

# **SPOKANE COUNTY WATER AVAILABILITY ADVISORY GROUP**

**Thursday, March 29, 2012**

**10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

**Spokane Regional Health District Auditorium**

**1101 W College Ave**

**Spokane, WA**

## **MEETING SUMMARY**

### **Attending:**

Rob Lindsay, <i>Spokane County</i>	Mike Hermanson, <i>Spokane County</i>
Mike Lithgow, <i>Pend Oreille County</i>	Ty Wick, <i>SAJB</i>
Susan McGeorge, <i>Whitworth Water</i>	Jeanne Barnes, <i>Spokane Assoc. of Realtors</i>
Larry Guenther, <i>Stevens County BOCC</i>	Charisse Willis, <i>Stevens PUD</i>
Joe Foote, <i>Murray, Smith &amp; Associates</i>	Doug Greenland, <i>City of Spokane</i>
Katherine Rowden, <i>Nat'l. Weather Service</i>	Steve Skipworth, <i>LLSWD</i>
Jonathan Rudders, <i>Geo Engineers</i>	Jim Brown, <i>Staff to Spokane BOCC</i>
Steve Davenport, <i>Spokane County Planning</i>	Karen Skoog, <i>Stevens Co. Farm Bureau</i>
Steven Holderby, <i>Spokane Regional Health District</i>	Kitty Klitzke, <i>Futurewise</i>
Suzy Dix, <i>Farmer/Realtor</i>	Rachael Osborn, <i>CELP</i>
	Susan Gulick, <i>Sound Resolutions (Facilitator)</i>

### **1. Overview of Spokane County Hydrogeology**

- ❑ Mike Hermanson provided an overview of the hydro-geology of Spokane County.
- ❑ Water supply issues do not exist county-wide, and the problems are not the same even within problem areas.

### **2. Instream Flows**

- ❑ Mike Hermanson provided an overview of instream flows.
- ❑ Instream flows are a water right for instream beneficial uses, including fish, hydropower, recreation, aesthetics, etc.
- ❑ All water rights issued after the date of adopted instream flows are junior to the instream flow water right. Senior water right holders are not affected.
- ❑ The Little Spokane River has an instream flow rule set that was set in 1976. The minimum flow has not been met in 21 of the past 33 years.
- ❑ The presentation is attached as a separate document.

### **3. Water Availability Standards from Other Jurisdictions**

- ❑ Mike Hermanson presented a summary of water availability standards from other jurisdictions.
- ❑ Mike reviewed standards from 12 different jurisdictions.
- ❑ While there are many good ideas within the standards that were reviewed, there is not a good model for Spokane County to follow. Each jurisdiction has unique hydrogeology, water supply concerns, land use configurations, legal frameworks, etc. Spokane County must develop its own standard.
- ❑ The presentation is attached as a separate document.

*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](mailto:Susan@Soundresolutions.com).*

#### **4. Review of Proposed Tools to Address Water Availability**

- The Advisory Group discussed the proposed list of tools and criteria.
- Geographic Zones
  - Members discussed the value of developing more rigorous requirements in the areas with known water availability problems.
  - This will allow targeted use of more rigorous requirements in the areas with known problems; the process can remain simple in other parts of the County.
  - It may be difficult to draw boundaries to establish geographic areas of concern, and may be controversial because property values could be affected.
  - Spokane County would need to develop these geographic areas based on available hydrogeological data. Additional aquifer characterization would be helpful. If the Advisory Group recommends establishing Geographic Zones, Spokane County staff would need to determine precisely what additional data are needed, if any, to accomplish this.
  - Rob Lindsay described the Little Spokane Groundwater Mapping project which the County has already completed.
  - The Advisory Group will work on addressing more rigorous testing and reporting requirements. Later in the process, the Advisory Group will revisit whether these new requirements should be county-wide or limited to specific geographic areas.
- Testing Procedures and Reporting Requirements
  - The Advisory Group is interested in looking at options for more stringent testing and reporting requirements.
  - They are also interested in further discussing potential revisions to the existing groundwater availability standard.
  - The Advisory Group would also like to discuss the current certificate of exemption process that is used for subdivision of land in many rural areas of the county. The Advisory Group will consider potential recommendations that either require more developments to go through the sub-division process, or add requirements to the exemption process.
- Criteria
  - The Advisory Group likes the criteria proposed, but would like surface water impacts to include impacts to downstream users.
  - Regarding impacts to adjacent homeowners, the Advisory Group discussed potential benefits of notification to neighbors during the application process and/or encouraging neighbors to allow their wells to be included in testing of available water.

#### **5. Next Steps**

- Jim Mathieu of NW Land and Water will attend the next meeting to discuss options for revised reporting and testing requirements, as well as options for a revised water availability standard.
- The next 2-3 meetings will focus on developing and refining recommendations.

*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](mailto:Susan@Soundresolutions.com).*

### ***Upcoming Meetings***

<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>Topics</i></b>
<i>Thursday, April 12, 2:00-4:00 p.m.</i>	✓ Options for data reporting and collection procedures ✓ Options for establishing geographic areas of water availability concerns
<i>Thursday, April 26, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.</i>	✓ Options for revised water availability standards ✓ Options for sub-basin/regional tools ✓ Options for multiple sites/sub-divisions
<i>Thursday, May 24, 2:00-4:00 p.m.</i>	✓ Review of draft recommendations
<i>Thursday, June 14, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.</i>	✓ Finalize recommendations

*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](mailto:Susan@Soundresolutions.com).*