



## **Columbia Basin Sustainable Water Coalition Stakeholder Meeting**

**Thursday, May 18, 2023**

**10:30am-12:30pm**

**Moses Lake City Council Chamber, 401 S Balsam, Moses Lake**

*The Columbia Basin Sustainable Water Coalition, a group of water purveyors and other municipal and small community water system stakeholders, was formed in 2018 to address Columbia Basin domestic groundwater supply issues and create locally-driven recommendations that influence water delivery methods and policy that will direct resources for long-term groundwater solutions*

The Coalition's stakeholder meeting convened at 10:27am. Sara Higgins of the Columbia Basin Development League facilitated the meeting as a contractor for the Coalition.

### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Self-introductions were conducted. Attendees included approximately 21 online participants and 23 in room participants.

### **OVERVIEW OF PAST AND UPCOMING MEETING TOPICS**

Ben Lee of Landau Associates briefly reviewed past meeting topics and upcoming topics. July will target coordinated or comprehensive planning efforts and how they might be beneficial for this group.

### **ENGINEER DISCUSSION ON CENTRALIZED TREATMENT AND REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION AND SIMILAR PROJECT POTENTIAL IN THE BASIN**

Ben Lee led an interactive discussion. There are no good examples for this kind of project in Washington State, although there are some plans for something similar and some out-of-state examples.

- Cascade Water Alliance is one example. It would take water from Lake Tapps, divert flows to new treatment facility, and distribute to Issaquah, Bellevue, Sammamish, Redmond, Kirkland, Skyway WD, and Tukwila. It is believed interties already exist between those jurisdictions.
- San Antonio water system – includes wastewater systems as reuse sources; several different groundwater and surface water sources, and regional distribution over a large area.
- Willamette water supply system, It involves an intergovernmental entity (between Tualatin Valley Water District and Cities of Hillsboro and Beaverton) that serves 250,000 residents. The surface water source is the Willamette River. All partners have their own supply but needed supplemental water source. Planned for completion in 2026. Two of the partners have diversion rights which are used to benefit all partners. Requires new

treatment plant, new storage reservoir, 35 miles of new seismically resilient distribution line with smart valve system. Payment strategies include: incremental rate increases of 14-20% each year plus development fees, EPA loan funding, cash reserves. Preplanning to end of construction is 14 years. Overall estimated cost is \$1.6 billion.

- Discussion for applicability for Mid-Columbia Basin project:
  - Primary Considerations:
    - Coordinated Planning
    - Source Water (quantity and quality)
    - Feasibility/Options Analysis
    - Cost and Funding Sources
    - Political Will
    - Implementation (Design, Construction, On-Going Operations)
  - General Discussion:
    - Example scenario, for discussion, could include diversion from Lake Roosevelt with treatment near-by and distribution throughout FLAG counties. Rough sketch includes over 280 miles of lines – much larger scale than Willamette. Logistically challenging and very expensive. There is value in considering all alternatives.
    - Large scale coordinated planning would be needed.
    - MOUs between partners can be a barrier. A good coordinated planning process would be the beginning.
    - [Comment from stakeholder participants: It may be easier to fund a project if it served ag users as well, or included them in the scope. Population is too rural to support this kind of infrastructure; and the scale of water needs for ag are so much larger than for municipal that the infrastructure would need to be dramatically larger).
    - Who would participate, how would the agreements be structured, who would take the lead (applying for and managing funding), agency coordination to approve sources, fund and approve phases, permitting, cultural and environmental resources, communications with decision-making and public education?
    - DOH encourages to consider long range funding.
      - Source water would be a barrier, both in quantity (water rights/authorizations) and quality (compatibility of multiple sources). Could include Lake Roosevelt, Banks Lake, CBP Canals, Industrial Re-Use, Pasco Basin ASGW. New or transferred state water right? M&I contract from Bureau?
    - Getting representatives invested is an important starting point, as well as political will from all levels (local, state, federal).
    - It was suggested that completion of CBP should be coupled with project considerations of the Coalition in order for all stakeholders to benefit.
    - It was asked if the East High Canal would be able to deliver water to eastern FLAG county systems in the off season.

- Discussion that municipal water is a very small amount of water compared to ag water from the canals. Moses Lake is pumping and delivering ~16 million gallons/day in peak season, which is not a lot of water relative to ag uses. The issue is that CBP was not designed to serve municipal needs.
- Water delivery for M&I is interruptible, but that does not carry weight with DOH as an approved source.
  - There was a question of what political level we need to reach in order to change policy so that municipalities can access secure water and have approvable sources.
- It was noted that canals carry different quality of water than what a municipality needs.
- Is there Lake Roosevelt water available through state permits in the off or shoulder season? – would require analysis, tribal consultation. The water would be interruptible because of dam flows, tribal and biological flows that are required to be met first.
- It is believed that there would need to be a federal amendment to the CBP act to allow non CBP water (e.g., “wheeling” state water right water from Columbia River through the CBP system) to flow in canals.
- Ongoing conversations with irrigation districts are needed.

#### **ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Board Chair, Elsa Bowen reported. “About” one-pagers are available for anyone interested. At today’s board meeting, the board approved by-laws and additional officers were elected: Shawn O’Brien is Vice Chair, Judi Ellis is treasurer, Kristina Ribellia is secretary.

Claire Miller introduced a number of new water purveyor profiles, their uses, and ongoing call to develop more for Group A & B systems in the FLAG counties. Copies of final profiles are available for those interested. Contact Claire or Cari Cortez to create a profile.

#### **WELL MONITORING UPDATE**

Ben Lee reported. Well monitoring and data collection continues under the WaterSMART grant. Technical contractors are looking to install data loggers in wells that can house them. Ben shared a map of existing monitoring sites. They are collating data from municipalities that gather their own data and coordinating with other regional monitoring programs to fill data gaps.

#### **ADJOURN: 12:30pm**

Next Meeting: Thursday, July 20, 10:30am-12:30pm