Minutes of Kamas Valley Public Meeting
July 29, 2004 – Kamas City Hall Auditorium
Kamas, Utah

State Engineer called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM.

INTRODUCTION

State Engineer introduced the participants. He stated that one purpose of the meeting was to review the data and conclusions presented in *The Geology of the Kamas-Coalville Region, Summit County, Utah, and its Relation to Ground-Water Conditions* and *Hydrology* by Hugh A. Hurlow of the Utah Geological Survey, and *Simulation of Ground-Water Flow in Kamas Valley, Summit County, Utah* by Lynette E. Brooks, Bert J. Stolp, and Lawrence E. Spangler of the U.S. Geological Survey. The other purpose was open a dialog about how new information gained in the studies might affect management of the resource. He acknowledged the cooperators who provided support for the studies: Utah Division of Water Rights, Utah Geological Survey, Utah Division of Water Quality, United States Geological Survey, Weber Basin Water Conservancy District, Davis and Weber Counties Canal Company and the Weber River Water Users Association. He then outlined the meeting agenda and introduced the presenters. He stated that copies of the reports could be viewed online at the Division of Water Rights website or purchased at the Natural Resources Bookstore.

WATER RIGHTS

John Mann, Weber River Regional Engineer for the Division of Water Rights, presented data on the valley's water rights. He showed a chart detailing the number of building permits for new homes issued by Summit County. He stated that growth in Kamas Valley was increasing the demand for small domestic wells. He showed slides giving the amount of well water being developed under change and exchange applications. He reviewed the State Engineer's general policies for the Weber River basin and specific policies for Kamas Valley. (Details of these polices are available on the Division of Water Rights website.) He proposed amending the policy with respect to the Kamas East area to discontinue the requirement for pump testing of individual wells.

GEOLOGY

Hugh A. Hurlow, Project Geologist of the Utah Geological Survey, reviewed the data presented in his geologic framework study. He stated that Kamas Valley is an intermontane valley at the west end of the Uinta Mountains. He showed illustrations detailing the valley's geology. He explained and illustrated the concept of stratigraphic ground-water compartments. Photos of rock samples were used to explain the concepts of bedding, faulting, fractures, joints, and solution channels. Geologic cross-sections showed the general structure of the basin fill aquifer and the complexity of the surrounding bedrock. He concluded by giving the conclusions drawn from the data.

Question: What is the Bull Lake Period?
Answer: This was a period about 65, 000 years ago when Kamas Valley was a lake.

Question: What is the extent of ground-water flow to the west, particularly Jordanelle and the Wasatch Front?
Answer: It is not an important volume.

Question: What is an important volume?
Answer: One that affects the hydrology of the receiving valley.

Question: Have core samples been taken of wells in the valley?
Answer: We are not aware of any.

Question: How good is our ability to "see" underground?
Answer: A review of geologic research methods was in answer.

Question: How can we better know how stratigraphy affects ground water?
Answer: More monitoring wells would be the greatest help.

HYDROLOGY

Lynette E. Brooks, Hydrologist of the U.S. Geological Survey, presented the data in her hydrology report. She stated the reasons for this study and the issues that were researched. She presented a surface water budget for the valley and showed hydrographs of the Weber River at Oakley and Indian Hollow. Next, she presented a ground-water budget and showed a flow map of the valley. She indicated that seasonal water levels fluctuate as much as 60 feet. She presented data on the physical characteristics of the aquifer material. On the issue of well interference, calculations indicate that a well pumped at a rate similar to a single family domestic well would not effect water levels in wells at a distance of 300 feet. Information was presented on the digital ground-water flow model, its construction, utilization, and sensitivity to various inputs. Water quality data was presented indicating excellent quality in the valley. Her presentation concluded with a summary of the information.

Question: How much water has been withdrawn from wells near Rockport Reservoir?
Answer: Since July 1, 50 acre-feet have been withdrawn.

Question: What effect does the Weber-Provo Canal have on ground-water levels in the Valley?
Answer: With the check dams in place, the effect is minimal. Some sections of the canal gain water from the aquifer system and some sections recharge the aquifer. Overall, the two effects balance each other.

Question: What effect do the canal's check dams have on ground-water levels?
Answer: When the check dams are removed, ground-water levels near the canal fluctuate about 3 to 4 feet.

Question: How frequently were the flows in City Creek and Indian Hollow measured?
Answer: Indian Hollow was measured seasonally while City Creek was measured monthly.

SUMMARY

The State Engineer stated that the information presented would be available on the Division of Water Rights website. He said the data is telling us that: 1) there is a connection between surface water and ground water; 2) there are large seasonal ground-water fluctuations occurring in the basin-fill aquifer; 3) changing land use patterns indicate the nature of water use in the valley is changing; 4) the potential for interference between domestic wells is minimal; 5) water quality is excellent; and 6) certain geologic units are better targets from water development. He requested comments on the data presented and whether the current water management guidelines should be modified; in particular the requirement for pump testing individual wells in the Kamas East area. He then opened the floor for questions.

Question: If the ground-water system is not yet stressed, what level of stress will stop the transfer of water rights?
Answer: At the present, we don't know what that stress level is. We will monitor the system as the transfers continue. More monitoring wells would be helpful.

Question: New wells in my area have drained my well; will you have the interferers stop pumping?
Answer: The State Engineer is charged with the overseeing the development of water and approves applications when there is reason to believe that no interference will occur. When interference occurs it becomes a civil matter for the courts; the State Engineer does not have the authority to terminate a water right.

Question: How are priority dates set and cut backs decided?
Answer: Priority dates are assigned when the water filing is made. Cutbacks are done in accordance with state water law.

At this point, attendee David Ure, representing the west Kamas area, reviewed some of the current discussions of the Legislature's Task Force Studying Water Issues and gave his observations on the flows of City Creek.

Question: How much water moves between Kamas Valley and other basins to the west?
Answer: Surface water leaves Kamas Valley through the Weber-Provo Canal, the Lost Creek Pipeline, and the South Kamas Irrigation diversion. Data indicates very little water leaves the valley through subsurface flow.

The State Engineer concluded the meeting by requesting comments be submitted by August 31, 2004.

The meeting concluded at 8:37 PM.