

***Ground Water Inventory, Monitoring & Assessment***

***Technical Guide Development***

**Date:** March 21, 2013 (Draft)

**Subject:** Steering Team Conference Call

**Participants:** Leslie Bach, Linda Spencer, Chris Savage, Chris Carlson, Joe Gurrieri, and Steve Solem

**Unable to Join Call:** John Allen, Tony Crump, Tony Erba, Katherine Smith, and Casey Giffen

**Discussion Topics and Action Items**

**Next Steering Team Call on June 27, 2013 @ 3:00 ET/1:00 MST**

# ****Project Overview****

**Steve Solem discussed key tasks coming up in the project schedule and their status:**

* **Concurrent review of v3.0 of the Technical Guide by the Technical Evaluation Group (Task 4.40) and the Core Team (Task 3.20) is underway and reviews are due March 29, 2013. One Technical Reviewer has submitted comments.**
* **Evaluation and Reconciliation of Technical Review Comment (Task 4.50) will serve as the basis for discussions on the June 2013 Core Team call and will identify needs for the final publication.**
* **Outreach and Communication (Task 6.70) with user community to improve their awareness and understand of the TG and the Technical Notes for GW inventory, monitoring and assessment.**
* **NRM Application/GMO Assessment (Tasks 6.20 and 6.30) work is underway. We hope to benefit from procedures and “lessons learned” from the Existing Vegetation Technical Guide when this work starts later this FY.**

# ****Groundwater IM&A Technical Guide Development****

**Evaluation and Reconciliation of Technical/CT Comments (Task 4.50)**

**Steve Solem described the process to evaluate and reconcile comments on the Technical Guide. Both the Technical Reviewer group and Core Team were asked to review and comment on the Technical Guide (v3.0).**

**Technical Reviewers will provide written responses to the questions outlined in the *Evaluation and Review Plan* (v3.3 – 4/25/12), which include the following:**

1. Is the overall structure and flow of information presented in the Technical Guide well-conceived? Are there any major flaws?
2. Does the introductory section adequately describe the relationships between agency business requirements and the purposed methods described in the Technical Guide?
3. How well do the sections on classification, mapping, and inventory flow?  Are there any major flaws in presentation or approach?
4. Are there changes to the Technical Guide that should be considered? Are there missing components?
5. What effects to your organization may result from using the technical guidance?

**Members of Technical Reviewer group and Core Team were also asked to provide technical suggestions and document edits.**

**Responses to questions and individual technical comments will be reviewed to determine the major issues or concerns with the Technical Guide content. Reconciliation of comments and recommendations to address major comments should be completed by May 2013.**

# ****Environmental Flows/Levels Pilot Test Update****

Joe Gurrieri and Leslie Bach provided an update of the **Phase II Pilot Test involving:**

* + **North Dakota/Sheyenne NG-Dakota Prairie NGs**
	+ **Oregon/Oregon Dunes NRA-Siskiyou NF**

**The field crew is on track to wrap up the two pilot sites this field season.**

**On the** Sheyenne Grasslands in ND, **the snow cover to date is fairly good and results indicate that the year was not a dry as the prior year. A review of the vegetation data, even with drought conditions, indicates a clear trend in plant species and various groundwater parameters being monitored.**

**Within the Oregon Dunes, the ecosystems in this area have been extensively studied for many years (some date back to 1945) however obtaining the data has been an enormous challenge. TNC has been able to retrieve archived, hand-written notes, and translate these into spreadsheets. The primary issue with these legacy data is a lack of raw data for the sites and she hopes to obtain data from the Water Commission Board. Once the datasets are available, proper data storage will be critical.**

**The remaining work for this field season involves vegetation monitoring and measuring the symmetry of independent-groundwater lakes. To develop a relationship between groundwater pumping from the dunes, lakes, and adjacent wetlands there needs to be fine-resolution data about the symmetry in the lakes, which is not currently available. A university group will measure symmetry for the pilot. Acoustic data will be used to measure symmetry.**

# ****Implementation – Database Interfaces****

**Chris Carlson shared that GDE Data Management was originally on NRM’s Program of Work (POW) for this fiscal year. However, in an effort to recalculate NRM’s capacity to do work the priority project list has been redefined and GDE Data Management is no longer on the priority project list. Chris will meet with NRM to assess what was in the original POW and try to determine when the GDE Data Management work might be accomplished.**

# ****Implementation – Communication and Outreach****

**Communication and Outreach Plan**

**Chris Carlson indicated he is not clear what type of template/model best meets the needs of leadership and user communities. The development of an outreach plan has deferred until he has more time to devote to this effort. Chris also indicated that the Office of Communications is not supporting internal rollouts.**

**We hope to take advantage of the work being done on the Existing Vegetation or Watershed Condition Framework Outreach Plans that might serve as useful models for the GW Technical Guide Outreach Plan. These templates are expected to be available at the end of April 2013.**

**User Community Outreach and Communication**

**During the Core Team call, team members provided an update on their for an update on outreach/communication efforts. The following are examples of these efforts:**

**Allison Aldous from TNC has developed a fact sheet for the environmental flows/levels pilot test. Allison’s Fact Sheet has been added to Dropbox/6.0 – Implementation/Outreach and Communication/Communication Tools.**

**Linda Spencer (NRM) presented a PowerPoint on GDE inventory protocols at the SRM Meeting in February 2013. The presentation is now posted on SRM website and is filed in Dropbox/6.0 Implementation/Outreach and Communication/Communication Tools.**

**Regional Air/Soil/Water meetings provide the best opportunities to inform users about the upcoming GW Technical Guide. Joe Gurrieri will be working with Polly Hays at the to develop a training session for R2 Regional Office employees and will provide an overview during an upcoming R4 meeting.**

**Kate Dwire (RMRS) suggested that smaller Society meetings (e.g., Fisheries Society) also provide good opportunities to inform communities. Kate will present a high-level overview at an upcoming meeting. Name of meeting?**

**Chris Carlson recently presented two briefings on the GW Technical Guide. The first briefing was for the Region 6 Regional Forester and TNC Vice-President. Chris indicated there was a high level of enthusiasm about the Core Team’s accomplishments as well as a new awareness about groundwater. The second was a briefing for NFS Directors on the Core Team’s progress and an overview of upcoming tasks. Chris said there was interest in the room, including questions from the Deputy Chief. Overall, Chris felt the briefing was good opportunity to provide increased awareness.**

# ****GDE Field Guide Implementation****

**Joe Gurrieri and Steve Solem provided the Core Team with an update on:**

**Training Status and User Feedback – A recording of a webinar that provides an overview of the GDE Inventory Field Guides is available at** [http://www.fs.fed.us/geology/groundwater.html](http://www.fs.fed.us/geology/groundwater.html%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**. Joe Gurrieri will present training at joint BLM/FS meeting in Carson City, NV.**

**GDE Database/Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW) Update – Abe Springer and SMNRA are reviewing spring restoration priorities using GDE Level 1 data. The objective is to build a relationship between procedures used in watershed condition monitoring, GDE Level 1 data, and other common data sources to assess feasibility and scope out restoration priorities across different spring sites. The team is working to resolve the issue of how do you classify a spring site in a watershed and translate the classification into the WCF condition rating.**

**We are continuing work with the migration of data in the GDE Database to the Enterprise Data Warehouse (EDW), but there is an issue with loading images. The current database limits the number of images that can be loaded. There is a final Access database (v4).**

**Springs Restoration Framework – Steve Solem is working with a team including Abe Springer (NAU) and Burton Pendleton (RMRS) on the Spring Mountains NRA in Nevada to develop a linkage between GDE Level 1 data and a condition rating for GDE’s. The use of GDE Level 1 data and other data sets to determine site conditions using the Watershed Condition Framework indicators/attributes will provide a linkage between GDE sites and the WCF process. This information may be used in updating the watershed condition assessments in 2014-15 when the 5-year reassessment process begins. It also provides a basis for developing restoration program requests on the Humboldt-Toiyabe NF for Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act funding or appropriated funds. The goal is to move beyond individual site restoration proposals to development a restoration program that can represent total restoration needs and provide a basis for annual program budget requests.**