

**Interbasin Compact Committee Basin Roundtables  
Rio Grande Inter Basin Roundtable**

**MINUTES**

**July 14, 2009 @ 2:00 – 5:00 P.M.  
Adams State College Student Center, Alamosa**

**Attending:** Doug Shriver, JB Alexander Mike Gibson, Ray Wright, Ron Brink, Lewis H. Entz, Mike Willett, Nicole Langley, Ryan Daugherty, Corey T. DeAngelis, Rio de la Vista, Mel Getz, Ralph Curtis, Judy Lopez, Lawrence D. Gallegos, Jim Rhett, Allen Brown, Greg Higel, Ruth Heide, Charles Stillings, Bill Yohey, Charlotte Bobicki, Steve Vandiver, Kitty Broadbent, Erin Minks

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- **Introductions** – Chairman Mike Gibson welcomed the Roundtable's new Recreational representative, Ryan Daugherty, General Manager of Mountain Man Tours. A quorum of members were in attendance. Travis Smith and Cindy Medina had asked to be excused.

- **Remembrance of Margaret Van Valen Russell** – Mike spoke for the Rio Grande Basin Roundtable in tribute to Peggy Russell, who passed away on June 29, 2009. She will be remembered for her good judgment as Water Referee for the Twelfth Judicial District, and for her work as Victim Advocate, working primarily on behalf of children, in the Alamosa Sheriff's Department. We will miss her.

- **Approval of Minutes June 9, 2009** – Ray moved to approve. Doug seconded. Minutes of June 9, 2009 were unanimously approved.

- **Division of Water Resources – Division III, Corey T. DeAngelis, Chief, Water Measurement**

SNOTEL - Snowpack was average to slightly above average this year. However, peak runoff began several weeks earlier than recent average. This was due in part to warming weather trends and possibly dust deposits on high elevation snowpack. NRCS forecast indicates a slight below average runoff for both the Rio Grande and Conejos basins.

Ten day analysis of Rio Grande – Index supply 625,000 AF projected for the 2009 calendar year, based on 527,000 AF flows forecast in the April through September period. This is higher than the April Forecast of 600,000 AF Index projected in April 2009.

We have an obligation to deliver 172,000 AF downstream from the Rio Grande, with approximately 9,500 AF carryover credit we'll have at end of the year. We currently have 10,600 acre-feet of credit in Elephant Butte, but we lose a little of that credit to evaporation over the course of the year.

119,100 AF have been delivered to the state line from the Rio Grande April thru July 6. Deliveries to the state line July 7 through October need to be approximately 7,000 AF, with a 6.5% curtailment needed to apply to ditches.

We're seeing a fairly good return flow now probably due to the southern ditches recharge from last year.

Conejos: Upper index supply 328,500 AF April – September + 31,500 winter time flows = 360,000 AF upper index. Of that, Colorado owes 155,200 AF to downstream states. 129,200 AF has been delivered to the state line April 1 through July 6. Deliveries to the state line July 7 through October need to be approximately 7,100 AF, with a 19% curtailment on the Conejos.

NOAA precipitation forecast for the San Luis Valley indicates an Above Average outlook for August through October 2009, with an "Average" outlook for November 2009 through January 2010.

Elephant Butte Reservoir is currently at 513,400 AF and dropping. It is anticipated that storage in the reservoir will drop to 400,000 AF in early August triggering Article 7 of the Compact. At this point no storage is allowed in post compact reservoirs.

The Advisory Committee on the rules for well use in the San Luis Valley continues its work. Dick Wolfe, the State Engineer, has a positive outlook about the advisory committee and expects it to come up with a good set of rules. The next meeting of the committee is to be held September 3 at Adams State College.

- **Terms of Roundtable Members** – Members were asked to review and make any needed corrections on a sheet containing current status of terms. We're looking for a Domestic Water Supply representative, also a rep from Saguache County. Rodney Smith has now filled the Trinchera representative. Since Hinsdale County has only one municipality, we might have only one representative from Hinsdale County. That would drop our numbers down to about 30. Terms run January to January. Mike suggested we should have a session to bring new members up to speed on issues, the status of HB 179 funds, etc. Maybe we should have a booklet for Roundtable members.
    - **Charles Stillings** wants to resign. He has been the at-large representative for wells. Charlie nominated Mario Curto from the Waverly area to fill out his term, which expires in 2012. Mario was not in attendance, but Members were OK with that suggestion. Members expressed their thanks to Charlie for his commitment, his many wise comments and his good counsel over the years. Mike expressed his appreciation.
  - **Colorado Water Congress** – Mike advised that The Colorado Foundation for Education provides scholarships to attend meetings of the Colorado Water Congress and suggested that the Roundtable have a talk about those two organizations and their relevance to the basins. It was an opportunity to staying informed about important legislation, and the opportunity for members to go to CWCB meetings. Make use of those scholarships!
  - **Request for R.B. Basin Funds: "CREP – Phase II Implementation" Sub District #1 – Steve Vandiver** – The Rio Grande Restoration Foundation is completing the development of proposals and related agreements for the voluntary enrollment of up to 40,000 acres of irrigated cropland in Subdistrict No. 1, under the Rio Grande Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, or Rio Grande CREP. This request for \$31,500 from Rio Grande Basin funds is designated to finalize the agreements between USDA, the State of Colorado, and the Commodity Credit Corporation, and to begin the implementation of the CREP program. Steve presented a PowerPoint summary of the request.
- Discussion** – Whether retiring 40,000 acres would actually restore the aquifer back to pre-2000 levels; whether \$4,000 was enough to do the environmental assessment and the possible need to come back for more funds; discussion of unfettered growth v. sustainability, benefits to the Basin, voluntary nature.
- Vote** - Rio de la Vista voted to approve the funds. JB Alexander seconded. Unanimous approval.
- **"State Invasive Species Program Summary: Focus on Zebra/Quagga Mussels" – Elizabeth Brown, Invasive Species Coordinator, Colorado Division of Wildlife** -- These aquatic invasive species, a pathogen for plants, are the "Most Wanted" of the AIS. Elizabeth gave a slide show on how these colonies of bivalve fresh water mussels, once native to a river in the Ukraine, came to the Great Lakes in 1988, probably by their larvae being carried in the ballast of transoceanic vessels. They stick on the bottom of boats and trailers or flow downstream in the natural water flow, or through distribution systems. Recreational boaters play a huge and preventable role in moving them around. Elizabeth showed a truly frightening map of the sightings distribution, showing that both species exist in Colorado. Photos of horrible levels of invasion. They are trailered overland on boat hulls. There are currently no control methods other than people removing them from their hulls and props. Seven positively identified waters in Colorado include Lake Pueblo, Lake Granby, Grand Lake, Shadow Mountain, Willow Creek, Tarryall Reservoir, and Jumbo Reservoir. The invasive characteristics of these critters: they clog pipes and infrastructure of water distribution systems, smother benthic organisms, remove plankton from water, degrade water quality, and kill fish from the bottom up. Extremely prolific. In Lake Ontario lake trout declined 95% in ten years. Huge impact on power plants and on water industry. In 2008, CWCB granted \$1Million to fight the Zebra Mussel in Pueblo Reservoir. In May 2008 Colorado passed the ANS Act – It is illegal to possess, import, export, ship, transport, etc... Gave authority to State to inspect, decontaminate and quarantine watercraft for ANS in State Parks and CDOW. Focus on information, prevention, and containment. People must take responsibility for their own inspection and decontamination -- Contact Elizabeth Brown for a copy of the slide show and for more information: [Elizabeth.Brown@state.co.us](mailto:Elizabeth.Brown@state.co.us) 303.291.7362
  - **"Consumptive Needs Assessment" Update – Mike Gibson** – Nothing new since last month. We need to have a one-day work session, put together a picture of future needs, perhaps with someone from the Division of Water Resources to help us. For example, with the future augmentation needs in the town of South Fork, where will that water come from?
  - **Education Liaison – IBCC Judy Lopez** – Mike and Judy went to IBCC, with Judy as the Roundtable's representative on the public education committee. Judy explained the function being to educate Roundtable Members about IBCC and to create feedback mechanisms for the IBCC. Our link on

the web page is the most informative. Mike suggested we review the results of the survey. Important to educate.

- **Platoro Reservoir federal funding – Erin Minks** reported that U.S. Rep. John Salazar, D-Colo., secured a request for \$646,000 in the energy and water appropriations bill. Salazar sits on the Appropriations Energy and Water Subcommittee, which approved the funding. The bill must still gain House and Senate approval. Mike asked what effect that would have on the Platoro Reservoir's approved request to the Roundtable of \$300,000. Would that money still be needed? If not, could those funds possibly be returned to the Basin? Mike Willet explained that this federal money is still a "maybe" and that even so, it is a year away.
- **Other Business - Mike Gibson – The Alamosa River Watershed Restoration Foundation** (ARWRF) received approval for SB 179 funds to match their EPA 319 funds and Natural Resources Damage Settlement (NRDS) funds, and at that time their fiscal agent was Jim Mietz, of the Resources Conservation and Development Council (RC&D). Jim is no longer at RC&D and that agency is no longer the fiscal agent for ARWRF. The Colorado Division of Public Health and Environment has put out a request looking for an entity to assume the role of fiscal agent for ARWRF and to provide administrative oversight to the project. Whatever group assumes that role would take total responsibility for the project – from concept and design to implementation and would receive the 319 funds as well as the SB 179 funds. Not sure the status of that search at this time, or if an entity has stepped forward. -- **The Rio Grande Restoration Project** – We still have not received an executed contract. Mike expressed disappointment at this hold up, evidently because of budgetary issues. -- **Pending Status of Roundtable-Approved Grants** - - Trinchera Irrigation Company -- We will see in September whether this project is approved. Also, Willow Creek's request for funding to restore and rebuild the streamshed. We need to see how these projects fare and how Basin funds will be impacted. Maybe we should ask Greg Johnson to talk to us about additional Basin funds.
- **Next Meeting** - Update on Rio Grande Reservoir Studies from Travis; maybe Greg Johnson about Basin funds; update on the Education Foundation. Maybe an annual picnic?

(Possibility of not holding a meeting next month)

Next Meeting  
September 8, 2009 2:00 – 5:00 P.M.  
Student Center - Adams State College - Alamosa, CO 81101