

# **Idaho Geological Survey - Advisory Board Meeting**

November 9, 2015; 9:00 AM

Meeting Notes

## **Present**

Ed Ratchford, Director and State Geologist, University of Idaho  
Bob Smith, Senior Associate Vice President, University of Idaho  
Rich Reed, President, Idaho Association of Professional Geologists  
Leif Tapanila, Chair, Department of Geological Sciences, ISU  
Jack Lyman, Executive Director, Idaho Mining Association  
Joe Stegner, Special Assistant to the President, University of Idaho  
David Hawk, Energy Analysis and Answers, E2A  
Tom Schultz, Director, Idaho Department of Lands  
Eric Wilson, Idaho Department of Lands

## **Announcements**

- AAPG Pacific + Rocky Mountain Sections Joint meeting  
October 2-5, 2016, Paris Las Vegas Hotel
- 68th Annual Meeting, Rocky Mountain Section, GSA  
May 18 & 19, 2016, University of Idaho, Moscow, ID

## **Overview of IGS Budget and Staff**

Dr. Ratchford provided an overview of state appropriations and grants and contracts through fiscal year 2015 which totaled just under \$800,000. State appropriations are down and grants and contracts, which at one point spiked to about \$800,000 for well assessment and drilling, are now at \$382,804. Dr. Ratchford would like to see the budget get back to historical levels of funding. Funding sources for the fiscal projected budget of FY16 include \$824,200 in operating expense and personnel. Other sources of income include multi-year grants and some carry over expense budgets which have very restricted usage.

The IGS FY17 Legislative request is a proposal for an additional geologist and a GIS analyst. The total request for the geologist is \$128,175 and the GIS analyst is \$90,360 (includes salary, fringe, operating expenses). The request has not yet been submitted by DFM to the Governor. Several strategies were discussed on how best to get the additional funding request approved. A meeting with the Governor was suggested to stress the importance of the new positions. Inclusion of industry representatives (Steve Brassey and Steve Thomas) in the meeting was also suggested so the Governor could hear how important the positions were to industry.

## **Current Projects & Research**

- A. Stibnite Project (Midas Gold) – IGS has done two large scale mapping projects for Midas Gold. They have finished Stibnite 1 (1<sup>st</sup> mapping project) and are working on Stibnite 2

which involves follow up mapping, ongoing geochronology, core logging, ore microscopy and microprobe work to understand timing of ore mineralization and emplacement.

*Coffee Break – After the break the group discussion portion of the meeting was moved up to accommodate members who had to leave early.*

### **Group Discussion**

IGS would like to propose providing high quality petroleum assessments and geologic services to evaluate perspective areas of the state by augmenting the Survey's annual budget with a small percentage (less than 25%) of the oil & gas severance tax. This would require legislation. There are three areas of Idaho that are speculative for oil & gas development. The augmentation to the budget would allow the IGS to hire a professional oil & gas geologist.

Dr. Ratchford would like the geologists who work for IGS to become *Registered Professional Geologists*. This requires successful completion of a two part 8 hour ASBOG national examination. When they become registered they are then qualified as expert testimony in courts of law. For all new hires, if they aren't already registered, they would be required to take the exams within the first 18 months of employment. This will be made clear when they were hired that it is a condition of continued employment. Rich Reed is championing having an annual or biannual educational requirement for registered professional geologists.

A proposal for consolidation of two satellite offices in the southern part of the state at the Boise Water Center has been made. This would provide critical mass for primary customer services and would strengthen state agency collaboration. The issue is public service – there is currently no office you can walk into. Leif Tapanila said there is very strong kickback from ISU; one of the advantages of having an IGS employee at ISU is that you gain faculty engagement from ISU. For no additional cost gain, IGS has access to graduate students, colleagues and aspects of proximity of having an agent in southeast Idaho. A suggestion was made to keep John Welhan on ½ or ¼ time after his retirement and hire his replacement to work out of the Boise office. This would give the new person 6 months to 2 years to work with John and an opportunity for IGS to see the effects of hiring the person at Boise instead of ISU. It was also noted that it will be about two years before IGS learns if the state lands the FORGE agreement.

### **Current Projects & Research - continued**

- B. Abandoned Mines & Lands (ID Dept. of Lands) – IGS has completed over 4000 files and maps of abandoned mines and lands and they are now available for download. They continuing categorizing and capturing useable information so that it is not lost.
- C. Petroleum System Modeling & Assessments (Alta Mesa) – Dr. Ratchford reviewed his task list for IGS Petroleum Research; he has developed a map of the oil and gas play. Idaho Department of Lands has asked IGS to upload their production data from gas wells. There are MOU's in progress between IGS & IDL and between IGS & Cedar Creek

Resources and are hoping to develop an MOU between IGS and Alta Mesa. IGS is working with IDL on proposed legislation for a core/cuttings facility.

- D. Smith's Ferry Project (ID Transportation Dept.) – IGS has been working with the Idaho Transportation Department to develop a geologic map for a section of Idaho 55 around Smith's Ferry.
- E. Aggregate & Landslide Projects (Internal)
- F. STATEMAP (USGS Sponsored Projects)
  - a. Current Status of STATEMAP Program in Idaho – Completed data for Salmon, Fairfield, Grandfield and Bonners Ferry quadrangles.
  - b. Salmon Project Area
  - c. Rexburg Project Area
  - d. Weiser/Payette Project Area
- G. Data Preservation (USGS) Project Update – Bill Bonnichsen has been collecting geochemical data and converting it to a digital data base to get it preserved.