

Notes from 9/25/08 IWG Hydrology Task Group Teleconference

Attendees:

Andy Bobst – BLM – MCFO
Kathy Brus – BLM – BFO
Chris Williams – BLM – BFO
Melanie Clark – USGS – Cheyenne
John Lambing – USGS – Helena
Harry Labonde – WY-SEO
Don Fisher – WDEQ – Sheridan
Kathy Schreve – WDEQ – Cheyenne
Bob Bukantis – MDEQ – Helena

Started the call at 9am. Due to several expected folks not calling in reminder calls and email were sent.

Andy outlined the three basic objectives of the meeting as:

- 1 – Elect new chair and sub-chairs
- 2 – Determine sub-group membership
- 3 – Evaluate need for changes to Purpose portion of Charter (task modifications to be handled by the sub-groups)

Determined that Kathy Brus would be the new Chair.

Decided that it would be useful to determine sub-group membership, and then have them determine who the chair should be.

1) Surface Water Group:

- i) Chris Williams
- ii) “New MCFO Hydro”
- iii) Kathy Schreve
- iv) Bob Bukantis
- v) Melanie Clark
- vi) John Lambing (until his retirement next ~Jan-Apr)

vii) Need to contact:

- (a) John Barnes - WSEO
- (b) Jearmey Z. - WDEQ
- (c) Tom Johnson - COE
- (d) Pedro Ramirez - FWS
- (e) Dave Gloss – USFS

- 2) Groundwater Group
 - i) Andy Bobst
 - ii) John Wheaton

At this point the call died. We scheduled to complete on 9/30 at 9am.

9/30/08

0900

Attendees:

Andy Bobst – BLM – MCFO
Kathy Brus – BLM – BFO
Chris Williams – BLM – BFO
Melanie Clark – USGS – Cheyenne
John Barnes – WY-SEO
Don Fischer – WDEQ – Sheridan
Kathy Schreve – WDEQ – Cheyenne
Bob Bukantis – MDEQ – Helena
John Wheaton – MBMG
Mike Philbin – BLM – MSO
Jeremy Zumberg – WDEQ – Sheridan
Tom Bills – BLM – BFO

1) Groundwater Group (continued)

- i) Andy Bobst
- ii) John Wheaton
- iii) Chris Williams
- iv) Don Fisher
- v) John Barnes
- vi) Melanie Clark – [Melanie has indicated that Tim Bartos and Mike Sweat would be better USGS contacts for this group]
 - (1) Need to check with
 - (a) Andy will check with Russell Levens – MT-DNRC [Russell will be part of the group]
 - (b) Bob will discuss with MDEQ folks [Bob has indicated that he and Jenny Chambers should be contacted for this group; they will determine who will attend, but there will be coverage]
 - (c) Chris will discuss with WY-GS (Keith Cleary?)

2) Water Management Group

- i) Don Fisher
- ii) John Wheaton
- iii) Kathy Brus
- iv) Andy Bobst
- v) John Barnes
- vi) Bob Bukantis (preliminary; perhaps Andy Wealsh long term)
- vii) Dennis Lamb?
- viii) USGS?

The group determined that it would be appropriate to re-extend the invitation to be involved in the group to the WY-O&G Commission and MBOGC. Don will contact Janie Nelson at WY-O&G; Andy will contact Tom Richmond at MBOGC. [Richmond has indicated that he would be interested]

The group then discussed the term of chairs. 2 years was determined to be appropriate. No staggering needed.

The group then moved on to examine the modified version of the charter (see below).

- Change “would” to “to”
- Change word “techniques” to “plans”

The group discussed if the “ongoing list of studies” task should be kept. It was determined that this needed to be a part of the meetings within each task, but it did not seem to qualify as a task by itself. It was determined that this should be part of the “standard agenda” for the task groups (along with round-robin), but that we did not need to have it in the charter. We need to make sure that studies are making it to the Clearinghouse as appropriate.

Discussed that when the modified charter is submitted to the IWG it should include a budget proposal to support the tasks.

The sub-groups will need to accomplish the following:

- 1) Elect Chair
- 2) Determine if the charter statement is appropriate
- 3) Develop a budget to support accomplishing each task, as it is proposed.
- 4) Determine if the work being done meets our requirements under the RODs or other sideboards
- 5) Develop summary reports for each task (~1pg per task) by this Spring (~April)

The following folks will coordinate setting up the task group meetings:

Chris Williams – Surface Water

Andy Bobst – Groundwater Drawdown
Don Fisher – Water Management Facilities

END OF CALL

Proposed Modified Charter (9/30/08)

Task Group on Water Resources

Background and Purpose: Coal Bed Natural Gas (CBNG) development requires the extraction of substantial volumes of water from coal beds in order to produce natural gas. Removal of groundwater from aquifers, and management of produced water on the surface, both have potential to cause environmental impacts. These impacts can be reduced through the use of appropriate mitigation measures, and the development of "trigger points" which if encountered would require activities to be reevaluated. Appropriate monitoring at both local and regional scales will allow appropriate mitigation measures to be developed, the effectiveness of mitigation measures to be assessed, and our status relative to trigger points to be assessed. This work will also provide a better understanding of watersheds and aquifers. It is the purpose of this group to develop appropriate monitoring plans for surface water and groundwater to address these concerns.

Tasks:

Current tasks for the group are as follows. Tasks may be added or removed, as appropriate, by either the Montana or Wyoming Interagency Working Groups.

1. Implement the surface water monitoring plan for watersheds anticipated to be affected by CBNG development (Rosebud, Tongue, Powder, Belle Fourche, and Cheyenne). Modify the plan as needed. The status of the monitoring stations will be tracked continuously, and made available via the intranet. Annual status reports will be prepared as soon as possible following the end of each hydrologic year (October-September), and no later than September of the following year. These status reports will integrate data from both Montana and Wyoming stations. An integrated interpretive report will be prepared every 4 years, and completed in time to be incorporated into every other 305(b) report.
2. Finalize and implement the groundwater monitoring plan for aquifers anticipated to be effected by CBNG drawdown. Modify the plan as needed. The status of the monitoring wells and springs included in the plan will be tracked continuously, and made available via the internet. Annual status reports will be prepared as soon as possible following the end of each hydrologic year (October-September), and no later than September of the following year. These status reports should be coordinated between Montana and Wyoming. An integrated interpretive report will be prepared every 3 years.
3. Develop siting and monitoring protocols for CBNG water management facilities (i.e. lined impoundments, infiltration basins, irrigation areas, enhanced evaporation, treatment plants, etc.). Although the issues surrounding these facilities should be the same, it may be necessary to develop separate protocols by state in order to meet differing regulatory requirements. At a minimum the protocols should be based upon a common understanding of the issues.