

LRC Water Use Conflict – STAKEHOLDER BI-WEEKLY MEETING MINUTES

Date: October 9, 2025 8:00 AM

Location: Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Jason Moeckel (DNR)
Brent Beste (DNR)
Glen Champion (DNR)
Uma Vempati (Kimley-Horn)
Wally Parkins (Royal Farms)
Gary Johnson (University of Idaho)

1. Modeling Discussions

- Modeling Update (Glen)
 - Glen (DNR) continuing to test SWB model. Initial results show that the combined total of groundwater recharge and runoff is less than the amount measured at the stream gauge.
 - Glenn is experimenting with different methods to lower the long-term average Evapotranspiration (ET) to align the model's output with the measured data.
 - A significant part of the current work involves refining the model's representation of internal watershed storage, where water drains to poorly drained or non-contributing areas. This requires manual effort to delineate which areas contribute to runoff versus those that do not.
 - Work has begun on the process to integrate the SWB model outputs into MODFLOW.
 - To accelerate this integration, Glenn plans to schedule a meeting with Limnotech to discuss ideas and potentially delegate some tasks. The goal is to assemble the combined SWB-MODFLOW model before finalizing all SWB parameters to see how the components interact, including groundwater ET and recharge/discharge dynamics.
 - In response to a question about capturing water from these storage areas, Glenn explained they are mostly small, distributed basins on farm fields. Water in these areas either evaporates, seeps in slowly, or is managed by tile drainage. He noted that while larger wetlands in the upper watershed have storage, they eventually overflow, and the model is being calibrated to the overall stream flow rather than the micro-details of every ditch.
- Modeling Coordination and Tool Development (Glen, Gary)
 - Gary Johnson has completed a preliminary version of a spreadsheet tool designed to evaluate the impacts of groundwater pumping on stream base flow.
 - The tool analyzes the effects of pumping from 86 different well locations within the area of influence on the base flow of Little Rock Creek, as measured at three primary gauges.
 - Gary's next step is to schedule a meeting with the irrigators' group to demonstrate the tool, explain its intended use and limitations, and gather their feedback for future development.
 - The current tool is based on the previous model. The plan is to regenerate the response data using the new model once it is fully developed, a process which is not expected to be time-consuming.
 - At present, Gary does not require additional technical assistance from the DNR or Limnotech but anticipates he may in the future.
- Survey Update (Brent)
 - To date, 32 responses to the irrigator survey have been received, representing approximately 50% of the permit sites within the watershed.
 - A map of the responses shows that a significant number of respondents are located within the zone of influence.
 - Key findings from the survey include:

- ☐ Most respondents calculate their water use based on the DNR-permitted pump rate, using electric meters and timing devices.
 - ☐ "Sprinkler Charts" method requires further investigation.
 - ☐ Most respondents reported not having performed any significant well maintenance, such as screen cleanings or pump replacements. It was noted this could be due to the relatively clean water quality (low in calcium and rust) in the area.
- The survey will remain open. The team hopes that discussing the survey's purpose and use at the November 13 stakeholder meeting may encourage more permit holders to respond.
- The data collected will provide qualitative insights to help extrapolate water use for the non-responding wells, and the team will discuss and decide on the best assumptions to use for the model.

2. Stakeholder Meetings: Draft Agenda (Topics) for November 13th Meeting

- By November 6th Stakeholder Bi-Weekly Meeting
- The agenda for the November 13 stakeholder meeting is in development and a concise preview will be finalized and shared with stakeholders by the group's November 6 meeting to gain alignment on proposed topics.
 - ☐ The meeting will provide a status update on the model revisions and the rationale for the changes. It will also cover how information from the irrigator survey is being used.
 - ☐ A key component will be an interactive session to gather detailed input from stakeholders on previously proposed solutions, including:
 - ☐ Beaver dams – Randy Klaphake
 - ☐ Crop rotations
 - ☐ Water conservation – Dean Zimmerman
 - ☐ Transporting water from Rice-Skunk Lake to Little Rock Creek
 - ☐ Wally will coordinate with the stakeholders who proposed the beaver dam and Rice-Skunk Lake ideas (Randy Klaphake and Dean Zimmerman, respectively) to have them prepare brief, five-minute presentations for the meeting.
 - ☐ The project team will also present maps with hypothetical locations for impoundment areas to solicit feedback and refine display materials. These maps will be reviewed internally by the core team on October 23 before the larger meeting.
 - ☐ The meeting will conclude with a wrap-up and a summary of next steps to ensure stakeholders understand how their input will be incorporated into the project.

3. Action Items / Next Steps

- **Glenn:** Schedule a meeting with Limnotech to discuss how they can assist with the modeling process to speed up the integration of the SWB and MODFLOW models.
- **Gary:** Coordinate with the irrigators' group to schedule a meeting to present the new spreadsheet tool and gather their feedback.
- **Wally:** Contact Randy Klaphake and Dean Zimmerman to ask them to prepare short presentations on their respective ideas (beaver dams and Rice-Skunk Lake) for the November 13 stakeholder meeting. Report on their willingness to participate at the next core team meeting.
- **Kimley-Horn Team:** Discuss the survey's purpose and use at the November 13 stakeholder meeting to encourage more permit holders to respond.
- **Kimley-Horn Team:** Prepare maps showing hypothetical impoundment locations for review at the October 23 core team meeting.

- **Kimley-Horn Team:** Continue to develop the agenda for the November 13 stakeholder meeting, ensuring it includes a wrap-up and clear next steps.

4. **Next Bi-weekly Stakeholder Virtual Meeting**

- October 23, 2025

5. **Next Workshop Meetings**

- November 13: The initial meeting for project updates and gathering feedback on proposed solutions.
- The group plans to increase the frequency of meetings with the broader stakeholder group to take advantage of their greater availability between November and February. This monthly stakeholder meeting approach aims to keep stakeholders more engaged and frequently informed of the project's progress, addressing feedback that they desire more regular updates. Proposed meeting topics are as follows:
 - December 2025 - Target late December follow-up on refined model outputs and presenting the results of model analysis on the ideas discussed in November (e.g., beaver dams, Rice-Skunk Lake).
 - January 2026 - January session to present simulation results that incorporate feedback and ideas gathered from stakeholders, including initial model results on crop rotation and conservation scenario testing.