

Agenda

Middle Snake Regional Water Resource Commission

Meeting Date: January 9, 2017

Meeting Place – Twin Falls County Office Building at 630 Addison Avenue West, Twin Falls, Idaho, Conference Room A. Enter the back of the building through the revolving door and turn right to the hall way. First door on the left or 2nd door if meeting is moved to conference room B.

Meeting time: 1:00pm

Agenda items:

- 1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (1:00 to 1:05)**
- 2. Approve Bills (1:05 to 1:08)**
- 3. Correspondence (1:08 to 1:15)**
- 4. Final review of all changes made to Water Quality section beginning on page 33. Bring the water quality section sent to members in October (1:15 to 2:30)**
- 5. New or old business: (2:30 to 2:40)**
- 6. Adjourn**

TIME FRAMES FOR EACH AGENDA ITEM LISTED ABOVE ARE ESTIMATES

January 9, 2017 minutes coming soon.

February 15, 2017 agenda coming soon.

MINUTES
MIDDLE SNAKE REGIONAL
WATER RESOURCE COMMISSION
February 15, 2017

The meeting of the Commission was called to order by Chairman Lew Pence at 1:00pm. Members present were Kerry McMurray, Duane Turner, Dean Edgar, Jim Schlund, Dan Suhr, Mary Davidson, Ami Bennett, Gale Kleinkopf and Bob Muffley, Executive Director. Also Present was Irene Nautch and Sue Switzer, IDEQ and Steve Hines, U.of I. Educator.

Lew asked if there were any changes or corrections to the previous minutes. Hearing none, Kerry McMurray moved the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Dean Edgar and approved.

Lew asked Bob for the bills since the last meeting. Bob said the bills include his compensation of \$550.00 and his mileage for \$35.65. Other bills are mileage for the members who are present. Gale Kleinkopf moved the Bills be paid. The motion was seconded by Dan Suhr and approved.

When Sue Switzer with IDEQ introduced herself to the Commission, she said there was a voting seat being held for a member of this commission to the Mid-Snake WAG. She asked that if any member was interested in becoming a member, he or she could let her know. She said, for the most part, the WAG meets every quarter on a Tuesday. Dan Suhr volunteered for the WAG at the end of the meeting.

Lew asked Bob if there had been any correspondence since the Last meeting. Bob said the only correspondence he had was emails between Steve Hines and himself concerning changes to the economic portion of the plan which he will be presenting today.

Lew introduced Steve Hines, U. of I. educator who presented changes to the economic portion of the plan that were previously discussed by the commission in December. Steve put the economic section on the screen and went through the changes including Bob's and his recommendations for further change. Steve recommended and the commission members to delete the sentence on the 6th line dealing with the formation of the economic model under the heading "Impact of Agriculture in Magic Valley. All of his other suggestions to add clarity on the remaining pages were also agreed to by the commission. Lew asked if there was a way to get all of table 2 on the same page. Steve said we can possibly do that after all changes are complete. He also covered some changes to the last page that Bob had suggested. There was some discussion concerning the percentage for the reduction of pumping under the water user agreement. Bob showed 11%, but others believe it was higher. Bob said he would check the original agreement and make a change if necessary.

Lew asked Bob to go ahead with the review of the water quality section. Bob started by going over the changes that were made at the January meeting. Only major changes are included in these minutes. Gale said, on page 22, we had bullets where items that impact our water are shown and he believes they are still necessary. Bob said he would add bullets on each item. Gale also said some of the items shown as impacting our water are not discussed in the rest of the text. After discussion he suggested we list these items under a new heading "Other possible impacts to the region's water". On page 23, Irene Nautch said hydro power should be shown as one word. Bob said he would correct throughout the document. Steve Hines said the total acres farmed in the region should now be 1,060,000. On Page 24, Irene said a TMDL is established by IDEQ and Water Shed Advisory Groups. Gale said Strategies shown under objective AO2 are shown as AO3 and should show as AO2 on page 27-28. Irene said we should add the words "if discharged to waters of the U.S." at the end of the 1st paragraph on page 31. Gale referred to Strategy AO1.g on page 32 and said he didn't like the structure. He suggested we add a colon after the words "industry uses for" and then number each item listed in the strategy. He also said goal B should be shown as goal C on page 33. It was pointed out, however, that the old Goal B had been eliminated so B was correct.

Lew said, because of the lateness of the hour, he needed to go on to new or old business. He said we would take up the review at the next meeting. Under new business, Lew said he had attended a meeting with the legislators in district 26 and was pleased when they brought up all the items we discussed in our letter to all of our legislators last month. Also under new business, Dan Suhr read an email from retired Supreme Court Justice Jim Jones. The message said he recently underwent an operation for pancreatic cancer and the doctor believed he had gotten it all. Jim also asked if we knew of any groups or organizations he could come and talk with concerning the Swan Falls Agreement. Jim said Idaho Power may be getting ready to take another swing at getting rid of the agreement. Dan said to let him know if something came to mind.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:35pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Bob J. Muffley, Executive Director

Agenda

Middle Snake Regional Water Resource Commission

Meeting Date: March 15, 2017

Meeting Place – Twin Falls County Office Building at 630 Addison Avenue West, Twin Falls, Idaho, Conference Room A. Enter the back of the building through the revolving door and turn right to the hall way. First door on the left or 2nd door if meeting is moved to conference room B.

Meeting time: 1:00pm

Agenda items:

1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (1:00 to 1:05)
2. Approve Bills (1:05 to 1:08)
3. Correspondence (1:08 to 1:15)
4. Final look at Economic section of plan – Steve Hines or Bob , (1:15 to 1:25)
(bring the copy emailed to you on 3/9/2017)
5. review last changes to water quality section & begin final review on page 34 - Bob
(1:25 to 2:10) (bring the copy emailed to you on 3/9/17)
6. Discuss possible educational opportunities – (2:10 to 2:20)
6. New or old business: (2:30 to 2:40)
7. Adjourn

TIME FRAMES FOR EACH AGENDA ITEM LISTED ABOVE ARE ESTIMATES

MINUTES
MIDDLE SNAKE REGIONAL
WATER RESOURCE COMMISSION
March 15, 2017

The meeting of the Commission was called to order by Chairman Lew Pence at 1:03pm. Members present were Kerry McMurray, Duane Turner, Jim Schlund, Dan Suhr, Mary Davidson, Ami Bennett, and Bob Muffley, Executive Director. Also present was Steve Hines, U.of I. Educator.

Lew asked if there were any changes or corrections to the previous minutes. Hearing none, Duane Turner moved the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Mary Davidson and approved.

Lew asked Bob for the bills since the last meeting. Bob said the bills include his compensation of \$550.00, his mileage for \$33.17 and supplies in the amount of \$31.79. Other bills are mileage for the members who are present. Dan Suhr moved the Bills be paid. The motion was seconded by Kerry McMurray and approved. Bob noted the mileage reimbursement has reduced to 53.5 cents beginning on January 1, 2017. The old rate was 57.5 cents per mile.

Lew asked Bob if there had been any correspondence since the Last meeting. Bob said he received an email from Gary Fornshell from the Mid-Snake Water shed Advisory Group saying their next meeting would be April 11th at the DEQ conference room. He noted that Dan Suhr agreed to attend and represent our commission.

Bob also received an email from Senator Jim Patrck in response to an email Lew had sent to all our regional legislators between meetings. Bob said about a week after our last meeting he heard that a senate bill number S1068 was being proposed to get more money in the Invasive Species program of the Dept. of Ag. He said the bill would also create a new "office of invasive species" which would act as a policy advisor to the Dept. of Ag, Idaho Fish and Game, state parks and state, federal, local and private agencies and organizations. The office would also seek sustainable funding from various sources. He sent a copy of the proposed legislation to Lew to see if he wanted to make comments. Lew and Bob met to see if we should respond to the proposed bill. A response was drawn up saying we were somewhat skeptical about creating an additional layer of bureaucracy when what is truly needed is an increase in funding for protection from, and eradication of, invasive species. Our comments also suggested that fees on boats alone can't adequately address this serious program. Invasive species impact nearly everyone in the state so adequate funding should come from the state's general fund or at the very least a fee should be established for all Rv's and ATV's licensed in Idaho. These vehicles can also be responsible for the introduction of invasive species. Senator Patick, in his comments back to Lew's email, said he believes the program needs a leader to direct activities

and acquire and new funding sources. He said they are willing to use state funds, but wants to look at other funding sources as well. He also said he is not convinced that we are currently free of invasive mussels.

Lew went on to the final review of the economic and water quality portions of the plan. Several corrections were suggested by commission members and Bob said he would make the changes and email the finished documents to the members as soon as possible. He suggested that the members once again review the sections and if other things need correcting or added, to send him their comments.

Lew said we need to discuss educational opportunities within the region. He said recent events concerning ground water quality in Lincoln and other counties appear to suggest we may need to develop something to reach out to the public. He asked Mary Davidson to give us an update on the situation in Lincoln County. Mary described the situation impacting several household in both Lincoln and Gooding counties. She said the primary concern is E. coli which has been discovered in several well sites. She said they haven't really been able to find the source other than possibly a dairy or a new hydro facility on the Big Wood Canal system. Mary said we've all learned that the aquifer generally flows in a south-westerly direction, but some of the problem wells are located, what should be, above the source of possible contaminants. She said they had an excellent turnout to a public meeting held by Lincoln and Gooding counties along with IDEQ, South Central Public Health and others. Mary said they also put a flier on testing wells in their local news publication and have had a lot response from it was well. She said the bottom line is that people on private wells need to remember to have their water tested at regular intervals. Lew said, several years ago, our commission and IDEQ teamed up to develop informational place mats on water quality issues which were given to restaurants in the region. He said he heard a lot of positive comments at the time, from the public. Bob suggested we contact the health district and IDEQ to see if we can team up on a water quality educational campaign. Bob said we had also discussed doing something to educate the public on invasive species which is also extremely important to canal companies, power generators, aquaculture and others in our region. Lew said it was getting late so would like to continue this discussion at our next meeting.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:27pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Bob J. Muffley, Executive Director

Agenda

Middle Snake Regional Water Resource Commission

Meeting Date: April 19, 2017

Meeting Place – Twin Falls County Office Building at 630 Addison Avenue West, Twin Falls, Idaho, Conference Room A. Enter the back of the building through the revolving door and turn right to the hall way. First door on the left or 2nd door if meeting is moved to conference room B.

Meeting time: 1:00pm

Agenda items:

- 1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (1:00 to 1:05)**
- 2. Approve Bills (1:05 to 1:08)**
- 3. Correspondence (1:08 to 1:15)**
- 4. Overview of recharge and other activities of the Water Resource Board for the coming year – Brian Patton, IDWR and Board members Vince Alberdi and Bert Stevenson. (1:15 to 2:00)**
- 6. Continue Discussion of possible educational opportunities – (2:00 to 2:20)**
- 6. New or old business: (2:20 to 2:30)**
- 7. Adjourn**

TIME FRAMES FOR EACH AGENDA ITEM LISTED ABOVE ARE ESTIMATES

MINUTES
MIDDLE SNAKE REGIONAL
WATER RESOURCE COMMISSION
April 19, 2017

The meeting of the Commission was called to order by Chairman Lew Pence at 1:04pm. Members present were Kerry McMurray, Duane Turner, Jim Schlund, Dan Suhr, Gale Kleinkopf, Dean Edgar and Bob Muffley, Executive Director. Also present were Steve Hines, U.of I. Educator, Brian Patton, IDWR, Vince Alberdi and Bert Stevenson, Idaho Water Resource Board members, and Irene Nautch, IDEQ.

Lew asked if there were any changes or corrections to the previous minutes. Hearing none, Duane Turner moved the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Dan Suhr and approved.

Lew asked Bob for the bills since the last meeting. Bob said the bills include his compensation of \$550.00 and his mileage for \$27.29. Other bills are mileage for the members who are present. Gale Kleinkopf moved the Bills be paid. The motion was seconded by Dean Edgar and approved.

Lew asked Bob if there had been any correspondence since the Last meeting. Bob said he received an email from Jack Nelson, previously of this commission, saying the Jerome Republican Party was sponsoring an event at 9:00 AM on Saturday the 29th of April at the Mountain View Barn. Among the speakers are Attorney General, Lawrence Wasden and Lt. Governor, Brad Little. Jack thought it would be good to have representatives of the Commission in attendance. Bob said the cost of the event is \$20.00 per person. Bob said he hoped to attend and thank the Attorney General for his action with the INL.

Lew introduced Brian Patton of the IDWR for an update on the actions of the Water Resource Board regarding recharge efforts in the region and the ESPA. Brian explained our aquifer and how special it is. He said the rest of the U.S. is envious of what we have. He said, because of leakage from surface water irrigation methods, the aquifer continued to gain water until 1952. It has, however, been in steady decline since that time. Surface water irrigators became more conservative by using new irrigation methods and irrigation by ground water pumping became more prevalent. Currently the aquifer is losing about 216,000 acre feet(af) of water every year and this can't continue. Everyone using the aquifer is at risk unless we can turn this around. He said one of the biggest risks is not being able to meet the requirements of the Swan Falls Agreement. To this end, ground water pumpers and surface water users reached an agreement on ground water pumping last year. This agreement calls for pumpers to deliver 50,000af of storage water every year to surface water users. Pumpers must also reduce pumping throughout the ESPA by 240,000af. It also supports a state sponsored recharge program for an

additional 250,000af. The legislature adopted two resolutions to support this goal and directed the Water Board to undertake aquifer stabilization and develop a capability to accomplish an average recharge of 250,000af per year by 2024.

Brian said they are spending money approved by the legislature to build the necessary recharge infrastructure. He said the Board, however began recharging in 2014 through the use of canal systems. He said they had a total recharge of 75,234af in 2014 – 2015 and still had a loss 305,920af in total spill past Milner Dam. In 2015 – 2016 they recharged 66,526af and still had a loss of 111,000af past Milner. He said the key to capture this water before it passes Milner, is completion of the recharge infrastructure. In 2016 they completed construction of a bypass at the mile post 28 hydro plant on the Milner-Gooding Canal. This project was necessary because the hydro facility is not equipped to handle winter water flows. He said they should now be able to divert up to 500cfs into the recharge site at mile post 31. Brian said they have also developed a recharge site at Egin near St. Anthony that will take 150cfs and are working on several others recharge sites in eastern and our region of Idaho. they are completing a pipeline in the Southwest Irrigation District that will recharge 54cfs by injection wells and also want to develop recharge at Wilson lake on the North Side Canal system. This system should take 130cfs and add 31,000af to the aquifer. They must also build a bypass of a hydro facility on this site, however, so the cost is estimated to run \$4.6 million. They are also making improvements to two other sites. One is near Shoshone that will be fed from the Little Wood River and the other is Murtaugh Lake on the Twin Falls Canal. When all sites are developed in our region the projected recharge should be about 930cfs during the winter months or 220,000af. They project that median river flows should be about 1,000cfs or 300,000af. Brian said the key thing to remember is that the more we can recharge in our region the more pressure builds up in the aquifer thus increasing the spring flows to the river at American Falls. He said an amazing thing happened this year. Because of the unusual amount of snow and rain, they are currently over 250,000af of recharge throughout the ESPA.

The Board is responsible for recharge throughout the state. The ESPA, however, is the priority for now. The state is also seeing reductions in aquifers in western and northern Idaho so recharge sites will be developed in those regions as well. This year's total budget for aquifer stabilization is \$14,444,273 and of this nearly \$11,000,000 will be spent on the ESPA. One of Brian's concerns is that an eastern Idaho canal system wants to start its own private recharge site and sell the recharge water to downstream pumpers. He's not sure what this would do to the states recharge plans. During the presentation several questions were asked concerning assurance of water quality. Brian said recharge water is in the winter and because of this the water is pretty clean. He said the Board monitors water quality both before and after recharge on every site and they've seen no problems to date.

Lew asked Bert and Vince if they had any comments. Bert said, regarding water quality, usually recharge water helps problems with pollution. Vince said he is very happy with the Board's recharge efforts to date and believes it will just get better.

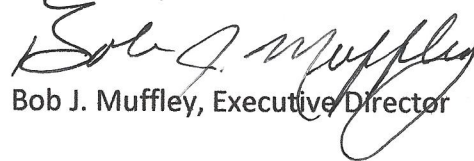
Lew thanked Brian for his update on recharge efforts on the ESPA and also thanked Bert and Vince for their valuable work as our region's representatives to the Water Board. We appreciate their efforts in restoring the health of the ESPA.

Lew asked Dan Suhr to give an update on the Mid-Snake WAG meeting he attended. Dan said the EPA has stiffened its requirements on the TMDL for the Middle Snake and a lot of people will feel the impact. He said the TMDL they have been working with had greatly overestimated the average flow of the river and because of this they tightened the standards. He's afraid it will cost people a lot of money to meet them and is not sure they can any time soon.

Lew went to the next item on the agenda which was to continue our discussion on possible education opportunities. He showed the Commission an outline and discussion topics for an educational session the commission put together with others during the early 2000's. He next handed out copies of a, well received, placemat program that DEQ and our commission developed and gave to restaurants in the region discussing water quality and the ESPA. He said these are examples of what we have done in the past and could be considered in future educational projects. He said, however, that because it was getting late, we could talk further at future meetings.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:46pm.

Respectfully Submitted

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Bob J. Muffley".

Bob J. Muffley, Executive Director

Agenda

Middle Snake Regional Water Resource Commission

Meeting Date: May 17, 2017

Meeting Place – Twin Falls County Office Building at 630 Addison Avenue West, Twin Falls, Idaho, Conference Room A. Enter the back of the building through the revolving door and turn right to the hall way. First door on the left or 2nd door if meeting is moved to conference room B.

Meeting time: 1:00pm

Agenda items:

- 1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (1:00 to 1:05)**
- 2. Approve Bills (1:05 to 1:08)**
- 3. Correspondence (1:08 to 1:15)**
- 4. Reopening of TMDL on Middle Snake – Sonny Buhider, Ph.D DEQ – (1:15 to 2:00)**
- 5. New Budget: Bob Muffley (2:00 to 2:10)**
- 6. Discuss educational opportunities - (2:00 to 2:35)**
- 7. New or old business: (2:35 to 2:40)**
- 8. Adjourn**

TIME FRAMES FOR EACH AGENDA ITEM LISTED ABOVE ARE ESTIMATES

MINUTES
MIDDLE SNAKE REGIONAL
WATER RESOURCE COMMISSION
May 17, 2017

The meeting of the Commission was called to order by Chairman Lew Pence at 1:04pm. Members present were Kerry McMurray, Duane Turner, Dan Suhr, Gale Kleinkopf, and Bob Muffley, Executive Director. Also present were Steve Hines and Gary Fornshell, U.of I Educators and Balthasar (Sonny) Buhider, Ph.D, IDEQ Regional Water Quality Manager.

Lew asked if there were any changes or corrections to the previous minutes. Hearing none, Gale Kleinkopf moved the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Duane Turner and approved.

Lew asked Bob for the bills since the last meeting. Bob said the bills include his compensation of \$550.00 and his mileage for \$27.29. Other bills are mileage for the members who are present. Dan Suhr moved the Bills be paid. The motion was seconded by Gale Kleinkopf and approved.

Lew asked Bob if there had been any correspondence since the Last meeting. Bob said, while it isn't correspondence, he wanted to report on the Jerome Republican meeting he and Dan attended last month. He said Republican candidate for Governor, Brad Little was in attendance and when he saw Dan Suhr and myself sitting at a back table, he sat with us during the entire meeting. Bob said we had his ear for about 2 hours and Dan said he should now have a pretty clear understanding on how we feel about the DOE's inactivity on waste held at the INL. Bob said Attorney General Wasden was not in attendance because of a recent surgery. Clive Strong attended in his absence. Clive stopped by our table and we asked him to thank the Attorney General for his actions regarding the DOE's desire to bring spent nuclear waste to the INL for study. We told him the DOE should abide by the agreement they signed with the state. Bob said he also received a couple of emails from Gary Fornshell regarding the Mid-Snake Water Shed Advisory group (WAG) meeting and their response to the EPA's revision to the TMDL which is the topic of today's discussion.

Lew Introduced Sonny Buhider to discuss the reopening of the TMDL by the EPA. Sonny said the EPA's rational for opening the TMDL is the lower than anticipated flows in the Middle Snake. He said the flow of the river is important for determining the amount of contaminants the river can handle. The EPA claims the actual flows have been much less than the anticipated flows used to determine the current TMDL and because of this, there needs to be an adjustment. He said this all started back in 2013 when the WAG chose to not open the TMDL and the DEQ concurred. The EPA basically said fine, but because of continuing problems with excess nutrient levels they would establish new load allocations to each entity impacting the

river. The new allocation would then cover everything flowing into and out of a facility. This means the facility would not only need to cleanup its own contribution, but the contribution from water sources feeding the entity.

Sonny said the primary concern is still phosphorus. Phosphorus levels can be reduced by a couple of different methods. The most economic way is establishing a wetland prior to water reentering the river. The second and costly method is the use of chemicals. The problem for fish farms is they have no room to build a wetland prior to entering the river. Sonny said the DEQ has been having good luck with past approved TMDL's and can see little reason to change. He said the big hang up with the EPA is river flows since our facilities are meeting the 0.075 maximum load for phosphorus at this time. Gary Fornshell gave some background on phosphorus levels and said there is no way to expect the facilities to do more than they are. Sonny said the primary area of concern is the river reach above Crystal Springs where there are only a few return flows to the river. Plant growth is expanding in this area. He believes the EPA is being pushed by environmental groups to take more action. The EPA and those groups fail to recognize that the Middle Snake is still a working river and state water laws must also be considered. For all practical purposes the river stops at Milner dam because of the many water right holders. Flushing flows are therefore rare in this reach of the river. While we are seeing one this year, it could be another 10 to 20 years before we see another. Gary said climate change could also be a factor. Bob Muffley asked if there had been any estimates on the cost to the facilities for the greatly reduced load limits. Sonny said the only estimate he knows of is one given by the city of Twin Falls. They estimate the cost to be between 70 and 100 million dollars. Bob also said the Middle Snake had been heavily used by everyone for over 80 years prior to the establishment of the original TMDL and asked if core samples have been taken to see how much phosphorus is being stored in the sediment. Sonny said a few samples have been taken over the years, but cost has been a factor so no, there has been no major study of this. He said he hopes to take some samples this year. Sonny also said the local nonpoint sources have been doing a very good job by reducing both sediment and nutrient loads to the river. A problem, however, is there is evidence that phosphorus levels are increasing in the spring flows. This could be coming from both farming and dairy interests. Bob asked if the EPA is giving any consideration to the steps being taken by the Water Resource Board to recharge the aquifer thus increasing spring flows into the river. Sonny thinks this is a valid argument and doesn't believe it's being considered by the EPA at this time.

Lew Thanked Sonny for taking the time to explain the proposed action by the EPA to change the TMDL and asked Bob to discuss the new proposed budget for the Commission. Bob asked for comment and said he prepared the budget for next year based on the growing carryover we've had for the last several years. Since it appears we may spend some of that money for education during the next couple of years, he decided it may be best to leave the assessment to the counties as it was last year. This reflects a deficit of \$8,500 if all money is spent. Gale asked if the committee needed to take action on the budget and Bob said it's up to the county commissioners.

On another topic, Bob said he contacted Steve Hines concerning the acronym, IDAEMP, which stand for the Idaho Agriculture Economic Model Program. Steve said the acronym must have been made up by his predecessor and the program was only done in the early 90's and is no longer used. He suggested we delete the sentences referring to this model program from the economic portion of the plan. Bob said, if no objection, he would delete the reference from the plan.

Lew said, once again, we are unable to discuss educational opportunities and suggested we not have a speaker for our June meeting and spend the time formulating a plan. Dan Suhr also suggested that we add to the agenda the election of a new vice-chairman since Jack Nelsen is no longer a member.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:45pm.

Respectfully Submitted


Bob J. Muffley, Executive Director

Agenda

Middle Snake Regional Water Resource Commission

Meeting Date: June 21, 2017

Meeting Place – Twin Falls County Office Building at 630 Addison Avenue West, Twin Falls, Idaho, Conference Room A. Enter the back of the building through the revolving door and turn right to the hall way. First door on the left or 2nd door if meeting is moved to conference room B.

Meeting time: 1:00pm

Agenda items:

- 1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (1:00 to 1:05)**
- 2. Approve Bills (1:05 to 1:08)**
- 3. Correspondence (1:08 to 1:15)**
- 4. Election for Vice-chair – (1:15 to 1:20)**
- 5. Update on Mid-Snake TMDL situation – Bob Muffley (1:20 to 1:25)**
- 6. Discussion of possible educational opportunities in the region – (1:25 to 2:25)**
- 7. New or old business: (2:25 to 2:30)**
- 8. Adjourn**

TIME FRAMES FOR EACH AGENDA ITEM LISTED ABOVE ARE ESTIMATES

MINUTES
MIDDLE SNAKE REGIONAL
WATER RESOURCE COMMISSION
June 21, 2017

The meeting of the Commission was called to order by Chairman Lew Pence at 1:04pm. Members present were Kerry McMurray, Duane Turner, Dan Suhr, Gale Kleinkopf, Ami Bennett, Jim Schlund, Mary Davidson, Dean Edgar and Bob Muffley, Executive Director. Also present was Mario de Haro-Marti, U. of I. extension Educator.

Lew asked if there were any changes or corrections to the previous minutes. Hearing none, Jim Schlund moved the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Duane Turner and approved.

Lew asked Bob for the bills since the last meeting. Bob said the bills include his compensation of \$550.00 his mileage for \$27.29 and a final bill from Ed Ditlefsen for \$621.00. Other bills are mileage for the members who are present. Dan Suhr moved the Bills be paid. The motion was seconded by Gale Kleinkopf and approved.

Lew asked Bob if there had been any correspondence since the Last meeting. Bob said he had sent an email to Ed Ditlefsen essentially letting him go as site manager for our web site. Bob said he wasn't able to depend on him to update the web site on a timely basis. Bob received an email from Ed with his final bill which included a 3 year hosting fee he had already paid. Our new site manager will be Marne Curtis of Gooding who will give us a quick response to our needs. This is especially needed so the proposed changes are available to the public prior to a public hearing. Bob said Ami Bennett has agreed to work with Marne on keeping our web site "user friendly" and current.

Bob also said there had been a lot of emails between Sonny Buhider, Gary Fornshell and himself while trying to draft letters to DEQ and the EPA. The final draft of the letter to the EPA was sent by email to all members prior to the meeting. He said Gary and Sonny both felt his first draft was too strongly worded so Bob took their advice and toned down the last draft. He hopes the pre TMDL history lesson will get their attention. Bob went on to cover item 5 on the agenda and gave an update on the TMDL situation. Bob said he had questions concerning the National Environmental Protection Act of 1969 (NEPA). It was his understanding that, if an action by the EPA, caused economic harm, NEPA requirements would need to be met. He also believed the EPA would be required to recognize a local plan. Since this was a legal situation, he called Kerry McMurray for his opinion and asked Kerry to share that opinion with the commission. Kerry said NEPA, although it discusses economic impact and local plans, would probably not help us in our current situation with the TMDL because the EPA is simply forcing the opening of the TMDL and not doing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). They may

consider the economic situation and the plan, but it wouldn't be mandatory at this point. He said Cassia's experience hasn't been good in the past. Bob said he would continue to follow the situation and so would Dan Suhr, who is now a member of the WAG.

Lew went back to item 4 on the agenda which was to elect a new vice-chair for the commission as Jack Nelsen had to resign. Dan Suhr nominated Gail Kleinkopf and asked for unanimous approval by the commission which was received. Gail is now the vice-chair of the commission.

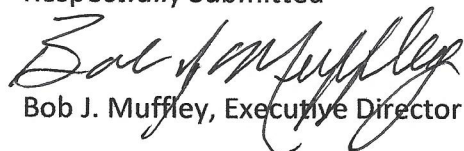
Lew said the last item on the agenda is to discuss ideas for educational opportunities in the region. Mario said we may want to start off by asking ourselves; what is the major problem right now? When this is answered, you can possibly put together an overview for the entire community or target specific groups. He said the extension service will help us once we decide. Bob said this could be easy depending on impact from changes to the TMDL. Following are ideas from commission members:

1. It was suggest that we do things in pieces so public isn't confused.
2. Sell the Commission. Let the public know who we are and what we do.
3. Sell the river. Show the people what once was and how the region benefited over the years.
4. We need a product.
5. Should have a presence on face book and other.
6. Digitalize all our records and files – could get a college intern to help
7. Need to have ongoing education.
8. Describe the multiple use aspects of the Mid-Snake and other waters of the region.
9. educate the public on the economics of the region and its dependency on water.
10. Timing of education is important. When and to whom
11. Fliers and pamphlets
 1. Economic data
 2. Water quality
 3. Water quantity

Under other business Mario said there were two workshops coming up in the region. The first is a manure and compost application work shop that will take place on July 12th from 1:00 to 5:00 at the Swager Farms Dairy in Buhl. The second is a dairy goat and sheep workshop on July 25th at the extension office on 203 Lucy Lane in Gooding which will go all day.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:39pm.

Respectfully Submitted


Bob J. Muffley, Executive Director

Agenda

Middle Snake Regional Water Resource Commission

Meeting Date: July 19, 2017

Meeting Place – Twin Falls County Office Building at 630 Addison Avenue West, Twin Falls, Idaho, Conference Room A. Enter the back of the building through the revolving door and turn right to the hall way. First door on the left or 2nd door if meeting is moved to conference room B.

Meeting time: 1:00pm

Agenda items:

- 1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (1:00 to 1:05)**
- 2. Approve Bills (1:05 to 1:08)**
- 3. Correspondence (1:08 to 1:15)**
- 4. Update on web site: Ami Bennett (1:15 to 1:25)**
- 5. Update on Preparing to digitalize records: Bob Muffley (1:25 to 1:30)**
- 5. Update on Mid-Snake WAG situation – Dan Suhr and Bob (1:30 to 1:45)**
- 6. Narrow in on educational opportunities in the region (See 1st item under ideas on 2nd page of minutes) – (1:45 to 2:30)**
- 7. New or old business: (2:30 to 2:35)**
- 8. Adjourn**

TIME FRAMES FOR EACH AGENDA ITEM LISTED ABOVE ARE ESTIMATES

Agenda

Middle Snake Regional Water Resource Commission

Meeting Date: August 16, 2017

Meeting Place – Twin Falls County Office Building at 630 Addison Avenue West, Twin Falls, Idaho, Conference Room A. Enter the back of the building through the revolving door and turn right to the hall way. First door on the left or 2nd door if meeting is moved to conference room B.

Meeting time: 1:00pm

Agenda items:

1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (1:00 to 1:05)
2. Approve Bills (1:05 to 1:08)
3. Correspondence (1:08 to 1:15)
4. Steve Schuyler, NRCS District Conservationist, Agencies work to conserve water and enhance water quality (1:15 to 2:00)
5. Amy Bennett – update on web site (if any) - (2:00 to 2:10)
6. Bob Muffley – update on digital records and discussion – (2:10 to 2:25)
7. New or old business: (2:25 to 2:35)
8. Adjourn

TIME FRAMES FOR EACH AGENDA ITEM LISTED ABOVE ARE ESTIMATES

MINUTES
MIDDLE SNAKE REGIONAL
WATER RESOURCE COMMISSION
August 16, 2017

The meeting of the Commission was called to order by Chairman Lew Pence at 1:04pm. Members present were Kerry McMurray, Duane Turner, Gail Kleinkopf, Ami Bennett, Jim Schlund and Bob Muffley, Executive Director. Also present were Steve Schuyler, District conservationist for the NRCS and Irene Nautch, DEQ.

Lew asked if there were any changes or corrections to the previous minutes, but said first he has a question. The minutes reflect that Dan Suhr, on his report from the WAG, made the comment that the IDEQ would rather use chlorophyll instead of phosphorous levels to gage water quality in the Mid. Snake and wondered why? Gail Kleinkopf said the term is applying to plant growth in the river and Bob Muffley said chlorophyll may be a better gage on water quality and several other states, with the permission of the EPA, started using this method. While phosphorous levels are still on the high side in the snake, there are only a few places with excessive plant growth unlike what the river looked like in the early 90's. Duane Turner also said new wells on page two should read replacement wells. Jim Schlund moved the minutes be approved as corrected. The motion was seconded by Gail Kleinkopf and approved.

Lew asked Bob for the bills since the last meeting. Bob said the bills include his compensation of \$550.00, mileage for \$27.29 and new envelopes, printing and other costs for supplies in the amount of \$564.24. Other bills are mileage for the members who are present. Ami Bennett moved the Bills be paid. The motion was seconded by Kerry McMurray and approved.

Lew asked Bob if there had been any correspondence since the Last meeting. Bob said we had an email from Beatrice Brailsford of the Snake River Alliance asking if any members of the commission would like to join them on a tour of the cleanup site at the INL. She said they would be meeting at the Lost River rest stop on highway 20. The tour will be on August 31st and another on October 11th. Bob said he would let Beatrice know if anyone wants to go. Bob said he had also called Brian Olmstead of the Twin Falls Canal Company and asked how the load restriction proposed by the USDA and the EPA worked out. Brian said, after negotiations, it isn't too bad. After that they talked about the amount of carryover they were going to have this year. Brian said he had good news for the recharge people because they would have all the water they need and they would still be sending water down the river. The two upper dams are still nearly full this year. Brian also said he spoke with the manager of the Salmon Falls tract who told him he was afraid they would need to be running water down the canals even after the end of the water season. Bob said he noticed this week that Salmon Falls Reservoir was still higher than the very beginning of most irrigation seasons on the tract.

Lew introduced Steve Schuyler the District Conservationist for the Natural Resource conservation Service (NRCS) out of the Twin Falls office. Steve said his agency got its start during the time of the Dust Bowl in the mid-west during the 1930s and from that came the formation of local Soil Conservation Districts made up of volunteer farmers and others. He said the government actually put together something that works because information now flows up from the local level to the Department. Steve handed out a sheet showing Idaho received over \$13,200,000 From the USDA for projects in the state which were also listed. He said about 90% of their work load had been replacing furrow or gated pipe irrigation systems with sprinkler systems. By doing this, they have minimized runoff back to the rivers which were loaded with sediment, chemicals and nutrients. He said while most farm operations on the north side of the river have converted to sprinkler, for various reasons, only about 60% has done so on the south side. He said the more people who convert to sprinklers the more benefits there are to water quality. This statement brought several questions from the commission on why the south side was lagging behind on conversions. Steve said the land north of the river is more sandy and rocky making it more difficult to use gravity irrigation methods so they were more motivated to convert early. The land south of the river is more flat with deeper soil so the gravity methods work well. Bob Muffley said he has seen more and more conversions on the Twin Falls tract over the last few years and he believes it may have a lot to do with the cost and short supply of labor.

Steve said he also does a lot of work with nutrient management and helping people create systems that hold water in the soil so there is more for crop uptake. Much of this work is with the back yard and small farm operations. He also does a lot of work in the area of soil health which is becoming a big item in minimum and no till operations. They are trying to build the soil through these methods so it also helps retain the water and minimize runoff. It also helps to keep the water from migrating to the aquifer. Jim Schlund asked if he did any work with settling pond construction. Steve said they did a lot of work in this area until 2002 when the state passed laws regarding construction and the Idaho Department of Ag is now responsible. He said they would help out if needed. He said that biggest pond project the agency worked on in our area was the Rock Creek project many years ago. Steve said they are also working with farmers on cover crops and looking at different blends of cover crops to add healthy bacteria to the soil. The healthy bacteria will help fight some of the unwanted bacteria now in certain soils. He said other things they work on are keeping cattle from damaging stream banks, canal settling pond systems and tracking the snow pack for the Salmon Falls tract. Most of the work they do is, however, is water quality related.

Lew thanked Steve for coming to speak with us and called on Amy Bennett for a report on the Web site. Amy said she and Marne are working on some upgrades to the system and looking at various presentations.

Lew called on Bob Muffley for an update on digitalizing the commission records. Bob said he and Amy got all the records such as agendas, minutes, correspondence, budgets and votes of the county commissioners on a single USB drive. He said it only took about 1 ½ hours to put in 25 year worth of records. He said he is now going through the old records for the Middle Snake

Study Group and hopes to have them on a drive by the next meeting. He said we would probably need to make some decision on how the material should be presented on the web site at the next meeting. He said he also came across some old reports which he needs to go through and bring some to the next meeting to see if we want to include them on the site as well. Bob said the old Study Group material is very interesting because we worked with all the state and federal agencies who dealt with water and the cooperation among the agencies and the counties was amazing. Gail Kleinkopf said we need to once again work with other agencies for education purposes. Bob asked Gail if you would email him some ideas he has on the educational front and Gail said he would.

Lew asked if there were any new or old business to come before the commission. Hearing note the meeting was adjourned at 2:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Bob J. Muffley, Executive Director

Agenda

Middle Snake Regional Water Resource Commission

Meeting Date: September 20, 2017

Meeting Place – Twin Falls County Office Building at 630 Addison Avenue West, Twin Falls, Idaho, Conference Room A. Enter the back of the building through the revolving door and turn right to the hall way. First door on the left or 2nd door if meeting is moved to conference room B.

Meeting time: 1:00pm

Agenda items:

- 1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (1:00 to 1:05)**
- 2. Approve Bills (1:05 to 1:08)**
- 3. Correspondence (1:08 to 1:10)**
- 4. Mitch Vermeer – Manager, Idaho Department of Ag Dairy/CAFO Bureau,
Discussion topics: rules inspectors are governed by, How inspections are conducted,
Agencies actions when dairy or CAFO is out of compliance, How complaints from the
public are addressed. (1:10 to 2:10)**
- 5. Discuss change of meeting time – Requested by Duane Turner (2:10 to 2:15)**
- 6. Wag Meeting report – Dan Suhr (12:15 to 12:20)**
- 7. Lew Pence – Tour of INL waste site (2:20 to 2:30)**
- 8. New or old business: (2:30 to 2:40)**
- 9. Adjourn**

TIME FRAMES FOR EACH AGENDA ITEM LISTED ABOVE ARE ESTIMATES

MINUTES
MIDDLE SNAKE REGIONAL
WATER RESOURCE COMMISSION
September 20, 2017

The meeting of the Commission was called to order by Chairman Lew Pence at 1:04pm. Members present were Kerry McMurray, Duane Turner, Ami Bennett, Jim Schlund, Mary Davidson, Dean Edgar and Bob Muffley, Executive Director. Also present were Mitch Vermeer, Manager of the Idaho Dept. of Ag CAFO Bureau, Mario de Haro Marti and Steve Hines, U. of I. Extension Educators and Irene Nautch, DEQ.

Lew asked if there were any changes or corrections to the previous minutes. Hearing none, Jim Schlund moved the minutes be approved as corrected. The motion was seconded by Ami Bennett and approved.

Lew asked Bob for the bills since the last meeting. Bob said the bills include his compensation of \$550.00, mileage for \$27.29 and postage stamps for \$49.00. He said there is also a bill from Marne Curtis for web site work in the amount of \$210.00. Other bills are mileage for the members who are present. Duane Turner moved the Bills be paid. The motion was seconded by Jim Schlund and approved.

Lew asked Bob if there had been any correspondence since the Last meeting. Bob said we had an email from Beatrice Brailsford of the Snake River Alliance asking if a member would be able to be part of a panel discussion. She said the panel will discuss current issues concerning the cleanup of the site. Bob said whoever would like to be on the panel from the Commission would have their mileage and one night stay in a motel paid by the commission. There were no volunteers so Bob said he would attend. He would first ask co-chair Gail Kleinkopf if he would attend since he has a science back ground. Bob also said he sent a letter to the USGS in Boise asking for help with groundwater quality trends in Jerome, Gooding and Lincoln counties. He hasn't received a reply, but only sent the letter two days ago.

Lew said the IDWR had checked his well and found it had raised 10' since it was measured last year. He said apparently recharge is working. Lew lives east of Gooding on Hwy 26. Several people suggest that he have his well water tested for quality. He said he hasn't yet, but he will. Irene Nautch said the test wells around the Gooding recharge site were all testing good at this time.

Lew introduced Mitch Vermeer, Manager of the CAFO Bureau for the Idaho Department of Ag. Mitch said his section deals with dairies and CAFO's for the state. He said Idaho currently has about 500 dairies of which 300 are located in our region. The average size of these the dairy operations are 1,100 head. He said there are 9,700 cattle feeder operations in Idaho, but the

department only looks at those with 1,000 head or more as these are CAFO's by definition. His inspectors look for various operational components and also test ground water on each visit. Mitch said they also inspect grade A dairy operations. These inspections are tough, as they should be and if violations occur, the dairyman has 30 days to comply or they will lose their grade. They inspect every dairy two to six times per year for environmental conditions. They look at the yards, ponds, piling of waste and the handling of nutrients. He said, in some ways they rely on the public to report if problems are found. Environmental problems, when found, are taken seriously and if inspections show a problem the dairy is given between 30 and 90 days before enforcement actions are taken. He said, this year, 40 enforcement actions were taken and many of them stemmed from the unusually hard winter. If problems are not corrected, they can issue fines on a per day basis until corrected. They also look for increases and changes to waste handling, as they must be approved by the bureau before they happen. The inspectors also look at the irrigation systems and take soil samples of all land applied waste. If over 40 parts phosphorous are discovered, action must be taken to reduce the waste load. A dairy must indicate on their plan where waste is exported, but the bureau can't inspect those sites. They do, however, look at the waste loads leaving the dairy so they can approximate the nutrient loads for waste, but it isn't very accurate. All dairy lagoons must be approved by them and regularly inspected, but each county must approve the location. The legislature approved a budget which allowed the Department to hire three new waste inspectors and that's all these people will do.

Mitch said that normally, when an extreme event occurs, like last winter, they are called in to go to the dairy and see what can be done to contain waste. The dairy, however, has no requirements at this time to have an emergency management plan. Mitch was asked if lagoons were designed to handle such things as 100 year floods. Mitch said they go by NRCS standards for a 25 year flood event. They also have a compliance program for compliance with rules on dairies of 3,500 head or more. Mitch finished by saying his bureau checks out all complaints, even when anonymous. His people investigate immediately and their inspections can be intensive and lengthy. He said they have several open cases at this time, but because legal matters are involved, he can't discuss them. He said well tests are taken on an annual basis and most are under 10 parts per million of nitrogen. Nitrates are also checked to see if the source is animal or synthetic. When asked if they also inspect people who raise replacement heifers, he said that would fall under the beef side of the department. Duane asked who the nutrient inspector is for this area and Mitch said Niki Holder out of the Twin Falls office.

Lew thanked Mitch for coming down from Boise to give us some insight into the dairy inspections in this region and what they entail. He said our commission has helped other agencies in the past with our legislators and asked if we could help his department, what would he like to see? Mitch said he would like to extend their inspection to 3rd party receivers of animal waste. He also said that if a dairy owns another farm under an LLC to receive waste, his bureau isn't able to inspect it as well.

Lew said the next item on the agenda involves a change to the timing of our monthly meetings and asked Duane to explain the request. Duane said he is always leaving the meeting early

because it drives a school bus. He would, therefore, like to change the meeting time to begin at noon instead of 1:00pm. After some discussion on the impact to possible speakers, Dan Suhr moved the meeting time be changed to noon. The motion was seconded by Dean Edgar and approved.

Lew asked Dan for a report on his latest WAG meeting. Dan said Sonny Buhidar is asking for comments on his strategy paper on revising the TMDL and members should get their ideas to Bob as soon as possible. Dan also said he doesn't like Sonny's idea of using a flow basis for the TMDL. He said this could cause problems for cities currently using a lowest flow basis for their plans. He said the city of Twin Falls isn't happy. Dan also said he was not aware of all the flow measuring devices in our region. He said there are many in the river and springs. Lew said he thought the strategy paper drawn up by Sonny was good, but had some suggestions. He said there are several columns on table one and the column marked "category" is not explained in the document. He would like to see this explained. He said he would also like to see the word dairy used instead of CAFO since it's better understood in this region. He said the words feedlots and dairies are used in legislation. Dan said CAFO is the best term because it includes all livestock operations that meet the CAFO criteria. Lew last suggestion was to include the word "recharge" on page 22 paragraph 7 talking about the Water Resource Board.

Lew reported on his I.N.L tour earlier this month and said it was a worthwhile experience. He said the group looked at four different sites dealing with hazardous waste. The first site is where barrels containing waste were buried. He said that they want to cap this site for any residuals that may be in the ground. The capping involves covering the area with good soil and planting native vegetation. The second site was the actual barrels that were removed. He said each barrel must be opened with special equipment and the contents sorted. They explained that each barrel contained some items that were more hazardous than others. These items are then placed in special casks for future permanent storage. The third site is where they will be processing the liquid waste. They have made some fixes and now believe the plant is ready to start processing. They also mentioned all the waste that had been brought in from other states in the past. The fourth site is one containing barrels sitting on a paved stack yard. DOE is also sorting the waste from these containers and compacting the barrels to 1/8 their original size. They also told the group how great they are at handling the waste and their people are highly trained at what they do. Lew took this to mean they want to ship future waste to the site to be processed. Dan Suhr asked if they spoke about the plumb. Lew said they did and are now using pumps to capture chemicals from the plumb. Dan also asked Bob Muffley if he had more information concerning the Line Commission meeting in Twin Falls on October 4. Bob said he had forgotten, but would email everyone when he gets the details.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:44pm

Respectfully Submitted


Bob J. Muffley, Executive Director

Agenda

Middle Snake Regional Water Resource Commission

Meeting Date: October 18, 2017

Meeting Place – Twin Falls County Office Building at 630 Addison Avenue West, Twin Falls, Idaho, Conference Room A. Enter the back of the building through the revolving door and turn right to the hall way. First door on the left or 2nd door if meeting is moved to conference room B.

Meeting time: Noon

Agenda items:

- 1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (noon to 12:05)**
- 2. Approve Bills (12:05 to 12:08)**
- 3. Correspondence (12:08 to 12:15)**
- 4. Balthasar (Sonny) Buhidar, DEQ – (12:15 to 1:00)**
 - 1. Explanation of the Flow Method**
 - 2. EPA response to Plan of Action for TMDL**
 - 3. Summary of actions to date and next steps**
- 5. Report on Line Commission meeting in Twin Falls – Bob Muffley & Dan Suhr (1:00 to 1:15)**
- 6. Report on panel discussion for the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability – Bob Muffley (1:15 to 1:25)**
- 7. Recess for public hearing on proposed plan changes at 1:30**
- 8. New or old business: (2:30 to 2:40)**
- 9. Adjourn**

TIME FRAMES FOR EACH AGENDA ITEM LISTED ABOVE ARE ESTIMATES

MINUTES
MIDDLE SNAKE REGIONAL
WATER RESOURCE COMMISSION
October 18, 2017

The meeting of the Commission was called to order by Chairman Lew Pence at 12:01pm. Members present were Kerry McMurray, Dan Suhr, Duane Turner, Ami Bennett, Jim Schlund, Mary Davidson, Gale Kleinkopf and Bob Muffley, Executive Director. Also present were Roy Hurbert, Lincoln County Commissioner, Cathy Roemer, Jerome County Commissioner and Sonny Buhidar, Irene Nautch and Michael Brown of the Twin Falls office of DEQ.

Lew asked if there were any changes or corrections to the previous minutes. Hearing none, Jim Schlund moved the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Ami Bennett and approved.

Lew asked Bob for the bills since the last meeting. Bob said the bills include his compensation of \$550.00, mileage for \$27.29 His lodging and mileage to the panel discussion for the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability meeting in Lava Hot springs for \$267.15 and two advertisements placed in the Times News legal section for \$158.82 for a total of \$1,003.26. He said there is also a bill from Muffley Insurance for photo copies for the past 5 months in the amount \$41.75. Other bills are mileage for the members who are present. Dan Suhr moved the Bills be paid. The motion was seconded by Gale Kleinkopf and approved.

Lew asked Bob if there had been any correspondence since the Last meeting. Bob said we had an email from Marne Curtis, our web site person, saying she has tried several times to get needed info from Ed on our current web site so she wants to build a new, more interactive site, but will be starting from scratch. I told her we needed the updates so go ahead with the build. We also received an email from Beatrice Brailsford thanking us for agreeing to participate in the upcoming meeting of the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability. He said we also received a reply from Mitchell Vermeer on our question about the 2nd party in handling dairy waste. Once again he referred to the 3rd party in his reply. Bob said the only thing he can come up with is that the 2nd party is the hauler of the waste since Mitch said they are also inspected from time to time. We also received a reply from Sonny Buhider concerning our suggested changes to DEQ's strategy paper for the TMDL. Sonny said all three comments were worked into the paper and enclosed the revisions. Bob said there were a couple of other items that are considered correspondence, but he'd wait and talk about them under new business.

Lew introduced Sonny Buhider, Regional Water Quality Manager for IDEQ, to explain the "flow method" to us and give an update for actions on the TMDL to date and the next steps. Sonny handed out an explanation of the flow method and graphs showing the flow curves at various times and places along a river. Sonny went on to say there is an excellent historical record of

the flows in the Mid Snake, but not so good for the tributaries. He said they would like to monitor flows daily, but it is cost prohibitive. Flows spike on a daily basis and you get the best picture of flows during that time. Sonny said the Snake River is a working river because it includes hydropower, agriculture, industries and cities. Flow charts of the river shows nearly a zero flow past Milner dam during the irrigation season, but flows again because of agriculture return flows and especially spring discharge. All flow charts decline during the agricultural season. He said it's interesting that all charts are below the target line for suspended solids at the test sites, but nearly all charts are above or far above the .075 mg/L target for total phosphorus. Sonny said point source dischargers are meeting their targets for phosphorus. Non-point sources have greatly improved, but are still too high. Lew asked about algae looking like oil slicks and Sonny said this can happen when conditions are just right. Growth in the region must be carefully done or ground water (drinking water) will be in more and more jeopardy. The flow method would be the best move for all point source dischargers. He said even the winter flows when water is higher in the river show high phosphorous levels. Bob asked what the TMDL target levels are above Milner Dam. He said the target levels are higher than ours.

Sonny went on to say the advisory committee is working toward their short term goal at this time which is completing their short term plan of action. This plan will dictate their future actions on the TMDL. The EPA is kept informed of their progress.

Lew Thanked Sonny for his explanation and update and asked Dan Suhr and Bob Muffley for their report on the Line Commission meeting held in Twin Falls on the 4th. Dan said there wasn't much attendance except for people from eastern Idaho. The news media didn't even attend. He said it was like he thought it would be, a cheering section for the INL. What he got from it was the INL was building large and expensive new educational facilities near ISU in Pocatello and were upset because the Union Pacific would not make changes to a railroad crossing for them.

Bob said there was a presentation on molten salt reactors by Terrestrial Energy USA. The long and short of it is they want to build a test reactor at the INL. He said the system uses liquid fuel, but it turns into solid enriched uranium which, once again, will need to be dealt with. The purpose of the reactor is to compete with gas to make electricity. The Presenter was excited because it will only cost 1.2 billion dollars to produce 200 MW of power. The reactor, however, will last 7 years before needing to be replaced. Bob said DOE reported on the cleanup operation and said all transuranic waste, except for 1 acre will be processed and ready to ship by 2018. They are also sure their new "fix" to the treatment facility for the buried liquid waste will work this time around. We've heard that before. It certainly sounds like they want to move more waste to the site for processing. Bob also said they want to reopen their transient reactor test facility which has been shut down since 1994. This facility conducts transient reactor tests where the test material is subjected to neutron pulses that can simulate conditions ranging from mild upsets to severe reactor accidents. This will also bring more hazardous waste to the INL.

Lew asked if there was any new or old business at this time. Bob Muffley said he had a couple of items that were given to him by U of I Educator, Mario de Haro-Marti. Mario told Bob that on the 26th of this month the U of I, Gooding Soil Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service are holding a free workshop and field day demonstration for cover crops. Lew Pence thought he might be able to attend. Mario also had a request for an "old time" member of the commission to be part of a Stakeholder Advisory Group on a U of I grant program to map, understand and optimize the food, energy and water system of the Upper Snake River Basin. Emphasis will be on the Magic Valley. He said our region is more diversified than most other regions of the country and that's why we were chosen for the grant and study. The results of this study could produce a tool for determining the future of growth in this area. There should only be about three meeting for the advisory group and they will pay for lunch and give each participant \$100.00. The meeting will be on November 9th. Gale Kleinkopf volunteered to represent the commission.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 1:28pm to go into public hearing.

Respectfully Submitted

Bob J. Muffley, Executive Director

Agenda

Middle Snake Regional Water Resource Commission

Meeting Date: November 15, 2017

Meeting Place – Twin Falls County Office Building at 630 Addison Avenue West, Twin Falls, Idaho, Conference Room A. Enter the back of the building through the revolving door and turn right to the hall way. First door on the left or 2nd door if meeting is moved to conference room B.

Meeting time: Noon

Agenda items:

- 1. Approve Minutes of previous meeting (noon to 12:05)**
- 2. Approve Bills (12:05 to 12:08)**
- 3. Correspondence (12:08 to 12:15)**
- 4. Randy MacMillan, PhD, Vice president, Clear Springs Foods (12:15 to 12:55)**
 - 1. Aquaculture position and concerns on revision to TMDL**
 - 2. Water quality data and trends for spring feeding aquaculture facilities**
- 5. Discuss proposed changes to water quality section of plan (12:55 to 1:15)**
- 6. Report on cover crop education program – Lew Pence (1:15 to 1:20)**
- 7. Report on Stakeholder Advisory Group for U. Of I. Study - Gale Kleinkopf (1:20 to 1:30)**
- 8. Mid Snake WAG report – Dan Suhr (1:30 to 1:40)**
- 9. New or old business (1:40 to 1:50)**
- 10. Adjourn**

TIME FRAMES FOR EACH AGENDA ITEM LISTED ABOVE ARE ESTIMATES

MINUTES
MIDDLE SNAKE REGIONAL
WATER RESOURCE COMMISSION
November 15, 2017

The meeting of the Commission was called to order by Chairman Lew Pence at 12:03pm. Members present were Kerry McMurray, Dan Suhr, Ami Bennett, Jim Schlund, Mary Davidson, Gale Kleinkopf and Bob Muffley, Executive Director. Also present were Ken Skinner and Candice Hopkins with the USGS, Mario de Haro-Marti, U of I Extension Educator, Sonny Buhidar and Irene Nautch with the DEQ and Randy MacMillan of Clear Springs Food.

Lew asked if there were any changes or corrections to the previous minutes. Hearing none, Dan Suhr moved the minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Gail Kleinkopf and approved.

Lew asked Bob for the bills since the last meeting. Bob said the bills include his compensation of \$550.00 and his mileage for \$27.29. Other bills are mileage for the members who are present. Jim Schlund moved the Bills be paid. The motion was seconded by Dan Suhr and approved.

Lew asked Bob if there was any correspondence since our last meeting. Bob said the only thing we received was a thanks from Beatrice for our taking part in their panel discussion for the Snake River Alliance.

Lew introduced Randy MacMillan, Vice President of Clear Springs Foods to talk about his industries concerns on opening the TMDL and data on water quality at the spring heads. Randy said they do support opening the TMDL because, the way it was proposed by the EPA, they really had no alternative. He said the concerns of the aquaculture industry include the heavily regulated flow of the river and the definition of the word nuisance with regard to plant growth. He said plant growth may or may not be a problem because some can be beneficial fish and other wildlife. He thinks that nuisance must be better defined through the TMDL revision process. Another concern is the surrogate water column total phosphorus target doesn't correlate with rooted plant growth. Randy said the bottom line is aquaculture in the region could have a sustainability problem. They have already spent a lot of time and money to achieve a 60% reduction in total phosphorus discharge from their facilities and can't economically do more. He said the worst problem for the fish industry is nitrate-nitrite as this has a direct impact on fish health. Phosphorus, however, is not a problem. The industry has closely monitored the springs feeding their facilities for years because they must keep their product safe and healthy for the consumer.

While the industry monitors their springs they also monitor the river at the Ken Curtis Bridge. He said Idaho Power also samples this area. The data from this site shows a reducing trend for phosphorus, but there doesn't seem to be much of a correlation between high and low flows. He said the river generally runs about 1,500cfs at the bridge with spikes from time to time. He said, after a period of high flows, for some time after, phosphorus levels will decline which is possibly because it has reached a different level in the sediment. Hydro facilities reduce flows so that helps to rebuild the phosphorus in the sediment over time. He concludes that total phosphorus concentrations are only weakly correlated with flows, but large flushing flows will lead to prolonged lower concentrations of phosphorus. Since phosphorus is in the sediment, the real problem is the fact that it's a working river with many users. Randy said their data on spring water entering fish facilities over the last 27 years show increasing trends in nitrate-nitrite in the springs and there is also evidence that phosphorus levels are increasing as well, especially on the higher elevation springs. This is evident at the CSF Visitor Center spring and Fountain spring. Depending on the time of the year, phosphorus levels have been as much as 100 to 120 part per billion. Since 2000 all springs have shown some increase in phosphorus. He said he believed that phosphorus couldn't travel much in groundwater because it adheres to soil and rocks. He recently read a report by the USGS, however, that was done in the east that could lead to a change in that concept. Randy summarized his talk today by saying their industry supports re-opening the TMDL and support DEQ in their efforts. He said the Snake River water flow is heavily regulated which changes the environmental dynamics and believes the water column total phosphorus concentration does not correlate with daily water volume nor does it directly impact rooted aquatic plants. Sediments are the likely modifier of water column total phosphorus. After several questions Lew thanked Randy for coming to speak with us today and giving the commission a better understanding the problem from the aquaculture prospective.

Lew asked Bob Muffley to help out on the next agenda item pertaining to proposed changes for the water quality portion of our plan. Bob said he received written testimony from Irene Nautch of the DEQ recommending some changes and sent them to all our members. He said we need to discuss her proposed changes and corrections at this time so we can complete our findings of fact and conclusions of law prior to sending the document to the county commissioners. The counties must then hold their own public hearings. Bob asked if there were any comments concerning Irene's testimony. A few members said they agreed with her recommendations and Bob said he did as well except for one. She suggested we alphabetize the impacts to our region's water quality found at the bottom of page 22. Bob said back in 1992 it was decided we should not alphabetize these items because it placed agriculture number one. At that time, and he believes even now, this is not a good idea. Since much of the water quality plan concerns agricultural uses we wanted then and he believes we should even now. This shows agricultural interests that they are not the only industry that can impact water quality and their industry is only one of many concerns. There was general agreement by the members to leave the list as written. Bob said all other suggested changes have been incorporated into the document. Ami Bennett moved the recommendation sent by Irene be incorporated into the plan with the exception of alphabetizing and that the corrected plan be adopted by the commission. The motion was seconded by Mary Davidson and approved.

Lew said he had attended the cover crop education program sponsored by the Gooding Soil conservation District, NRCS and U. of I Extension. Lew reported the program was excellent and showed why cover crops are so important in southern Idaho. He learned about new types of cover crops and their benefits to the soil. He said he remembers that in the spring of the year there would be so much sand on the road south of Wendell that you couldn't get to the Niagra Springs Park. This problem was finally corrected when the farmer started planting a cover crop on his fields.

Lew Asked Gale Kleinkopf for a report on the Stakeholder Advisory Group meeting sponsored by the U.of I. regarding a grant to the university for a study to map, understand and optimize food, energy and water systems in the Magic Valley. Gale said the advisory board is made up of people who are very interested in water and what it will lead to in the future. Representatives from many industries in the region sit on the panel. The researchers will be using various models to project future growth in the region and it involves experts from around the country. He said the panel was put together to answer questions and comment on the needs of the region. Mario de Haro-Marti said he is working on the technical side of the effort and at this time they are trying to put together as much information as they can about our region and its communities. Ami Bennett asked if counties could contribute to the effort with such things as current land uses which can be obtained through county Planning and zoning Commission's. Mario said he would make that suggestion.

Lew asked Dan Suhr to give a report on the WAG meeting he attended earlier this month. Dan said, at this time they are still trying to figure out time lines and settle on a definition of nuisance. He said they still aren't sure what the EPA wants. Randy MacMillan said it's a little confusing since some EPA people want to give the DEQ a little more latitude and others don't. He said they had until April of 2019 to change the TMDL.

Under other business, Bob Muffley said we will go to the county commissioners in January with the recommended changes to the plan. Each county will need to schedule their own public hearings. Mario de Haro-Marti said the U. of I Extension will be having a pesticide applicators seminar on December 13th and 14th and will be holding a Risk Assessment and Management seminar for dairies in Twin Falls on November 16th, January 24th and March 7th.

Being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 1:50pm.

Respectfully Submitted

Bob J. Muffley, Executive Director

