

St. George (7/25/2013) Breakout Session

Bob Morgan – Water Law

- Water Law as originally written states after a 10 year period where the water flow gets below 7.5M acre-feet of water annually, the upper basin loses all rights to water and it goes to the lower basin. Bob stated that I think Water Law states that if a 10 year average is not met, the upper basin has to release water to compensate the lower basin. I don't think you turn the upper basin totally off.
- I own land in Iron County. In terms of water law it is illegal to conserve water in Iron County if you have a water right. I have 140 acre-feet in Iron County. If I don't use it I lose it. If I want to build a house in Iron County, they require 1 acre-foot water right to obtain a building permit to build a house. That is a County law, the state law is .43 acre-foot. Iron County requires 1 acre-foot to build a house in Iron County.
- I own 100 lots in Sun Valley Estates, and it is my understanding to get a building permit I have to present the county with a 1 acre-foot water right. I could keep the water right and drill my own well. I have signed an agreement with the Central Iron County Water Conservancy District that they will take that water right and they will supply water to those lots. Either way we have to have 1 acre-foot of water for each lot.
- Speaking on behalf of the Piute Tribe. We are entirely within the state of Arizona, but we have a lot of interactions with water projects in the Utah. One being the Lake Powell Pipeline and the other one being Jackson Flat Reservoir. That reservoir caused a lot of concerns that were handled in a very poor manner. We would like to see the Governor change the way these projects are handled. We want to see a changes to Water Law. Right now the law does not allow citizens to conserve water except on a very minimal permitted basis. We would like to see storm water management. Which would allow infiltration by engineering slower water movement allowed by residential and businesses. Current water law in Utah does not allow that to happen.
- Why is there no enforcement in the collecting of rain water? People are collecting all they want with no enforcement. It is money. All of the offices have experienced 20% cuts so there is not enough manpower to police. Bob talked about being able to get a permit to store 2000 gallons of storm water and he questioned what part of the law discourages conservation. People need to be able to catch the rainwater to use in their yards. All the time we see rain coming off rooftops just go in the gutter. There should be water trades. This has been discussed with the Governor.

Dennis Strong – Maintenance, Infrastructure & Funding

- The general public is already subsidizing water rates. Water suppliers should charge what it costs; people should pay the real costs. Many are against having their property taxes go the WCWCD, and it should be changed. Schools should not be subsidized either – people should have to pay their own way.
- Water rates should be twice as high as they are now to force people to use ET systems and conserve. Perhaps low income families could receive some sort of subsidy on their rates, but that is all.

Tage Flint – Delivery and Water Efficiency

- 31% of our water use is culinary. A gray water recovery system, captured in a tank outside the home, would help with our outdoor water use.
- Energy Water Nexus, we must use appropriate plants for xeriscaping or we could raise our energy bills.
- Two projects that were wasteful, the first being a proposed water park near the airport. He thought that recreation should take place where the water already exists. Also talked about a development where they are building a manmade lake. He wanted to know why St. George city was approving projects like these.
- A citizen thought that conservation will not happen as long as it is voluntary. People should pay for the water they use. Also, the city should reduce the amount of building permits that it issues. Communities should not grow beyond their ability to survive on their own resources. He thought the LPP was a big gamble.
- Would like to see building codes that would require the insulation of hot water lines or require the instant hot water heaters that are new to the market.
- Promote low water usage. Use native plants that don't cause additional heat. People resent that they pay for other people to waste water. People should take the time to properly maintain their sprinkling systems to help alleviate waste. Want to see water taken off of property taxes and that people should pay for what they use.
- Happy to pay for the water used and also suggested that they manufacture salt at Pa Tempe Hot Springs.
- Upset that one of these meetings was not held in Kane County. Proposed no open irrigation or reservoirs. Also no midday irrigation from spring to fall.
- Willing to pay more for water rather than pay for the LPP.
- Suggested implementing gray water recovery systems and also suggested a water trade with Nevada.

Tim Hawks – Water and the Environment

- Concerned over how climate change will affect the Colorado River.
- Concern over recreational access to streams and rivers.
- Lake Powell, is the level from a reliable source?
- In stream flow needs for riparian and aquatic species need to be considered in all future water plans.
- Even with pipeline the water demand of the community may not might not be met if people don't improve their water efficiency.
- Relationship between water conservation and environment. Inefficient water use often times benefits downstream users.

Warren Peterson – Water for Agriculture

- Cedar City is going to make my kids rich when they come after my ag water since they dropped out of the Lake Powell Pipeline. Planners in the area need to develop all options not just convert ag.
- Spoke about ag efficiency as taking from recharge, said a better term for ag conservation is ag efficiency since a greater percentage of water used for sprinkle irrigation water is lost to evaporation than with flood irrigation and even older sprinklers
- Farmers and ranchers need irrigation restrictions and reduce irrigation during heat of day, say between 11 AM and 6PM. Farmers need to be better educated on farm practices just as with residential conservation. Farmers also need education to better manage their fields. NRCS grants and other help improved their fields and water use. Conservancy Districts or NRCS could help with education.
- Conservationists need to realize the water needs of ag crops and that all crop types need to be grown in Utah, not just feed crops. Need to respect ag water and keep it a priority.
- Agriculture should have a high priority. If ag lands are retired, Utah will be dependent upon far-away production, leaving our food supply vulnerable.

Voneene Jorgensen – Competition for Water

- We don't want all our eggs in the same basket. Thus, we would like to see water in Lake Powell developed to diversify our sources. And this needs to be well under way by 2025 to avoid some of the compact issues that might arise.
- I'm really grateful for Gov. Herbert what he did regarding the Snake Valley agreement.
- It is not a good idea to develop Lake Powell water since it is a tenuous source of water to say the least.
- Nevada does not have any business looking at Utah's water.
- When Los Angeles entered Owens Valley to get water for the city, that was criminal. We can't let Nevada do the same to us.
- Lake Powell is only at 46% of its capacity. I don't think it is wise to become dependent upon Lake Powell as a water supply.
- A balanced approach is important.
- What is the state doing to protect water for farmers?
- We need the pipeline, but we also need conservation.
- I like the idea of controlling our use through pricing.
- We should be using our Colorado River Compact water now. There shouldn't be competition for that water from other states.
- Support the Lake Powell Pipeline.