

**Pend Oreille Basin Commission**  
**Quarterly meeting**  
**June 11, 2008**  
**2:00-5:00 p.m.**  
**Panhandle Health District facilities (Sandpoint)**

**Minutes**

**Present:**

Ford Elsaesser  
Brent Baker  
Linda Mitchell  
Craig Hill  
Kate Wilson

**Absent:**

Marc Brinkmeyer  
Caryn Miske  
Susan Martin  
Doug Conde

**Attendance:**

10 public/agency  
(Sign-in sheet available)

**Agenda:**

- 1) Welcome and approval of Minutes
- 2) Meet Tom Herron (IDEQ)
- 3) Update on Negotiated Rulemaking for Septic Design Flow (Dale Peck, PHD)
- 4) Presentation: New AIS Legislation and updates (Rep. Eric Anderson)
- 5) Video: Lake Mead Quagga Mussel video (Rep. Eric Anderson)
- 6) Presentation: Septic replacement program for Bonner County (Greg Becker, NRCS)
- 7) Update on the AIP and fishery management (Jim Fredericks & Chip Corsi, IDFG)
- 8) Reminder/discussion of upcoming meeting dates
- 9) Adjournment

**Meeting:**

Craig made a motion to *approve the 2/20/08 Minutes*. Brent seconded. All in favor, **motion passed**. Tom Herron, the new Regional Water Quality Program Manager for Idaho Dept. of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) introduced himself to the Commission.

Septic Design Flow Negotiated Rulemaking: Dale Peck, Director of the Environmental, Response & Technology Division at Panhandle Health District (PHD), provided an update on the Negotiated Rulemaking process for septic design flow. Efforts were made last year by PHD to change the requirements in the Panhandle; this year IDEQ will be leading an effort to make the modifications State-wide. If the Board of Health approves the proposed changes, they go to the Legislature in January. Due to outdated septic threats to ground and surface water, the management agencies will be moving forward in the process to get more stringent design requirements.

The biggest issue surrounding the proposal is the size of the area necessary to build (and replace) a drainfield. The size required is determined by the lot size and the soil type; setbacks are greater for lots near surface water or with a high water table. In addition to the design revisions, the Rulemaking includes changing the definition of "module" and putting the soil classifications into code (vs. "technical guidance" as they now stand).

Linda made a motion to *authorize Kate to draft and submit a letter to the IDEQ public hearing on June 19<sup>th</sup>*. Brent seconded. All in favor. **Motion passed.**

Aquatic Invasive Species: Rep. Eric Anderson of Priest Lake gave an informational presentation on House Bill 643, the newest piece of AIS Legislation. The southern border of Idaho is at immediate risk, as many high-use lakes in Utah, Nevada, and Arizona are now infested with quagga and/or zebra mussels (*Dreissena rostriformis bugensis* and *Dreissena polymorpha* respectively). One female, in the right conditions (temperature, pH, calcium concentration) can produce over one million eggs in one season (and in the ideal conditions, may reproduce all year long). They cover hard surfaces up to 150 feet deep, including rock/cobble, docks, boats, water intakes, and irrigation pipes.

HB 643 will provide the State with the authority to inspect and quarantine boats infested with AIS, prosecute anyone who knowingly transports AIS, and more (through the rulemaking process). The bill also includes the allocation of \$5 million in the case of an AIS emergency. Rep. Anderson voiced his support for mandatory boat wash stations, boat inspections at borders/ports of entry, more sustainable funding sources (sticker program, user fees, etc), and addressing the issue in proactive manner. Rep. Anderson encouraged the Commission to write a letter to the Governor and the Director of ISDA; participating in the rulemaking for HB 643 is also of the utmost importance. Rep. Anderson showed a video of the mussel situation at Lake Mead.

Septic Replacement Program: Greg Becker, District Conservationist for the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) gave a presentation on his idea for promoting a grant-funded septic replacement program in Bonner County. The goals are to: 1) protect water quality, 2) strengthen partnerships with agencies and the public, 3) limit nutrients and bacteria, 4) improve flow standards, and 5) increase public awareness about the need for septic maintenance. Priority areas, as discussed by the "Lake Nearshore Committee," will include shoreline properties (within one mile of the lake).

Greg envisions that the program will begin with a pilot project in a priority area, one that will replace individual outdated systems with a large community system. From there, if the project is successful and meets all of the desired goals, the program will proceed to solicit applications from property owners/communities who would like to participate. PHD reports that they see systems failing in locations such as Hope, Garfield Bay, and Bottle Bay. The 2007 Nearshore Survey indicated that wastewater issues were perceived to be the greatest threat to water quality (per shoreline homeowners).

AIP/Fishery updates: Jim Fredericks, Regional Fishery Manager for IDFG, and Chip Corsi, Panhandle Supervisor for IDFG gave an update on the status of the Angler Incentive Program (AIP), the status of the kokanee, and other fishery management efforts. Harvest is down significantly on rainbow trout (RBT). Chip credits the bad weather, high fuel prices, and hopefully, a decrease in the abundance of predators. 10,000 lake trout (LT) were removed 2005-2007 utilizing both anglers and nets. The nets have been removed for the season; they will return in August. They have been using up to 14 trap nets and four miles of gill nets. The majority of the fish they gill net are 14-16

inches, and with the trap net are 15-30 inches. More fish are caught in the gill nets, and all of the harvested fish are cleaned, filleted, and transported to local food banks by the netters and IDFG.

IDFG will not be conducting a population estimate on LT this year; they were done in 2004, 2006, and 2007. U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service allows IDFG a “take” on bull trout (BT) of 150 fish per season; they have had 80 BT mortalities out of 400 caught in gill nets this season.

In August, the kokanee trawling will take place (to establish a population estimate for all ages as well as spawners). Biomass of kokanee has continued to decrease. In 2007, there was a good number of fry, so IDFG is hopeful that there will be more one year olds this year. After age one though, the trend has been a serious decline in adult kokanee. The hatchery at Granite Creek/Sullivan Springs had a very poor egg take this year. IDFG hopes to supplement their hatchery stock with fry from other places, if available. In a “good year,” IDFG will have 15-20 million eggs; this year there was less than ½ million. In order to have a population that is sustainable, there needs to be a 50 percent or greater survival rate. They are far from that now. None of the data suggests lack of food as an issue for kokanee in Lake Pend Oreille.

Chip reported on fishery impacts due to the high flows. The total dissolved gas increases with high flows. In the past, IDFG has seen a higher mortality rate on kokanee with higher flows-which can be hard on juvenile fish in particular.

IDFG is still looking into the AIP “cheating issue,” and will be testing the otoliths (ear bones) of suspicious AIP fish heads to ensure that they come from Lake Pend Oreille. Melo Maiolie, previously at the Bayview Research Station, will now be working from the Coeur d’Alene IDFG office. Chip will ensure that the Commission meets his replacement when he comes so that we may continue to work with them on winter pool and kokanee population efforts.

Chip also gave an update on the Idaho Club Trestle Creek application. IDFG requested that there be no beach and the docks redesigned. Kate will get the Commissioners the new application as soon as it comes in.

Kate provided updates on the budget and Commission-funded projects.

Linda made a motion to *schedule a conference call (to discuss winter pool for Lake Pend Oreille) on August 28 and the next quarterly meeting for September 24*. Brent seconded. All in favor. **Motion passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.