



MEETING SUMMARY

Ogden Valley General Plan Water Sub-Committee

Meeting #1 - Kick-off

December 17, 2014

3:00 – 5:00 pm

Huntsville Library Auditorium

Participants

Bill White, Huntsville Town

Ron Gleason

Ryan Jolley, Jones & DeMille Eng.

Ted Mickelsen, Jones & DeMille Eng.

Ross Hansen, Division of Water Rights

Rob Thomas, Wolf Creek Water & Sewer

Scott Richardson, Huntsville Town

Kent Jones, Division of Water Rights

Miranda Menzies, Work Creek Water & Sewer

Kenton Moffett, Ogden City

Dennis Shaw, Eden Water Works

Pen Hollist, Liberty Pipeline Company

Brandon Thueson, Weber Fire District

Mark Anderson, Weber Basin Water Conservancy District

Weber County

Sean Wilkinson

Charlie Ewert

Scott Mendoza

Consultant Team (Logan Simpson Design)

Buck Swaney

Krissy Nielsen

Introduction

Goals of this subcommittee:

- To produce a narrative on the challenges and functions of water in the Valley.
- To gain an understanding of trends on water availability and quality.
- To produce recommendations on water governance.

Dialogue

Quality

- General consensus is that current water quality is excellent. The main concern is that as more development comes into the Valley, it will impact the water quality.
- The group would like to see a more formal relationship between Huntsville and Weber County to ensure development doesn't impact water quality conditions in Huntsville.



Quantity and Geology-

- Huntsville and other communities are having a difficult time finding additional sources of water. Currently, Huntsville relies on the spring by the Monastery, and does not have adequate water to manage peak demand (and is out of compliance with regulations).
- Fire Department experiences issues with water supply and access. It is difficult to know if there is enough water available, and building codes require significant flows that valley water systems can struggle to supply.
- Miranda Menzies provided a handout and explained the geology of the Valley. Ryan Jolley contributed with a handout on specific capacity. Because of geological conditions explained by Miranda, ground water is not a reliable option for large-scale development. The geology of the Valley is not high permeability, except for in the few gravel areas. This means that majority of wells draw low flows. The water is there, but it is not highly productive. (handouts are attached)
- Anecdotally, shallow wells are going dry. This may be because of changes in irrigation practices. This is contradicted by some other monitoring data, but it isn't known whether the contradiction is because deep and permeable wells are being monitored and not shallow ones.

How many units can the Valley support?

- This question cannot be answered without data, but Miranda did offer a number of around 10,000 based on her knowledge.
- What is plan B if we cannot support the level of development occurring? Some indication that the simplest solution might be to convert agricultural water into municipal water.
- Look into how much water is stored vs. obligated at Weber Basin. Exchange contracts with Weber Basin need to be considered carefully, and within the context of available groundwater.

What is the situation with “water on paper”?

- We need to collect the number of how many have been issued.
- There is no easy way to show how many are being put to beneficial use.
- Best estimate reported of decree of water rights was 33,000 acre feet.

Governance

Best estimate is 83 individual water companies. Water companies are willing and do work together, but are not ready to give up individual ownership. Additionally, it was discussed if the reason so many water companies exist is because of the way the system is set up impedes smaller companies from joining larger ones, or if it is because of the culture.

- One idea: Change in the way the developments are approved at Weber County. A “will-serve” letter required before development can occur. This would require some sort of a water company moratorium – no more water companies – to be workable.



Data

There is no consolidated data repository. It would be valuable to gather quantitative data and at some point compare it to historical data. The initial study is needed and then a sustainability plan with data.

Action Items and Next Steps

Committee members were asked to volunteer in an effort to produce key information summaries on the following topics:

1. Existing Conditions for Water Quantity- Each water company present to write a short one or two paragraph summary on their existing conditions.
2. Existing Conditions on Water Quality- Logan Simpson will contact Dr. Sorenson from USU and extract data from the Avery 1994 article suggested by Pen.
3. Governance- Weber Basin will write up a short summary on how their exchange system works. Otherwise, the group felt that is was not necessary to produce a write up on the current governance structure.
4. A comprehensive, valley-wide water balance study like the one in Morgan County is desired. There also needs to be a monitoring program to make the initial study trend worthy. This was also discussed as a “ground water development plan”. LSD and Weber County to discuss this detail.

The Committee will meet again on January 28th at 2:00 pm at the Huntsville Library.