

**COMMISSIONERS' MINUTES
KITITITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON
COMMISSIONERS CONFERENCE ROOM
SPECIAL MEETING**

WEDNESDAY

1:30 P.M.

MAY 4, 2011

Board members present: Commissioner Paul Jewell; Vice-Chairman Alan Crankovich and Commissioner Obie O'Brien.

Others: Mandy Robinson, Deputy Clerk of the Board; Kevin Lindsey, County contracted Hydro-geologist; John Vaccaro, USGS and Matt Ely, USGS.

SPECIAL MEETING USGS REPORT/UPDATE COMMISSIONERS

At 1:30 p.m. **Chairman Paul Jewell** opened a special meeting to receive and discuss a report & update on the Upper County work that the USGS is doing.

Matt Ely, Hydrologist for USGS, provided the Board with a Power Point presentation to review and a Western Kittitas County Groundwater Study, Washington a proposal prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey for Washington State Department of Ecology. He indicated that to kick off this project, they compiled the advice of the Ground Water advisory committee and that helps to create their framework for the project. He gave a brief overview of the history of the project and what has got us to where the County is currently at. He gave a brief description of the four phases they will be doing to complete the scope of work on this project. He expressed his on-going support and openness of being accessible to answer questions at future Board meetings as well as for public presentations.

John Vaccaro, Hydrogeologist USGS, explained how to tell what phase the water is in by the look of the water and also what the different phases mean to them. He discussed with the Board the Carbon 14 samples and how they are used and how they assist with determining the different phases of that water can be in. He reviewed the types of results they have received from the collections they have taken from other jurisdictions. He explained that it's like water DNA because all water has a "signature". He reported to the Board that they currently have a CWU Masters student working along with them for this project. He explained that this provides for a win, win solution for the student, as it assists them with their Masters program and it

APPROVED
6/7/2011

benefits USGS due to the low cost. He indicated that USGS provides supervision and training to the student.

Mr. Ely explained how the funding works, where the funding comes from and how USGS matches state dollars.

Mr. Vaccaro indicated that they are currently working to get Idaho involved, which they will also contribute funds. He indicated that USGS is also working with the US Forest Service and they are willing to work with anyone.

Discussion took place on the roadblocks that they have run into throughout the process what all they test for when doing water samples.

Mr. Ely indicated that they have had an overwhelming response in citizens offering to be participants in the USGS work that is taking place in the Upper County. He stressed his appreciation for their willingness to take part in the study.

Mr. Ely and Mr. Vaccaro reviewed some of the steps they are currently focusing on and some that are going to be acted on in the near future. Mr. Vaccaro indicated that they will be working with DOE to be sure that their water right information is up to date and accurate, as well as collect information from the B water systems. They are also working on figuring out issues presented by part time residents and full time.

Commissioner Jewell questioned Phase 4. He asked if the Sub-Basin testing locations had been selected at this point or not.

Mr. Ely indicated that they were preparing to build a detailed water budget report. He indicated that those reports can be catered to Kittitas County's interests and that they can be as limited or full of information as the Board sees fit. He indicated that the problem they may run into is if for example the Yakama Nation indicates that there are fish in a stream whether it was yesterday or 50 years ago. Those are now protected streams so that they can put some potential limitations on Sub-Basin testing sites.

Commissioner Jewell asked for clarification on a "water budget" and what the difference is between ground water and surface water for these water budgets. He questioned USGS's statements indicating they are "developing a water budget". Mr. Ely gave a brief example that was based around a "for instance" scenario.

Mr. Vaccaro added that they typically do a focus on drought years.

Discussion on scenarios for what outcome may come from the water budget reports.

Kevin Lindsey explained to the Board how the reports could benefit the County. He stated that in laymen's terms, water budget = available water.

Mr. Vaccaro indicated that USGS needs to get a list together of what the County wants to see in the report. He indicated that once that list is compiled they can provide the information needed to assist the County in making decisions. He indicated that the water year is from October - July vs. January - December which is our standard year.

The Board expressed their appreciation of the work that the Ad-Hoc group and USGS has done. They emphasized their appreciation for the commitment the two groups have had to assist the County through this process.

Mr. Ely extended an invitation to the Board to come out in the field at anytime and see what they are working on.


The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

DEPUTY CLERK OF THE BOARD



Mandy Robinson

**KITTITAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
KITTITAS COUNTY, WASHINGTON**



Paul Jewell, Commissioner