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MEETING NOTES

SOUTH SASKATCHEWAN RIVER SUB-BASIN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The South Saskatchewan River Basin Water Management Planning

Date: 24 and 27 November 2001
Location: Provincial Building, Medicine Hat

Attending:

- Sector Representatives and/or Alternates:

<u>Sector:</u>	<u>Representative:</u>
Rural Municipalities:	Floyd Haas
Urban Municipalities:	Frank Wetsch
Industrial:	Ron Wendling, Jim French (alternate)
Other Agriculture:	Len Mitzel
Recreation:	Duncan Baldie (27 only)
Environmental:	Corlaine Gardner
Irrigation Agriculture:	Stan Klassen (24 only), Keith Francis (27 only)

Absent

First Nations:	Rick Yellowhorn
Recreation	Merv Petersen, Ralph Pinder

- Alberta Government staff:

Cheryl Dash, Community Relations Officer
Doug Ohrn, Basin Coordinator

Meeting Topics:

1. **Welcome**
2. **Review Agenda**
 - No changes (addition/deletions) were suggested

3. Administration

- There was some discussion about holding another joint BAC meeting in January to review the plan and to brainstorm ideas for phase 2. BAC members are in favour of another joint meeting.
- Public involvement for phase 1 was reviewed and it was identified that there would be one open house in Medicine Hat for the South Saskatchewan River Sub-basin. BAC members are encouraged to participate.
- Reminder to all BAC members to submit expense claims to D. Ohrn or C. Dash by the end of the year if you are claiming for mileage, meals or accommodation. Those organizations that are able to cover expenses of members are encouraged to continue to do so.

Advice from the South Saskatchewan River Sub BAC

The points listed below are not in order of priority

1. Matters & Factors that the Director should consider when reviewing applications for water allocation transfers:

- Temporary or permanent transfers – can they be adjusted according to the effect on the environment downstream and upstream. All transfers (upstream and downstream) should ensure that there is ‘no harm’ on a third party (of equal or senior priority) between the transfer (from the old diversion to the new diversion) or further downstream. The ‘user’ is to include the aquatic environment as well as human or industrial use.
- Fully allocated vs fully used – the transfer, or consideration of a transfer, should examine the changes in the system ... for example if you are currently using 60% of your allocation, and decide to transfer the remaining 40% (upstream or downstream), effects or changes in the overall system of water use should be considered.
- Water quality of return flow in urban and rural systems.
- Effects on the aquatic environment dealing with waste assimilation.
- Effects on the user and aquatic environment by upstream transfers.
- Just as the Irrigation Districts Act requires that land must be identified as being suitable for irrigation if it is to receive water for irrigation, the Director must consider the suitability of the land for irrigation in the case of a transfer for that purpose.

2. Water Conservation Holdbacks:

- Criteria the director uses should be available to the public
- Manage for median flows.

3. Future Evaluation of Transfers System:

- Track stream health as the transfer program and holdbacks progress. Initially to establish a baseline and then determine the best time intervals.
- How much volume is transferred.
- How much volume in the holdbacks and use.
- Has the transfer process actually increased the overall consumptive use.
- Tracking ownership (monopoly and foreign ownership concerns).
- Changes in water quality due to transfers.
- Water administration could track dollars
- Changes in consumptive uses

- What and where there are changes in use
- How much of the water is being returned to the stream over the whole program – over a certain reach – other?

4. Topics for future phases of the SSRB Water Management Plan:

- Socioeconomic factors/considerations
 - Balance between economy and environment
 - Sustainability
 - Working within legitimate boundaries of environment and economy
 - Win-win situations
- Conservation education
 - What is conservation?
 - What is waste?
- Water quality – don't kill the system
 - Act sooner, not later
 - Return flows – quality?
 - Urban runoff – treatment (get data and avoid finger pointing)
- Basin water policies
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5. Points to be addressed outside the SSRB Water Management Plan

Good Standing

- If a licence is cancelled then a portion can be reserved (by the Crown) for the aquatic environment then the remaining can go back into the system for re-allocation. This division should be equitable.
- The licence that is cancelled does not retain priority.

Parked

- Water quality problems resulting from extreme rainfall events.
- Transfers – does this pertain to what you are 'traditionally' using or part of your total allocation.
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- Storage or development of off stream storage options – the director should consider future transfers in the approval of funding of infrastructure.
- Interbasin transfers

These notes were prepared by Cheryl Dash (403-381-5562). Please let me know if there are any errors or omissions.

Copies to: All attendees
BAC Coordinators