



State of Idaho

DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

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June 5, 2012

C. L. "BUTCH" OTTER
Governor

GARY SPACKMAN
Interim Director

Tom Scallorn, Chair
Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee
University of Idaho
PO Box 44301
Moscow, ID 83844-3301

Dear Mr. Scallorn:

Thank you for your recent letter discussing Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee (PBAC) activities. In addition, **thank you for notifying me of PBAC's intention to dissolve the Citizen Advisory Group (CAG).**

I applaud PBAC's continuing efforts to stabilize the aquifer levels while minimizing conflicts between water users and between the states of Washington and Idaho.

Since PBAC was organized, PBAC has promoted a number of public involvement activities including: (1) forming the Citizen Advisory Group, (2) sponsoring the annual Palouse Water Summit, and (3) publishing an annual Palouse Ground Water Basin Water Use Report. These are positive steps toward sharing information. The Palouse Water Summit and the Palouse Ground Water Basin Water Use Report primarily disseminate information. In contrast, the CAG offered a greater opportunity for effective dialogue. As PBAC transitions away from the CAG, I encourage PBAC to implement strategies that will encourage and enhance public input to PBAC.

I commend PBAC for continued research and monitoring to track the aquifer trends. The 2010 water use report, the most recent report available, notes that the water level data shows consistent declines in the static water levels in deep wells. The Wanapum aquifer also appears to show water level declines. I encourage PBAC to assess the goals and objectives of the ground water management plan to determine if any revisions should be made to address the continuing declines.

My staff will continue to participate with PBAC to help with locally driven efforts to address water needs in the Palouse Basin. In addition, I want to become a more active participant in PBAC sponsored activities, including occasionally attending PBAC meetings or PBAC sponsored conferences like the upcoming Palouse Water Summit. Thanks again.

Sincerely,

Gary Spackman
Interim Director

Cc: Julie Titone, Chair, PBAC Citizens Advisory Group
Keith Stoffel, ex officio Citizens Advisory Group member, Washington Department of Ecology
Keith Franklin, Idaho Department of Water Resources
Mike McVay, Idaho Department of Water Resources