

VERBATIM MINUTES
BEAR RIVER COMMISSION MEETING

JULY 11, 1985
12:55 p.m.

Cokeville City Hall
Cokeville, Wyoming

Submitted by
Nancy Fullmer, Secretary

THOSE PRESENT

UNITED STATES

Kenneth T. Wright, Chairman
and Federal Representative

UTAH COMMISSIONERS

D. Larry Anderson
Blair R. Francis
Paul Holmgren
Calvin Funk (Alternate)

WYOMING COMMISSIONERS

J. W. Myers
S. Reed Dayton
John Teichert (Alternate)

ENGINEER-MANAGER

Wallace N. Jibson

IDAHO COMMISSIONERS

Daniel Roberts
Don W. Gilbert
Rodney Wallentine

SECRETARY TO COMMISSION

Nancy Fullmer

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

UTAH

Robert L. Morgan, State Engineer
Paul C. Summers, Division of Water Resources
Dennis J. Strong, Division of Water Resources
Dr. Norman E. Stauffer, Division of Water Resources
Robert M. Fotheringham, Division of Water Rights, Logan
James Christensen, Department of Agriculture
Roy P. Urie, Utah Board of Water Resources
Philip S. Knight, Utah Board of Water Resources
Wayne Winegar, Utah Board of Water Resources
Clark J. Wall, Utah Board of Water Resources
Clair Allen, Utah Board of Water Resources
George Buzianis, Utah Board of Water Resources
Eugene Johansen, Utah Board of Water Resources
Kenneth R. Cardon, Utah Association of Conservation Districts
Jay B. Bankhead, Bear River RC&D, Utah
Marion Olsen, Bear River RC&D, Utah
Lee Allen, Utah State Representative
Robert W. Hill, Utah State University

IDAHO

Kenneth Dunn, Director, Idaho Department of Water Resources
Russell D. Stoker, Water Master, Soda Springs
J. D. Williams, Idaho Board of Water Resources
Lee Ream, Dingle Irrigation Ream Crockett, Dingle
John Thomas, Last Chance Canal, Idaho
Max Rigby, Last Chance Canal, Idaho
Donald S. Rex, Bear River RC&D, Idaho
Charles Brockway, University of Idaho
Golden Keetch, Water User, Idaho

WYOMING

John Shields, State Engineer's Office
Jeff Fassett, Deputy State Engineer
Michael O'Grady, Wyoming Water Development Commission
Michael Purcell, Wyoming Water Development Commission
Walter Scott, Wyoming Water Development Commission
R. D. Burman, University of Wyoming

MINUTES
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Ken Wright: Let's call the meeting of the Bear River Commission to order. We have one item of business. We don't have to approve the minutes. The item of business is to nominate Larry Anderson as the new Secretary-Treasurer taking Dan Lawrence's place so he is able to sign checks and get the Bear River Commission going.

Don Gilbert: I so nominate.

Reed Dayton: Second.

Ken Wright: Motion carried.

Wes Meyers: Mr. Chairman I have one other item I would like to bring up. I would like to make a motion that the Engineer-Manager and the new Secretary-Treasurer draft a resolution commending Connie Borrowman, Bert Page, and Dan Lawrence for the many hours of very useful work they have done for us. A lot of it was beyond the call of duty. They can draft it but I would like to so move that it be done.

Ken Wright: Larry and I were just talking about that on the bus. I think your suggestion is a terrific one. Larry and I were talking about getting some sort of a somewhat permanent plaque or appreciative thing we could present Dan at our next Bear River Commission meeting. Your suggestion is an excellent one.

Reed Dayton: Second.

Ken Wright: All in favor, any opposed. Motion passed unanimously.

John Teichert: I think we should know if we have a quorum here.

Nancy Fullmer: I started a list around and it is still going around.

Ken Wright: Any other business?

Larry Anderson: We have one thing. The Amended Bear River Compact and the Bylaws of the Bear River Commission have been reprinted as required. We would like to get rid of them out of our library. I don't know whether some of you are flying or not, but we would appreciate it if you would take a couple of bundles back with you. We would appreciate it and then we won't have to send them to you and we can give you the rest of them at the next Bear River Commission meeting. I suspect anyone who would like to have a copy of the Bylaws of the Bear River Commission and the amended Compact are certainly welcome to pick them up instead of having to call your different states' representatives to get them and we will lay these out here. We have a couple of packs for Wyoming and Idaho.

We also have a draft of the last minutes of the Commission meeting. They are just a draft, but there were some assignments made and instead of waiting until we meet again in November we would like to at least handout the draft minutes. We will improve them from that point, but if you have comments on things we have misinterpreted, please give Nancy a call so she can correct them and we will send the official minutes prior to the next meeting. But there were some assignments made and we thought you would like those so we will give those out today to the commissioners.

Wally: Do you have any more than these?

Larry: We have about 250 at our office and we brought about 80 for each state.

Wally: Whatever you have left here I will take back with me.

Ken: Is there any additional business.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m., and the group left for a tour of the proposed Smith's Fork dam project.

Presentation on
Smith's Fork Project

Michael Purcell: The Smith's Fork project came to the attention of the Wyoming Water Development Commission through an application from the Cokeville Water Development Association. The application was submitted to the Commission in 1982. Reed Dayton was actively involved and he was the president of the Water Development Association at that time. Upon receipt of the application, the Water Development Commission made a reconnaissance level study. When we were doing the reconnaissance level study, we were looking at a small storage project. We were looking at developing Wyoming's compact allocation and 14,500 acre-feet as well as providing flood control benefits for the town of Cokeville. The Level I study as we looked at two or three configurations for the dam, the largest storage capacity was 40,000 acre feet. But through the generation of the Level I studies, it became very apparent that the site itself could certainly handle a larger storage capacity, and through the efforts of Mike O'Grady and attending the compact commission meetings and the Bear Lake Regional Commission meetings, it was apparent there might be some benefits to Idaho and Utah if the project was enlarged. We took that concept to Governor Hershler and explained the situation to him. He wrote a letter to the governors of Idaho and Utah and asked them if they would be interested in pursuing a feasibility analysis of a larger reservoir on the Smith's Fork. Both of those governors responded favorably.

In subsequent meetings with Utah, Paul Summers and Norm, we felt the size of the reservoir we should pursue would be approximately 125,000 acre feet. Last year Wyoming funded a feasibility analysis of a 125,000 acre-foot reservoir on the Smith's Fork. The results of that study were that it is a technically feasible site, but it is an expensive site. The estimated cost of the facility will be approximately \$62 million. Last year while we were working on the technical feasibility part of it, Utah was looking at water quality and benefits that could be derived on that basis. So about the first of this year, representatives of Idaho, Utah, and Utah Power and Light met and analyzed the feasibility report to determine what it meant. In essence we felt at that point in time we had

to more or less determine what each state thought the potential project benefits would be. We also saw some benefits that Utah Power and Light might derive. For these efforts we assigned Utah the lead role. With that I would turn it over to Paul Summers to talk about the activities that are going on right now.

Paul Summers: Basically what we have done is form a group of working people with our economist chairing the committee and representatives of Utah Power and Light and Wyoming, and we are trying to get one from Idaho but we haven't got one yet. We felt like in talking with Utah Power and Light there were a lot of benefits that would, in fact maybe in some cases, be of more benefit to Utah Power and Light than either Utah or Idaho. So we felt like they needed to be defined, and Utah Power and Light felt they needed to be defined and were very willing to participate in this group. They have met once and got started. Hopefully by fall, somewhere around November, we will have those things defined so we can say well ok here are the benefits now how does that compare with the cost. That is really the next step we need to go through.

The water quality work that we did was our share of the feasibility study. There is a considerable amount of benefit to Bear Lake of having storage upstream from Bear Lake. By that I mean a reservoir at Smith's Fork would almost act like a sink by catching a lot of pollutants that get into Bear Lake. The water quality of the Lake is a major issue and the Bear Lake Regional Commission is an entity around the lake there that is supported by the states of Utah and Idaho in regards to trying to come to grip with that problem. We were actually contracting through the Bear Lake Regional Commission for this work. It turns out there was a considerable amount of benefit, but it obviously is not enough to offset a good chunk of that project, but at least it has some benefits and we want to further define those. We feel other parts of that study need to be looked at.

That is kind of the work we are doing. We are looking at it in respect to the whole Bear River Basin. We are doing a fairly intense planning effort to develop what we call a "Bear River Water Development Plan". And if the Smith's Fork project fits into that, that would be great.

Mike Purcell: Are there any questions you have for us? We were hoping the meetings that will occur in the fall of the four entities will derive the benefits of the project. We hope we can determine what those benefits are and what we will be willing to allocate for construction funding.

??? : How often would that 125,000 acre-foot reservoir fill on the Smith's Fork?

Norman Stauffer: 125,000 acre feet is total storage; we had 25,000 acre feet for dead storage in there, but on the average year it would fill, on the short years it might not fill. It spills more than half of the time. There is a good base flow there for hydropower.

Mike O'Grady: Out of the 50 years we operated the reservoir in the models, 17 years it didn't fill.

??? : What is your projected power generation?

Mike O'Grady: 13.9 gigawatt hours.

Kenn Dunn: On the preliminary report the benefit cost ratio was .5 to 1. What are you looking at now? How do you get your benefits up?

Paul Summers: That is part of the reason why we are doing this study that I just mentioned. We need to talk to Idaho about having someone be a participant in our group. We have an economist from our office, one from Wyoming Commission office, as well as Utah Power and Light, and we need the same from Idaho. They are going through to better define those benefits. We feel like there is a lot more there than were defined in that report. We expect the results sometime in the fall and we think that will put a whole new picture on it.

Mike O'Grady: We didn't look at downstream benefits in our report, it was just specific to Wyoming.

Jim Christensen: Would you define the relationship with the storage up here with the lower basin aspects in water going down. Are you storing and just releasing it, or moving some of the storage from downstream to upstream?

Mike O'Grady: We transferred 60,000 acre feet of Utah Power and Light's storage in Bear Lake upstream.

Jim Christensen: At Bear Lake or further down? Is that legal and feasible?

Norman Stauffer: Utah has roughly about 12,000 acre feet that we haven't used in the upper basin. We could look at it for that project. Primarily the 60,000 acre feet would keep that amount of water from going into Bear Lake to help the water quality. There is a possibility Utah could put 10,000 acre feet in there and still be within the Compact. I don't know whether we will do that. It is part of the study that we are looking at.

Jim Christensen: Is the 10,000 acre feet because of the legal constraints?

Norman Stauffer: The amended Bear River Compact specifies how much storage is allowed above Bear Lake.

Clark Wall: Did you say \$62 million for 125,000 acre-foot reservoir? What was the estimated cost of the 40,000 acre-foot reservoir?

Mike O'Grady: 40,000 acre-foot would be about \$25 million.

Mike Purcell: When we were looking at the storage facilities, our program per se, our loan grant program, the best situation we could give the Water Development Association would be a 25% loan and a 75% grant. With the \$25 million price tag for the small facility, there was a real question whether they could come up with their share of the 25% for supplemental irrigation and municipal uses.

Ken Dunn: Do you have preliminary figures on the cost per acre foot of water?

Mike O'Grady: No. It became so apparent from the study the physical characteristics of the sight itself and the water availability that there were more benefits than just Wyoming could benefit from.

After the presentation, the group toured the site of the proposed Smith's Fork dam project. Michael O'Grady pointed out the features and dimensions. He also explained the site was mainly on private ground but also involved a small piece of Bureau of Land Management property.

Mr. Bob Hill, from Utah State University, explained that as part of the study being conducted for the Bear River Commission by the University of Idaho, University of Wyoming, and Utah State University, they had installed some weather stations and lycimeters at three places in the Upper Bear River. He invited everyone to tour the lycimeter sites, which were located south of Montpelier in the Paris Bottoms or Dingle Swamp, on the J.F. Ranch towards Randolph, and in Hilliard Flat south of Evanston.