Humboldt Stakeholder Working Group Meeting June 25, 2024, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM
Nevada Gold Mines Elko Office, 1655 Mountain City Highway, Elko, NV 89801

10:00 AM Welcome and introductory remarks
- Opening comments, meeting process/procedures and times – State Engineer's Office
- Introductions (name, representation, goals of participation) – All

11:00 AM Outlook and updates on conjunctive management in the Humboldt, including current proposals before the State Engineer – State Engineer's Office

11:45 PM Lunch

1:00 PM Working Group member topics – All

2:45 PM Topics for next meeting or future consideration – All

3:00 PM Adjourn

Humboldt Stakeholder Working Group Meeting June 25, 2024

Suggestions for conference rooms for future meetings are needed. A couple of stakeholders identified the Boys and Girls Club in Winnemucca as being a venue with the requisite space and technology/connectivity. This is under consideration as being the venue for the September 25 meeting.

Everyone has the opportunity to voice their thoughts, participation of stakeholders is important. It is important to cooperate so there is minimal conflict.

Update on ongoing work:

We've been working on conjunctive management for 10 years and there are great tools we can use now that we did not have when we started.

Middle Humboldt model and report ETA is the end of this CY.

NV Water Initiative-Progress is ahead of schedule in Pine Valley, one of the demonstration basins.

USGS gauges have been placed at Rye Patch and Chimney Reservoir.

There will be an elevation gauge placed at South Fork.

Next priorities are Humboldt River nr Stonehouse and Humboldt River nr Rose Creek

Goals of Conjunctive Management:

Transparency

Mitigate Conflict

Avoid curtailment

Communication regarding what the State Engineer's office is dealing with and how NDWR works.

Kip Allander presented a variety of capture management goals with NDWR preferred goal and capture terminology (see visual aids). NDWR preferred goal is to initiate capture management from a zero-condition starting at some point in time (t_0) when capture management framework is implemented.

Mahannah suggests evaluating magnitude of the cumulative effect of 'hall pass' (grandfathered legacy capture).

Proposals:

Return flow credits for treated wastewater effluent returned to system via RIBS, direct discharge, or as through domestic septic systems serviced by public utilities, not all water is consumed

Different ways to return water to river/basin

Direct discharge of treated water to river

Chris Mahanna and Jay Dixon present proposed process and timeline for implementing conjunctive management in the Humboldt (see draft handout)

Routson suggests folks become familiar with what is happening with curtailment on the Ogallala aquifer in (Nebraska, Kansas, or Oklahoma).

Develop Humboldt River Conservancy District that will have taxing abilities and a funding mechanism.

The stakeholder group would be responsible for making HRCD happen.

Critical management designation is the State Engineer's potential tool within state authority.

Capture models suggest benefits to downstream users from capture management.

All models have strengths and weaknesses.

Concept is based on well location and aquifer properties rather than distance from river.

Revisit upper basin baseflow measurements later in the summer.

The upper model can be used on a case-by-case basis.

Stix suggests that once the capture tool goes online it would be beneficial to send a generalized notice out to GW users to let them know something is coming.

Suggestion made to evaluate magnitude of the cumulative effect of exemptions proposed for domestic, stock, and other minor uses.

It was noted that users should consult with an agent or consultant or a possible HRCD rather than NDWR regarding help with the capture tool and their water rights.

Rather than priority, curtailment could be based on conflict.

Models could show individual impacts if there is conflict.

Pumpage info is clearer now since the meter order.

It was noted that there are flaws and damages to the many diversions along the Humboldt River and we should continue to encourage users to repair and maintain them to improve flow in the river.

NDWR repairs and maintains several diversions.

HRCD could potentially have the funding to improve channel conditions to improve flow of surface water.

Topics for next meeting in September:

Meeting location options

Mitigation-what does it look like?

Discuss concepts from other states that could work for NV

Explore HRCD option in depth

What do we want NV to look like in the future?

Look into a facilitator to implement HRCD

Discuss specific scenarios experienced regarding impacts on the river

Discuss press release vs notice to users once query tool comes out.