoming should take to build and implement a comprehensive and efficient monitoring program in the Green River Basin. The CU Plan has been developed and structured with the recognition for the absolute need for better information on water use in the basin. However, it is also built upon the belief that the individual pieces of the framework to support the plan should be assembled with care to ensure the long-term durability and quality of data generated from the program. The main components addressed within this plan include; 1) climate and hydrology, 2) diversion and consumptive use, 3) water rights attribution, 4) reservoir operation, 5) groundwater, 6) administration/ decision support tools, and 7) outreach.



A draft of the CU Plan has been completed and is currently being reviewed by the State Engineer. The plan is meant to be dynamic. The document will be updated on a regular basis to note tasks completed, changes in direction of the program, status of ongoing work efforts and newly proposed tasks or program requirements. Copies of the plan will be available for the public later this fall.

As is well known, discussions about "water" can bring a myriad of responses from any resident of Wyoming and in particular from those who put water to beneficial uses as a daily part of their lives. As work is undertaken as outlined in the CU Plan, there will be a keen awareness of this program by water users in the basin. One key component of this program is for its development and implementation to occur in a very open manner, with the public provided the opportunity to see the tasks and results as they progress. In short, outreach efforts may very well define the success or failure of this program.

Fortunately, the Green River Water Planning process led

(Continued on page 4)

WRDS (Continued on page 2)

water development in Wyoming.

Searching the WRDS Library is simple and straightforward. Using the example of a search for 'Viva Naughton', follow the instructions listed below:

- First go to http://library.wrds.uwyo.edu/
- Click on the '*Wyldcat Catalog*' link (left-hand side of top menu)
- Enter 'Viva Naughton' in the search box. In this case the search box is set to return documents held by the Water Resources Data System only. Using the drop down arrow will allow patrons to include other libraries in their search.
- Click on the 'keywords' button. If the search is successful, all records held by WRDS will be displayed. In the 'Viva Naughton' search example 2 records will be returned.
- Click on the 'Full Detail' button on the left side of the record box to see more information on each item.

The call number and location of the item is then listed.

If no records are found, try broadening the list of libraries to be searched or modify your keywords.

For additional information on the WRDS Library please contact Barbara Muller, Water Librarian

Email: library@wrds.uwyo.edu
Phone: (307) 766-6661
Fax: (307) 766-3785

Mailing Address:
Water Resources Data System Library
Dept 3943
1000 E University Avenue
Laramie, WY 82071

Physical Address:
Room 230
Wyoming Hall
University of Wyoming
Laramie, WY 82071

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by the WWDO and associated Basin Advisory Group will provide a good opportunity to insure those interested in water issues in the basin remain updated on the development and implementation of the CU Plan and related efforts. In addition to the BAG meetings, it is important for the Colorado River Coordinator to meet with municipal, industrial and other water users to explain the need for accurate and regular reporting of water use and to readily answer questions. Some of this interaction has already begun, but much more is needed in the future.

Any questions or requests regarding this program should be directed to Steve Wolff, Colorado River Coordinator, Wyoming State Engineer's Office, Herschler Bldg., 4E; Cheyenne, WY 82002; swolff@seo.wyo.gov (307) 777-1942.

Calendar of Water Events

October 2, 2007 - Water Forum, 10 am - 12 pm, State Engineer's Office, Cheyenne

October 16, 2007 - North Platte Decree Committee Meeting, 1-4 pm, Torrington

October 31-November 2, 2007 - Wyoming Water Association Annual Conference, Cheyenne

November 6, 2007 - Water Forum, 10 am - 12 pm, State Engineer's Office, Cheyenne

November 7-9, 2007 - Wyoming Water Development Commission Meeting, Casper

December 4, 2007 - Water Forum, 10 am - 12 pm, State Engineer's Office, Cheyenne

December 5-6, 2007 - Yellowstone River Compact Commission meeting, Billings, MT

January 8, 2008 - Water Forum, 10 am - 12 pm, State Engineer's Office, Cheyenne

January 10-11, 2008 - Wyoming Water Development Commission Meeting, Cheyenne

February 5, 2008 - Water Forum, 10 am - 12 pm, State Engineer's Office, Cheyenne