

NPBRT Meeting Minutes 4-27-10
NFS Conf. Room (3-5PM)
100 Main Street, Walden, CO

Members Present

Ann Timberman
Paula Belcher
*Kent Crowder
*John Rich
*Barbara Vasquez
*Ty Wattenberg
Michael Wright
*Rick Wyatt

Guests Present

Greg Johnson
Erin Light
Matt Reddy
Shanna Schalnus
Liz Schnackenberg
Jeff Streeter
Carl Trick II
Kincaid Waldron

Members Absent

*Mike Allnutt
Deb Alpe
Mike Alpe
*Jim Baller
*Pete Conovitz
*Tom Hackleman
*Hal Hagan
*Mike Honholz
*Sandy Knox
*Kay Meyring
*Dirk Ramsey
(* Voting members, total 13)

I. Agenda Review: The agenda was accepted.

II. 3-9-10 Meeting Minutes: The draft version of the 3-9-10 minutes was completed late (on 4/23). For this reason, they will be distributed electronically and considered for acceptance at the May meeting.

III. Greg Johnson-CWCB, Water Supply Planning Section: Discussion of Basin Needs Assessment and updated SWSI Report

Greg's presentation is distributed with these minutes.

Kent commented that changes in the WSRA funding threshold guidelines are in progress. Greg went on to explain that the goal is to tie funding decisions to needs assessments. But since the basin defined needs assessments, any project forwarded to the CWCB for funding decision is assumed to meet some need valued by the Basin! Kent commented that he wanted to find a way to update the North Platte SWSI with language that emphasizes the local value of irrigated agriculture in the basin.

Current Status: Greg summarized the status of the M&I Demand 2050 report. CWCB Staff have gathered comments on M&I Demands to 2050 report. CWCB will respond to comments and revise report – available May/June 2010. The Non-consumptive Phase 1 report was

completed for all basins earlier this year. CWCB Staff has gathered feedback on report. CWCB will respond to comments and revise report - available May/June 2010. CWCB will update M&I gap analysis, the agricultural shortages statewide, and will review the information with the RTs in 2Q2010. All this information will be included in report updating consumptive and non-consumptive needs statewide based on recent reports and Basin Roundtable Needs Assessment efforts. Final Report Target Date: November 2010

Plans for NCN Phase 2: There were different approaches to mapping the attributes in the various basins. They ranged from the Rio Grande approach...a 4 page letter clarifying and updated their NC needs assessment, to the Colorado Basin (risk-based list of locations/attributes), the Gunnison (list of attributes per segment, then comment section with qualitative reason why selected), the Yampa-White (table of important reaches with issues delineated) and the SW, NP (non-prioritized stream segment maps) and Rio Grande/Arkansas (non-prioritized HUC maps). So a roll-up to the state level can only be done qualitatively, not by GIS mapping. In each case, Greg emphasized that one needs to dig out the details to understand the attributes and issues in each basin. Carl asked: Are most basins moving toward attribute prioritization. Greg's response: most basins are moving onto projects and processes. He pointed out that the budget for support of Basin GIS mapping by CWCB was essentially exhausted, so remapping would be limited. Carl asked: Does CWCB think there's value in remapping or taking a tabular approach for important reaches. Greg replied: Tabular may be more useful because it brings local information to the surface. Kent commented: But remapping with relative weights would provide a graphic illustration that would be useful in the future.

IV. CNHP North Platte Basin Wetlands report: Errata sheet & PCA labels

The final report for the WSRA-funded wetlands inventory in North Platte Basin (*Identification and Assessment of Important Wetlands within the North Platte Watershed*) will be modified by an errata page in front, following the title page, and by labels on the PCA maps which encompass private lands. The modifications will be made in both the electronic version (on the CNHP website) and in the 20 hardcopies printed and distributed. The final version of the errata sheet and PCA labels is shown below, which contains corrections caught by the RT in the review at this meeting.

Identification and Assessment of Important Wetlands within the North Platte River Watershed

Errata Sheet

1. Page 17: Land Use History – Third sentence replaced by: Trappers began moving into the area during the early 1800s attracted by the presence of beaver in the many streams crisscrossing the basin.
2. Page 36: Mineral Extraction Impacts—Last sentence replaced by: Fluorspar production was intermittent until the mines closed in 1973 (personal communication Rex Shaw, former supervisor of Ozark Mahoning Mine).
3. Page 57: Wetland Mapping and Wetland Plant Communities—Fourth Sentence replaced by: The intersection between the number of wetland acres from the NWI maps and the Colorado Decision Support System 2005 data base is 78, 038. The amount of 115, 375 irrigated acres is the official amount submitted in 2005 by State Engineers Office as required by the North Platte Decree.
4. Page 65: Discussion – Fourth sentence replaced by: The watershed hosts one of the three known Colorado breeding sites of the American White Pelican (*Pelecanus erythrorhynchos*), Colorado's largest nesting population of Willet (*Catoptrophorus semipalmatus*), one of Colorado's largest nesting populations of Greater Sandhill Crane (*Grus canadensis tabida*) (CNHP 2009; Kingery 1998) and populations of resident river otter (*Lontra canadensis*), beaver (*Castor canadensis*) and muskrat (*Ondatra zibethicus*).

5. Page 130: Michigan River Potential Conservation Areas Management Urgency Rank Comments—second and third sentence replaced by: Improper grazing from cattle and wildlife was noted as evidenced by the “mushroom shaped” pruned willows. Additionally concentrated cattle and wildlife can cause trailing with the floodplain.....

6. Page 150: Rock Creek at Green Ridge Potential Conservation Area Management Urgency Rank Comments—second and third sentence replaced by: Improper grazing from cattle and wildlife was noted as evidenced by the “mushroom shaped” pruned willows. Additionally concentrated cattle and wildlife can cause trailing with the floodplain.....

PCA label

PCA boundaries are drawn to encompass ecological processes derived from onsite field assessments, topological maps, aerial photos or satellite imagery. On-site field assessments on private lands were conducted only where written permission was granted by the owner. Not all lands within the PCA boundaries were field assessed.

V. Jeff Streeter-TU: North Platte Basin Trout CSI Study

Barbara requested that TU present the Conservation Success Index that was published on their website in early 2009 for the North Platte (both CO and WY). Jeff attempted to get the folks that wrote the report to present, but they were not available for this meeting, so Jeff took the responsibility to describe it to us. He did not use powerpoint materials, but the report and the associated maps can be viewed at: http://tucsi.spatialdynamics.com/NorthPlatte_General.aspx?SpKey=16. Jeff has been working with the authors of the study to make it as accurate a possible with known data. They’ve been through 3 iterations of details on the WY side. The goal of the CSI was tweaked to include ‘wild’ cold water fisheries, because it is believed that the North Platte and its tributaries did not host native salmonids historically. The report was created by combining GIS-compatible data obtained from other agencies. When Jeff and Barbara started asking TU authors’ questions about data sources, the link to the report on the home page for TU was pulled. It’s clear that the report has not been ‘ground truthed’. The report is considered a draft, in need of completion. (However, the report is still available on the TU website if you use the full URL given above. Jeff didn’t know this when he made his report to the NPBRT.) Jeff emphasized that he feels very closely identified with the North Platte and associated communities after living and guiding in the region for 25 years. Rick Wyatt asked Jeff his opinion of on-channel dams. Jeff replied he would be concerned about any structure in the channel that prevented fish passage, as connectivity of fisheries is very important. He’s very motivated to help TU get the CSI as representative of the knowledge available from local agency folks, landowners and fishermen as possible.

VI. New Business: Kent Crowder & Carl Trick – IBCC & WSRA funding updates

Kent noted that the Basin account balance is currently \$323,535.

The IBCC portfolio tool is available on the IBCC website. Kent encouraged RT members to ‘try it out’. Carl commented that the Consumptive Needs group is under direction from the governor to deliver a ‘product’ by December. They are meeting once a month and need to include both consumptive and consumptive needs in the report. Kent attended the IBCC breakout for the non-consumptive needs group.

The Education Outreach Committee has been formed with Deb Alpe as chair. The Committee needs to work out a basin education plan. It was suggested this committee might partner with the JCOEN, since the missions are somewhat similar, Deb is involved in both and it would help leverage the agency participants on the JCOEN. Carl serves on same committee at the

CWCB level and commented that this activity is very important for outreach to the community. Kent asked which NPBRT members would be willing to serve on the committee. Positive responses came from John Rich, Ann Timberman (herself or delegate from ANWR) and Barbara Vasquez.

VIII. Set Next Meeting: May 25, (7-9PM, FS Conference Room). This meeting will start the summer hours. Primary topic is the raw water storage project for the town of Walden. Barbara asked if there would be room on the agenda for Joanna Lemly to describe the 2010 EPA-funded CNHP wetlands study underway. Kent wasn't sure there'd be room on the agenda.