

Ruhenstroth Water Planning Steering Committee

Meeting Minutes – January 9, 2008

Members of the Ruhenstroth Water Planning Steering Committee met at 5:00PM at the Ruhenstroth Volunteer Fire Department Training Room. Members present were Chairman Jim Liles, Vice Chairman Rick Oliver, Secretary Stephanie Hicks, and members Mark Gonzales, Tom Stanley, and Vicki and Rob Bates. Mike Morley was absent due to schedule conflicts.

The agenda was as follows:

- 1) Website update- please check the website before coming to the meeting.
- 2) Mission Statement development.
- 3) Well site selection list and team member assignment-equipment list.
- 4) Projected work ahead of time. On site percolation test.
- 5) Meeting with State Engineer to discuss tentative plans.
- 6) Prepare for Public Meeting-set date.

Item 1.: The Committee discussed how the website looks and what information is being provided. Tom indicated from recollection the number of hits for December was approximately 23. The committee agreed that they were surprised that the hits are so low. The website provides information to frequently asked questions such as, “why is the pipeline being constructed to the Sawmill Development if no water is being taken from the Ruhenstroth well?” Jim indicated that several people that he has spoken with are not interested in what the committee is doing. They have decided they will deal with the problem when and if their wells go dry. Many more people are concerned with the current drainage problems. There is still a lot of distrust out there. The committee discussed whether a Development Agreement was approved for the Sawmill Project and would like to review it. This may help clarify questions and concerns that the residents still have.

Action Item- Stephanie will look at when and if a Development Agreement was approved for the Sawmill Project.

Item 2: The committee discussed the Mission Statement which was drafted by Mike Morley and previously emailed to everyone. Everyone agreed it was a good start and that a Mission Statement was really important for the public meeting. The committee made the following changes to the draft:

"Known as the Ruhenstroth Water Planning Steering Committee, we are...

An ad hoc group of proactive Ruhenstroth residents concerned about the current and future health and availability of the aquifers that supply water to the Ruhenstroth community.

Our first goal is to collect, monitor, and collate aquifer data, and to provide this information to Ruhenstroth residents and county officials.

Our second goal is to identify the various water resource conservation and development options available to ensure the long term viability of the Ruhenstroth residential community water supply."

Action Item- Rick will email some other language related to the specific Ruhenstroth aquifer information.

Item 3: Vicky Bates questioned whether we could get a copy of the USGS report that studied the East Valley Aquifers in March of 2007. The report discussed the locations where water levels were declining. If it is available we may be able to use it as a Ruhenstroth benchmark.

Mark stated this is why we are trying to tie the USGS wells into the mapping grid. Rick indicated that the mapping grid was completed and explained the information on the maps to the committee. Rick indicated that he is reasonably sure that he has selected the correct lots that the USGS wells were located on. Additionally, he picked lots within the grid of residents who indicated on the survey that they would be willing to have their static water level measured. A total of sixty sites were selected and about 23 of those were the USGS test sites. A one-time measurement does not mean much, but once we have several years, we can analyze the information.

Action item- Rick provided list of the selected lots to Vicky, Mark and Jim. The list was divided out into 3 groups with 18 to 21 calls per group. Vicky, Mark and Jim will make initial contact with the owners of those 60 lots to confirm that they still want to the committee to test their static water level. Calls to each resident on the list should be made prior to the next committee meeting to obtain their renewed permission, and if denied, we will select alternate lots at the next meeting.

The committee selected the dates of March 29th and April 5th for static water level measurements. March 29th is the first choice with April 5th being selected as an alternate in the event of bad weather. Due to potential liability, we will need the owner to be present when the static water level measurement is taken. The process will consist of 2 steps: (1) Take off the well cap and (2) electronic tapes will be used to measure the depth below ground surface of water in the well. The entire process should not take more than 5-10 minutes per site. We

will not be attempting to measure the depth of the well itself, as this would involve dropping the tape past the pump and through the wiring harness. (It would not be considered accurate unless the well is new due to sanding-in-Rick)

Stephanie mentioned an item on the January Board of Commissioners agenda that had to do with a contract with the USGS Water Resources Division to complete a ground water nitrogen budget for the Carson Valley.

Action Item- Stephanie was tasked with following up to get a copy of the report and/or meeting minutes.

Item 4 and 5: Rick advised that there have been six new well logs for the Ruhenstroth area from May 2007. Four of the six were re-drills. The original wells in these instances were only about 120 feet so the wells were quite shallow. The County had advised us of approximately 20 re-drills in the area, adding the 4 more that occurred in April or May 2007, the total is now 24 re-drills. Additionally, there may be a few more that occurred at the end of the summer that have not been reviewed and added to the data base yet.

Rick suggested that we may want to consider a site percolation test to see how quickly the ground percolates. If we took fire trucks and dumped as much water as we can in the stream bed, we could see how fast the water percolates. This information would give us an idea of what the ground will do. The infiltration to recharge wells may have strict standards, but we could meet with the State Engineer and see what he thinks. Perhaps we could use surface water rights to obtain water from the Allerman Canal and bring this through the Settelmeyer property to a big open parcel. The committee discussed that this would require piping to be buried underground. It was discussed whether the piping should go through BLM or private land. It would most likely be too expensive and too restrictive to go through public right-of-way along the streets. Jim offered to get estimates of the pipe and pump costs based on approximately 2.5 miles of 6 inch or 8 inch pipe. The committee will need to determine how much water we could pump each spring until regulation would put our junior rights out of priority. We could maybe divert and pump up to 40% of those rights in any one month until June/July of each year as long as the priority lasts. We need to know if we could pump enough water and whether that water would percolate fast enough to be of recharge benefit given the design criteria. As discussed previously consolidating these surface water rights will be a huge task.

The committee then discussed natural recharge from drainage. This seems to be something that the County is interested in but has not implemented any plans we are aware of. This could consist of holding ponds, or even check basins across the Smelter Creek wash so that water has a chance to percolate and naturally recharge. Smelter Creek basin drains approximately square miles, a quite substantial area for runoff. This computes to a volume of 800 acre-feet runoff with one inch of precipitation that didn't soak in. If only half of that were

captured in check basins, and half of that made it into the aquifer, there could be a substantial benefit to our water levels, depending of course of the frequency of them filling up. Perhaps there could be resource development upstream with check dam as part of the county flood control, erosion control program.

Item 6: The committee decided that they should hold a public meeting before we proceed with the static water level measurements. We want to explain our activities, promote the website as our source to disseminate our information, and how the lots in the grid were chosen. Unfortunately, we will be unable to measure the static water level of everyone who agreed to participate in the survey. The date for the public meeting was set as Friday, February 22, 2008 at 7 pm. We will invite Commissioner Doug Johnson, but he does not have to field questions. The committee should discuss donations for funding and also the feasibility study. Further items for discussion and who will be presenting will be discussed at the next meeting.

Action Item- Mark will follow up on obtaining water level information from Carl Ruschmeyer for the County well.

Next meeting date will be Wednesday, February 6, 2008 at 5:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 6:45 PM.