

SPOKANE COUNTY WATER AVAILABILITY ADVISORY GROUP

**Thursday, November 15, 2012
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Spokane County Water Resources Center
1004 N. Freya St.
Spokane, WA 99202**

MEETING SUMMARY

Attending: *(This list includes only those who signed the sign-in sheet)*

Rob Lindsay, <i>Spokane County</i>	Mike Hermanson, <i>Spokane County</i>
Doug Greenland, <i>City of Spokane</i>	Jeanne Barnes, <i>Spokane Assoc. of Realtors</i>
Rusty Post, <i>Dept. of Ecology</i>	Ty Wick, <i>Spokane Co. Water District #3</i>
Karen Skoog, <i>Stevens Co. Farm Bureau</i>	Michael Cathcart, <i>Spokane Homebuilders Assoc.</i>
Steven Holderby, <i>Spokane Regional Health District</i>	Alene Lindstrand, <i>Realtor</i>
Dick Price, <i>Stevens Co. PUD</i>	Steve Skipworth, <i>Liberty Lake Sewer & Water District</i>
Rachael Osborn, <i>CELP</i>	Katherine Rowden, <i>NOAA</i>
Susan Gulick, <i>Sound Resolutions (Facilitator)</i>	

1. Opening

- Mike distributed a map noting the estimated preliminary plats outside public water service areas that have been filed since 1/1/2003, which was requested at the last meeting.
- Jeanne Barnes distributed real estate forms that relate to wells and water availability, including the seller disclosure statement, the land and acreage addendum, and the well addendum.

2. Review Draft Report

A. Background

- The Advisory Group clarified that watershed groups have been grappling with the issue of water availability for more than five years. This will be changed in the report.
- Rachel noted that there are more state statutes that require counties to consider water availability in making land use decisions. She will provide a list to Susan.

B. Determination of Water Availability Prior to Issuance of a Building Permit

- Susan will ask Northwest Land and Water if low producing wells should start at a pumping rate of less than one gpm, and will clarify the text accordingly.
- The Advisory Group discussed that the current standard proposes a minimum of one gpm per household. If a well serves two households, the requirement is doubled, etc. The Advisory Group discussed that this often leads to conflicts if one house uses more than its allotment. It was noted that homeowners that share a well generally have a written agreement related to well use and maintenance, but this does not always prevent conflicts. This issue will be noted in the report, though there are not suggestions for how to resolve it at this time.

If you have questions or comments, please contact Susan Gulick of Sound Resolutions at (206) 548-0469 or by e-mail at Susan@Soundresolutions.com.

C. Assessment of Long-Term Water Availability

- Susan will clarify in the report that groundwater monitoring is not equivalent to well metering.
- The Advisory Group discussed whether groundwater monitoring is desired in “areas of concern” or in areas with known problems. It was mentioned that monitoring helps identify problems, so limiting it known problems may be counter-productive. Susan will try to improve the language in the report.

D. Geographic “Problem Areas”

- The Advisory Group had a lengthy discussion on whether the establishment of overlay zones (which are understood to be a tool used in land use planning), or the mapping of geographic areas with water availability problems (which would be informational, but would not impact land use planning), should be a recommendation of the Advisory Group. Currently this topic is on the list of unfinished business that the Advisory Group encourages Spokane County to continue working on.
- Susan agreed to write a couple of options for the Advisory Group to consider at their next meeting: one that recommends that Spokane County develop overlay maps of areas with limited water availability, and one that recommends that Spokane establish overlay zones.
- Susan will work with Advisory Group members via e-mail on these options. Additional options may emerge from the discussion.

E. Determination of Water Availability Prior to Land Division

- The Advisory Group discussed the need to better explain the term “impairment” in the report.
- The Advisory Group also discussed that it may be preferable to ask that an evaluation of legal availability be made prior to sub-divisions, rather than an evaluation of potential impairment, because the term impairment has many nuances, while the term legal availability is straight forward. This will be decided at the next meeting. It was noted that at the outset of this project physical, not legal, availability was to be the focus of the Advisory Group.

F. Impairment to Senior Water Rights

- There were no changes discussed in this section of the report, although changes to the discussion of impairment in the previous section may need to be reflected in this section as well.

G. Conclusion

- The Advisory Group did not recommend any changes to conclusion of the report.

3. Next Steps

- Advisory Group members should provide Susan with any additional comments on the draft report no later than Nov. 30th.
- Advisory Group members should send Susan letters of support or objection to the recommendations of the Advisory Group prior to the next meeting. The letters may be amended to reflect any changes made to the report at the final meeting.

If you have questions or comments, please contact Susan Gulick of Sound Resolutions at (206) 548-0469 or by e-mail at Susan@Soundresolutions.com.

- Susan will send an e-mail to Advisory Group members to determine if the best date for the final meeting is January 17 or January 24. The final meeting will be 3 hours (1:30-4:30) at the Water Resource Center.

UPDATE: The next meeting will be on Thursday, January 24th at 1:30 at the Water Resources Center.