Water Transfer Working Group Minutes for May 21, 2007 at 1:00 PM


Dawn Wiedmeier began the meeting with a request for comments and corrections on the minutes from the previous meeting. With no comments, the minutes were accepted as written.

Dawn continued with the next agenda item concerning the Ahtanum Irrigation District transfer requests (2007-4 thru 2007-27). Tom Tebb stated he wants to run the full course on this, keep Jim Davis informed of their position, and that Ecology’s work has been done but wanted to submit this one when the time is right, thus, it remains on hold for now. Tom T will let us know when he will bring this back to the group.

The next agenda item is a proposal from last year (2006-13), with a current year number of 2007-32, for McCormack. This proposal is scheduled for court on June 14, 2007. Stan Isley discussed where this one is at with the proposed Court Order Pendente Lite request currently before the Adjudication Court, and that this group looked at this one last year with a “thumbs up” result. It is in the gap-to-gap reach about three miles south of the Yakima Field Office. There is no change in the proposal from last year, which was then based on an application filed with Ecology to put it into the trust water program. Stan continued with the next agenda items 2007-33 thru 2007-36, by explaining each proposal. 2007-33 is a water right appurtenant to the former Schaake property in Subbasin 9 (Wilson-Naneum), now owned by YRBWEP, and Stan feels it is a straightforward transfer of an irrigation water right to instream flow enhancement use. 2007-34 is in Subbasin 7 (Reecer Creek), another former Schaake, now YRBWEP, water right proposed to be transferred to instream flow enhancement use. 2007-35 is associated with the former Roy property now owned by YRBWEP. Stan explained the proposed flow pathways of water from the Fowler Ditch Association canal through the Bureau of Reclamation YRBWEP (former Roy) property and to the Yakima River and then downstream in the Yakima River to the Columbia River for instream flow enhancement use. The group discussed conveyance loss, and Stan stated it is a win-win situation. Stan continued with 2007-36 for the Seaton Water Users Association and Teanaway River Ranch Associates proposal. Stan explained the consumptive use (CU) calculation and the group asked about other diversions downstream and what they have used. Stan said he has periodically checked the diversion records from the stream for each of the systems, but not the diversion records for each of the individual water users, each of whom have their individual water rights. Stan will look at each water users’ diversion records later this year to see how they will be affected, in other words to see how much of this “up to an additional 20% block” of each water right will be assigned to instream flow enhancement use in the Teanaway River. He is looking for a thumbs-up. Dawn asked for the group’s recommendation and they gave a thumbs-up on this group of proposals.
Larry Martin continued with the next agenda item, 2007-37, by explaining this is a temporary transfer for this year and next year to Ellensburg Water Company. The group discussed this proposal with Tom Ring suggesting someone do a CU calculation. Tom R suggested they work this out with Stan and to email it around, and Tom R said to give a thumbs-up contingent on that. The group agreed and Stan said he will send the email and that he likes this transfer.

The group continued with 2007-31 for Eaton. Tom Tebb explained this is a change in point of diversion, which will improve efficiency and the fish habitat corridor in the Yakima Canyon area. He is looking for a thumbs-up. After a very brief discussion, the group gave a thumbs-up.

Joe Mentor asked about the agreement between Reclamation and Ecology on joint management of state trust water rights in the Yakima Basin that Stan is currently drafting, and Stan said it is separate from the exchange contract between Reclamation and Ecology that Bob Barwin and Bill Ferry are currently working on. Stan will send out the draft agreement this week and forward it to management for review. This is to define how the water rights acquired under the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project will be placed under the state trust water right program and jointly managed by Reclamation and Ecology. The group discussed the target flows, if the draft would be back to the group before signing, and asked if monitoring be addressed in the agreement. Stan said he would have a draft by the next meeting.

The group continued with an update on the Ecology/Reclamation Exchange contract with Bill Ferry stating that the first step has been taken with the first run on the draft being prepared by Reclamation and that that draft has now been given to Ecology to draft their part. Bill F explained the process with public notices. Bob Barwin stated he has not even had time to spend on this yet, but will respond by mid-June and forward it to Ecology management. The group discussed the matching of authorities between state and federal.

With no other issues before the group, the next meeting has been set for June 25, 2007 at 1:00 PM in the Yakima Field Office conference room.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:20 PM.