



# AGENDA

## IDAHO WATER RESOURCE BOARD

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At Large

**Peter Van Der Meulen**  
Hailey  
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**Charles "Chuck" Cuddy**  
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**Albert Barker**  
Boise  
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**John "Bert" Stevenson**  
Rupert  
District 3

**Dale Van Stone**  
Hope  
District 1

**Streamflow Enhancement & Minimum Streamflow  
Committee Meeting No. 2-16  
October 31, 2016 at 3:00 p.m.**

Idaho Water Center  
Conference Rooms B, C & D  
322 East Front Street  
BOISE

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1. Welcome and Introductions
  2. Bohannon Creek Transaction
  3. Pole Creek Transaction
  4. Goat & Meadow Creek Transaction
  5. Other Items for Discussion
  6. Adjourn

Committee Members: Peter Van Der Meulen (Chair), Vince Alberdi, Chuck Cuddy, Roger Chase, Dale Van Stone

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Americans with Disabilities

The meeting will be held in facilities that meet the accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you require special accommodations to attend, participate in, or understand the meeting, please make advance arrangements by contacting Department staff by email [jennifer.strange@idwr.idaho.gov](mailto:jennifer.strange@idwr.idaho.gov) or by phone at (208) 287-4800.

# Memorandum



To: IWRB – Streamflow Enhancement and Minimum Streamflow Committee

From: Amy Cassel

Date: October 24, 2016

Re: Water Transactions Program – Bohannon Creek Source Switch

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Endangered fish recovery efforts in the Lemhi River basin hinge upon reconnection of currently dewatered tributaries. The draft Lemhi Conservation Plan includes State commitment to reconnect 10 tributaries in the next 20-years. Bohannon Creek, a Lower Lemhi River tributary that is seasonally de-watered due to irrigation withdrawals, has been identified as a high priority reconnect stream for Lemhi River Basin restoration efforts. Habitat in Bohannon Creek is ideal for spawning and rearing Chinook salmon and steelhead and since 2014 water users on the Bohannon Creek-3 diversion have entered into early season Minimum Flow Agreements to spill 2 cfs of water in the lowest reach to protect steelhead eggs (redds) from drying up during the critical incubation period in June. Maintaining that target flow of 2 cubic feet per second between the Bohannon Creek-3 (BHC3) diversion and the confluence with the Lemhi River (see map below) facilitated the incubation of steelhead eggs in the lowest reach of Bohannon Creek. However, this approach has always been considered a short-term solution and a long-term plan has been in development for several years.

The long-term plan to address flow limitations on lower Bohannon Creek is to eliminate the BHC3 diversion and transfer to point of diversion 5.5 cfs of senior water rights to a new location on an existing Lemhi River ditch (L8A). The change will require construction of a new pumping station at the L8A ditch, a pipeline, and improved irrigation infrastructure. The senior rights are held by Betty Stokes and Dale Jolley, the only two water users who currently divert water at BHC3.

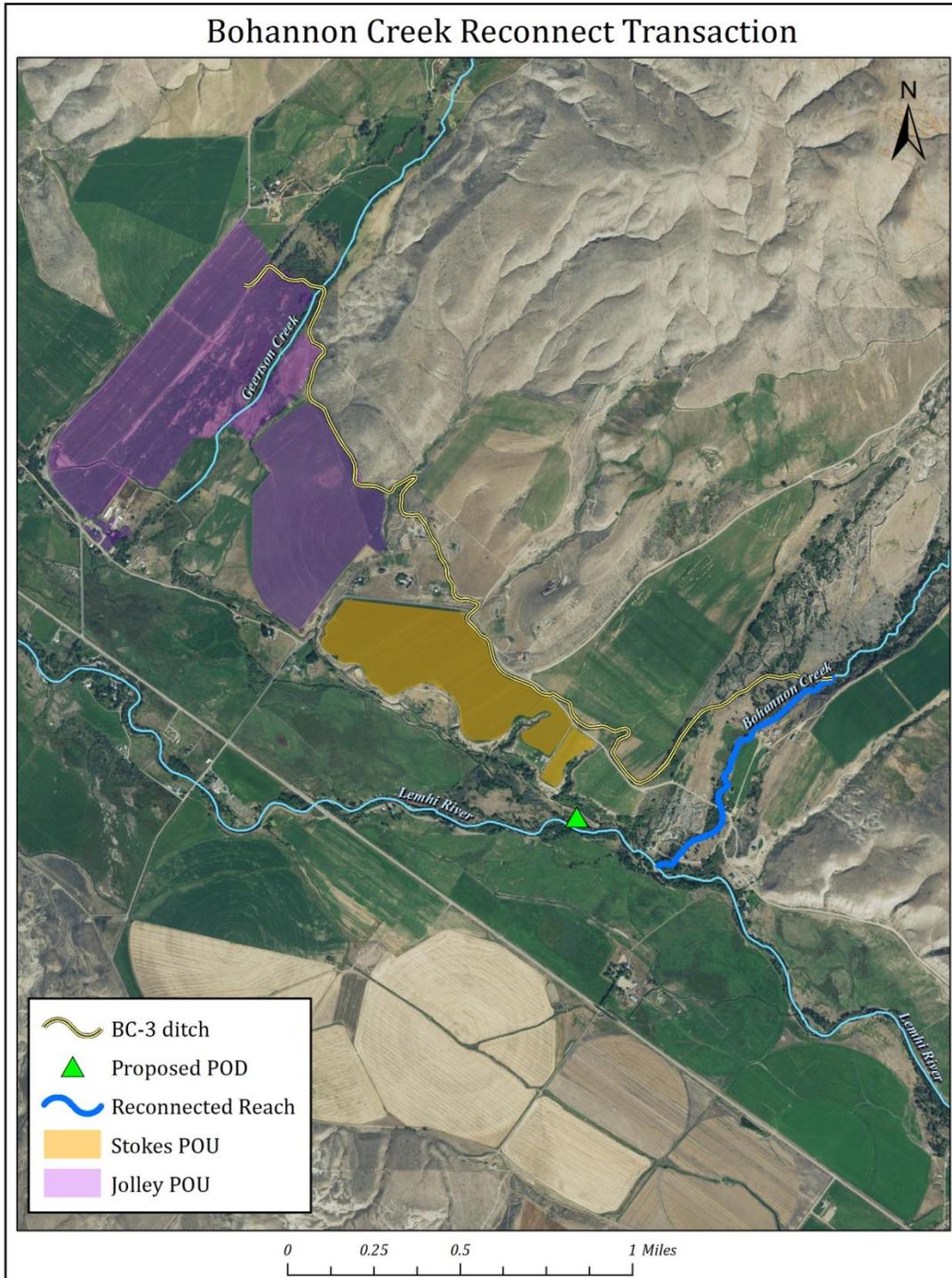
IDFG has secured funding to develop the pumping station at the new point of diversion and improve irrigation infrastructure. The change in the location of the point of diversion and costs associated with pumping water from the Lemhi River will increase on-farm costs to both the operators. Therefore, staff would like to develop a 20-year agreement not to divert with both Stokes and Jolley to offset the increased cost of operation. In order to make the proposed changes feasible for the water users, funds from the Columbia Basin Water Transaction Fund or the Idaho Fish Accord could be used to cover the estimated cost of power for 20 years.

IWRB staff would like to assist the Stokes and Jolley family with the water right transfer and develop power estimates based on the new irrigation design. Previous estimates for both transactions (Stokes and Jolley) were approximately \$800,000 total but there have been some changes in the overall irrigation design and that number is likely to change.

## Request for Board Guidance

Staff would like to discuss whether the Committee supports pursuit of a 20-year source switch (agreement not to divert) with Stokes and Jolley.

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# Memorandum



To: IWRB – Streamflow Enhancement and Minimum Streamflow Committee  
From: Amy Cassel  
Date: October 26, 2016  
Re: Water Transactions Program – Pole Creek 2017-2035

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Pole Creek is a tributary to the Salmon River near the headwaters in the Sawtooth Valley. Pole Creek has the potential to provide high quality habitat for threatened Chinook salmon and bull trout. There is one active diversion on Pole Creek which can seasonally dewater a 2 mile reach of the creek. Salmon Falls Land and Livestock has irrigation and hydropower rights that can divert up to 22 cfs at that diversion.

Salmon Falls Land and Livestock worked with the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) to develop a flow and habitat restoration plan that allowed the authorization of their ditch on Federal land. The restoration plan was implemented prior to the 2016 irrigation season and included the installation of 3-phase power to replace 7 cfs of hydropower, transfer of the point of diversion and new fish screen, irrigation system redesign and installation to eliminate pivots crossing the stream, fencing of the riparian corridor, replacement of several culverts with bridges, and the installation of 2 large irrigation wells to replace late season Pole Creek surface water.

Implementation of the restoration plan also included plans for a 20-year water transaction to compensate the landowners for the increased cost of irrigation (3-Phase power to turn pivots and pump groundwater). In 2015, IDWR staff used the irrigation system design and Salmon River Electric Coop rate information to develop power estimates for the new groundwater pumping system. Power costs were estimated to be approximately \$20,000 for the full irrigation season (May – September). This estimate was shared with the landowners prior to the 2016 irrigation season and they were concerned that the estimate would not cover the entire cost and were unwilling to enter into a 20-year agreement at that price. Staff then requested that the landowners provide their monthly power bills from the 2016 irrigation season to support a revised pumping cost estimate. Actual pumping costs for the 2016 irrigation season were \$19,871.71, very close to the \$20,000 estimate. Board staff will meet with the landowners to review the 20-year estimate and finalize the number for a funding resolution. Funding is available from the Bonneville Power Administration through the Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program (CBWTP).

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**Action Item:** Action is not required by the Committee at this time. A resolution to authorize execution of a 19-year agreement with the land owner will be submitted for Board consideration once a long-term agreement and associated costs have been negotiated.

# Memorandum



To: IWRB – Streamflow Enhancement and Minimum Streamflow Committee

From: Amy Cassel

Date: October 25, 2016

Re: Water Transactions Program – Goat and Meadow Creek Acquisition

The following is a new transaction that was initiated by Western River Conservancy, a private non-profit organization, and is still under development. It will be introduced to Committee for informational purposes. Action is not required by the Committee at this time, though questions and comments are encouraged.

## **Background:**

Goat and Meadow Creeks, located in the Sawtooth Valley, are tributaries to Valley Creek and are classified as B-list streams under the Snake River Basin Adjudication (SRBA) Settlement Term Sheet. These creeks are classified as B-list, developed streams because of chronic dewatering and passage barriers due to irrigation diversions, unscreened irrigation diversions, impacts due to grazing, and residential development. The Valley Creek B-List tributaries are relatively small drainages but their hydrological contributions are considered important thermal refugia for Chinook salmon. Meadow and Goat Creek have both been designated critical habitat for steelhead and Chinook salmon, and juveniles of both species are presently utilizing the streams for rearing habitat. In 2008 a fish survey was conducted on Meadow Creek and 63 juvenile Chinook salmon were observed just upstream of the mouth. This was the highest density of Chinook juveniles ever observed on the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. Both Goat and Meadow Creek have Minimum Stream Flow water rights held by the IWRB.

Goat Falls Ranch is a privately owned ranch near Stanley that flood irrigates approximately 300 acres out of Goat and Meadow Creek. Water rights with a total diversion rate of approximately 12 cfs are appurtenant to the ranch, which includes approximately one mile of Meadow Creek stream frontage and approximately 100 feet of Goat Creek stream frontage. As a result of numerous diversions and livestock grazing, the quality of fish habitat in the creeks varies from very impaired to good.

Goat Falls Ranch was initially listed for sale in 2012. In May 2016, Western River Conservancy (WRC), a private, Portland-based land-acquisition non-profit with a focus on conserving critical river habitat in the West, signed a Purchase and Sale Contract with the sellers of Goat Falls Ranch. Upon the successful sale of the ranch, WRC hopes to convey the property (land only) to the Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) and the water (water rights only) to the Idaho Water Resource Board. Purchase of the land would be funded through the Land and Water Conservation Fund and management of the property would continue in perpetuity under the Sawtooth NRA. Ownership of the water rights would be changed to the IWRB and permanently leased and rented through the Water Supply Bank to the Minimum Stream Flow water rights at the mouth of Goat Creek and Meadow Creek. Funding of the water rights acquisition would come from the Columbia Basin Water Transaction Fund.

## Request for Committee Guidance

At this time, the Goat and Meadow Creek transaction is presented to the Committee for informational purposes only. Staff requests comments from the Committee regarding the transaction to better understand the IWRB's interest in acquisition of the water rights on Goat and Meadow Creek.

