

West Desert Watershed Council Meeting

Attendees

Paul Hansen – Tooele City	Carl Ege – DWRe
Don Anderson – Rancher Juab County	Tyler Melling – Cedar City
Eric Rogers – Intrepid Potash	Nate Anderson – Dugway Proving Ground
Michael Gates – BLM	Nickolas King – Hill Air Force Base
Amos Murphy – Confederated Tribes of the Goshute	Laura Vernon - DWRe
Jacob Clegg – Erda City Engineer	Shannon Clough – DWRe
Paul Monroe – CICWCD	Carly Payne – DWRe
Brett Palmer – Stansbury Park Improvement District	Hollee Wood – The Langdon Group
Alan Smith – Grouse Creek Rancher	Andy Rasmussen – The Langdon Group
Steve Erickson – Great Basin Water Network	Joe Havasi – Compass Minerals

Welcome and Review of Agenda Minutes

- Motion to approve minutes from both the 10/3/2023 and 11/14/2023 West Desert watershed council meetings
 - Don Anderson made motion
 - Brett Palmer seconded motion
 - Motion unanimously approved

Presentation

Workplan for the Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan – Laura Vernon, Great Salt Lake Basin Manager

- Historically low lake levels encouraged legislature to approve funding for this plan
- The plan is not solely for GSL. It's a plan for all basins within GSL basin
- Incomplete puzzle – we don't have the full picture and are missing pieces
- Get all basins speaking the same language. Better understand water availability across all basins and look as one holistic basin
- Challenge: ensuring a resilient water supply requires extraordinary vision and collaborative effort. Solutions remain socially and technically complex as demands on this limited resource continue to increase
 - Today's water management decisions shape tomorrow's possibilities
- Social complexity
 - Social challenges
 - Awareness challenges
 - Fragmentation
 - Organizational and institutional challenges
 - Legal challenges
- Technical complexity
 - Water supply
 - Water management
 - Land management

- Quantification
 - Environmental challenges
- Integrated effort: HB429 and BOR GSL basin study
- Integrated approach: how can we build a resilient water supply for GSL and its watershed
 - Water supply
 - Water demand
 - Water quality
 - Watersheds
 - Stormwater
 - GSL needs
- Phase 1: Work Plan development
 - Stakeholder engagement
 - Advisory group – state and federal individuals
 - Steering committee – various stakeholder interests
 - Technical formulation
 - Gap analysis
 - Prioritization of potential projects
- Phase 2: Decision making efforts
 - Data and model framework
 - Scenario planning process
- Goal: ensure a resilient water supply for Great Salt Lake and all water uses, including people and the environment, throughout the watershed
- This is intended to help make decisions in both the short term and long term
 - 2024: quantify water resources, assess and validate challenges and opportunities
 - 2025: evaluate options, develop and evaluate strategies and tactics
 - 2026: recommend actions
- For each of the watershed councils, we see an important opportunity or connection to be made. You have expertise and data that would be helpful for us to know as we move forward, and there may be data that we have and can make available to you to help in your efforts as well. This watershed council can be the group that the GSLBIP comes to work together and gain information from.
- Work Plan
 - 1. Integrated Collaborative Engagement
 - 2. Scenario development
 - 3. Data and model development
 - 4. Scenario evaluation
 - 5. Develop appropriate adaptation and mitigation strategies
 - 6. Trade-off analysis
 - 7. Decision analyses
 - 8. Reporting and rollout
 - 9. Technical sufficiency review
- Work Plan roll-out
 - Mid-November release
 - November 15 presentation to legislature

- December 7 open house
- 45+ day review period
- BIP work begins January 2024

Council Discussion and Questions

- Tim Davies is now full time with commissioners' office and his position at water quality is temporarily being filled by Nate Lunstad
- Question: is it to be done or has it been done finding or identifying some of the missing pieces within this effort?
 - Answer: The gap analysis identified some of the missing pieces that need to be filled. This integrated plan process will do the work to find the answers to questions identified in the gap analysis.
 - Follow-up question: can you name some of the missing pieces that were identified during the gap analysis?
 - Answer: Some examples are: streamflow data reaches, wetland outflow data to GSL, measurement of water loss during transport
- Question: Do you feel that the timeline you have gives you enough time to get the data you need?
 - Answer: The timeline is ambitious, however funding for this project does not expire, so there's pressure point coming from that. People are looking for answers yesterday to these questions, and this work really should have been done 10 years ago, so that's the driving force behind the quick timeline. The team will take the time needed to do the work correctly, but we are hopeful to get it done as quickly as possible.
- Question: The additional data you've talked about comes from the Wasatch front. Are you looking for additional data from our area as well (West Desert)?
 - Answer: Yes. We are looking for a full picture, so we do need information from this area. The focus has been primarily on the Wasatch front because the majority of the water that feeds into the GSL comes from the Weber, Bear, and Utah Lake areas. Water contribution to GSL from West Desert is small in comparison to the Wasatch front, but it is not negligible.
- This project necessitates that you work across state lines, county lines, federal and state agencies, tribal lands, local communities, etc... There are a lot of players and these different organizations have not historically spoken to one another on these issues. This is a big task.
- There are several ground water studies going on right now that the GSLBIP team is hoping to pull information from.
- Both the highest and lowest lake level years have been within the past couple of decades – this seems significant

Organization

Consideration for the appointment of a Secretary for the West Desert Watershed Council

- Paul Hansen has stepped down from being the secretary role, though he will stay on the council

- It is not necessary to have a secretary role, but somebody will need to maintain those duties once TLG is not able to
- Carly can provide assistance, but it is not within her job duties to take minutes and fill the secretary role for every meeting for every council
- Secretary does not need to be a voting member of the council, it can be an admin from an organization represented within the council who helps out with minutes and calendar invites and other secretary duties (could be somebody at Tooele City or with CICWCD, for example)

Consideration of Board Members

- Amos Murphy is the chairman of the Confederated Tribes of the Goshute
- If willing, the council would like to have a voting member on the council who can represent tribes/tribal interests
- Amos has agreed to attend meetings for now but may need to delegate another member of the tribal council to be a voting member who has greater capacity to attend meetings
 - The council and the tribe will be in touch whether it is Amos or somebody else

Next Meeting

- Next West Desert Watershed Council Meeting:
 - Planning meeting for field trips over the summer months
 - Fully remote meeting on March 5, 2024 at 3pm
 - Virtual link: <https://jubengineers.zoom.us/j/5825820003?omn=88605876275>

Meeting Adjourned