

NPBRT Meeting Minutes 9-21-10

NFS Conf. Room (7-9PM)

100 Main Street, Walden, CO

Members Present

*Mike Allnutt
Deb Alpe
Mike Alpe
*Jimmer Baller
Paula Belcher
*Kent Crowder
*Tom Hackleman
*Hal Hagan
*Kay Meyring
*John Rich
*Barbara Vasquez

Guests Present

Corey Engen-Flywater
Deb Heeney-NRCS
Greg Johnson-CWCB
Tim Kelley–Kelley Greenlandscapes
Erin Light
Denis Reich-CSU Ext
Matt Reddy-DU
Nicole Rowan – CDM
Jeremy Sueltenfuss-CSU
Zach Smith – CWT
Bob Timberman-USFWS
Carl Trick II
Caid Waldron
Reagan Wyskom-CSU

Members Absent

Ann Timberman
*James Carothers
Pete Conovitz
*Mike Honholz
*Sandy Knox
Jeff Streeter-TU
*Ty Wattenberg
Michael Wright
*Rick Wyatt

(* Voting members, total 13)

I. Agenda Review: The agenda was accepted with the clarifications that 1) Colorado Water Trust will be presenting a WSRA application tonight & 2) Deb Alpe will provide an update on the Education and Outreach Committee under Old Business.

II. Approval of NPBRT Minutes: Aug 17, 2010 Meetings

Jimmer Baller moved to accept the minutes as written, Kay Meyring seconded the motion and the minutes were approved unanimously.

III. Reagan Waskom, CSU & Dir., Colorado Water Institute & Jeremy Sueltenfuss, CSU Grad Student:

Valuing Irrigation Created Wetlands Research Project:

Reagan opened by stating they have the funding and are ready to launch this project which will attempt to quantify the economic benefit of the ecological services provided by irrigated agriculture. Jeremy is the grad student (Masters) who will be conducting the study. They are currently closing in on the landscape within which to conduct the study. Their first choice had been northern Larimer County, but have come to believe that North Park might be the best location. They would like to explore the pros and cons of conducting their study here

with the RT (and are not asking for funding). The study would 1) quantify the irrigated acreage (and incidental wet acres), 2) determine the ecosystem services provided by that irrigated and sub-irrigated land and 3) establish an economic model to 'dollarize' the services. Carl Trick asked what kind of data and access to private property do you need? How much primary data collection will be done versus exercise of map layers that already exist? Reagan answered that there would be some field time to learn the NP irrigation practices, but Jeremy would not be collecting much primary data on the ecological services (i.e., won't be 'counting ducks or surveying plants'). Kent asked how much review and involvement do they want by the NPBRT. Reagan answered he wanted the opportunity to get facts checked informally. Carl asked how important is the CNHP wetlands inventory to your work. Jeremy replied they've already been in discussion as to the wetlands data and mapping, but not sure yet how existing data will be used. Kent asked whether they were familiar with the Decision Support System in which all the irrigated lands and ditches are defined. Reagan answered that he was aware of this, but that they were not yet familiar with the actual database. Carl asked how the results from North Park, where the only crop is high mountain hay, might be applied more generally to the state...for example to the San Luis Valley or eastern CO... where there are many differences in agricultural practice (land is plowed, crops planted, water often applied by overhead sprinkler, etc). There was no answer to this question. However, Carl went on to say he'd rather see the study be done here rather than elsewhere because he couldn't see how the results from eastern CO could be applied here! The NPBRT was asked by Kent whether they supported the study to be done in NP, and there was unanimous agreement it would be an interesting study from both consumptive and non-consumptive perspectives.

IV. Barbara Vasquez- Results of NCN Attribute Prioritization Exercise by the full

Roundtable At the August meeting the full RT used the NCNA form developed by the NCNA committee to rate the 12 attributes defined for the North Platte Basin in the meeting. Once everyone had the opportunity to complete the form, each of the participants was asked to state their rating with any explanation they chose to volunteer until all participants had given their rating on all 12 attributes. The discussions in that RT meeting helped the participants learn and understand better the opinions of each other. The tabulated results of this exercise were presented in this meeting. The ratings were summarized for each attribute as both averages (total score divided by # raters) and median (midpoint in the ratings). Using these values, the attributes were then rank ordered from highest to lowest scores. There were only very small differences in the rank order depending on whether averages or medians were used. Kent commented that he had spent time analyzing subgroups the results based on whether the raters were voting members of the RT, or residents of Jackson County, and these subgroup results were very similar to the overall RT results. Top five of the 12 attributes were 1) stream fishing, 2) lake fishing, 3) waterfowl hunting & wetland wildlife viewing, 4) waterfowl, shorebird & crane habitat, 5) amphibians & 6) Rare plants & significant riparian/wetland plant communities. Barbara will finalize the NCNA Phase II prioritization report for next month's NPBRT meeting.

V. WSRA Applications

North Platte Diversion Structure Assessment: Zach Smith, CWT & Corey Eagen, Flywater

Zach Smith introduced the WSRA application from Colorado Water Trust which would benefit both consumptive and non-consumptive use in the North Platte Basin. The application

focuses on the non-consumptive attribute that the RT has ranked the highest in our basin: stream fishing. As Corey Eagen explained, for wild salmonid (trout) populations, it's important to maintain connectivity up and down stream. Older style diversion structures often present physical barriers to fish movement, especially in low water conditions. The CWT, with the participation of Flywater, proposes to assess diversion structures in our basin (to which they're able to gain access) to determine whether they present barriers for fish passage. The results would be cataloged, mapped and used to prioritize structures for upgrade or replacement. They stated that the work would in no way impact water rights or impose any requirements on the irrigation operations. The CWT proposes this as a first phase of a multiphase project, in which they would help the owners of diversion structures suggested for repair/replacement to find grant money to support that work. It was also pointed out that these upgrades, like the Old Pioneer Ditch diversion structure replacement funded through the NPBRT, engineered by Jeff Crane and completed in 2009, would provide additional benefits such as ease of operation and water efficiency to the irrigation users. CWT is requesting \$37,550 of basin funds for Phase 1 of this project. The application is attached with these minutes and will be voted on by the NPBRT at the Oct. CWT/Flywater will be at the Oct. meeting to make a short presentation and answer any questions in advance of our vote.

VI. Status Update on Draft and Final Sections of the SWSI 2010 Report: Greg Johnson, CWCB & Nicole Rowan, CDM

Greg and Nicole presented an update of the SWSI 2010 Report and solicited feedback from the NPBRT. The purpose of their presentation was to provide a brief overview of major Colorado water supply technical reports and their conclusions, discuss report schedule and timeframe for finalizing remaining components. The Statewide Water Needs Assessment is scheduled for January 2011 and Basin-specific Reports 1st Quarter 2011. The M&I Report was just released yesterday (9/20). It includes an estimate of passive conservation (consumers using more efficient appliances/fixtures) of 7-8% out to 2050. They also commented that new technologies for oil shale extractions have reduced projected water use, which has been incorporated into this report. For the North Platte, with the medium assumptions & 90% success of IPPs at 2050, 20AFY was projected and growth into existing supplies was projected at 100AFY (low) to 300AFY (high).

For agricultural planning in NP, they used the LRE-created DSS model, based on 117,000 acres under irrigation and projected 15-20% reduction in irrigated acres out through 2050. There was discussion around the table to change this to show a 'green arrow' of increased acreage. One potential agent for that positive change is the project underway by DU, funded by CWCB, DOW and NAWCA, to increase irrigated acreage to the benefit of both agriculture and water fowl production. They also commented there's a grant round with a funding of \$1.5M with a deadline in mid-November for alternative transfer methods (Ag→M)

The powerpoint material used in the presentation is being sent with the meeting minutes. For most of the topics, the North Platte Basin was a nonexistent or very small component of overall statewide gaps. Greg & Nicole left physical copies of the draft report with Kent. One of the key discussion points for the NPBRT was the decision to review potential future consumptive needs for the basin, within the limitations defined by the three-state-agreement. They also left draft copies of the NCNA Phase II map and report with Barbara for review and feedback by the NCNA committee and NPBRT at their Oct meetings. Their deadline for feedback is end of October.

As a logistics support, they asked who needed RT notebooks. The notebooks that they

brought were distributed, and they took names of others who requested them.

Finally, Greg commented that the existing state-wide funds haven't been exhausted (approx \$2M left) and the CWCB may have a 2nd round for WSRA applications in March. However, the budget projections for 2011 are quite tight, and additional funding for RT and State water supply initiatives is uncertain. The CWCB is also considering moving to a 5 year planning cycle, with the first 2 years dedicated to planning and the following 3 years focused on implementation.

VII. IBCC/CWCB Update: Kent Crowder/Carl Trick

VIII. Old Business

Deb Alpe, NPBRT Education Liaison:

NPBRT Education Plan

Deb handed out an update (see attachments to these minutes) to the draft Education Action Plan (EAP) that was distributed last month. She requested a formal acceptance of the EAP by the RT. A motion was made by Barbara Vasquez to accept the EAP as presented, seconded by Tom Hackleman and unanimously approved by the RT

CFWE has offered to work with the NPBRT to establish a document that provides information on the work of the roundtable. This would give each RT member a common document that could be used in community outreach and education. It would also provide a 'start-up' document for new RT members. Kristin Maharg, CFWE, plans to present a WSRA application next month for funding to create these materials.

Deb reported on the August PEPO meeting where there was considerable discussion and confusion about the objectives and content of the state-wide forum proposed for next Feb. There will be a follow-up PEPO meeting next week and another in October, by which time she hoped the objectives and date(s) for this Forum would be established.

The IBCC is again offering scholarship opportunities to RT members to help defray costs of attending water-related events around the state. The notice plus scholarship details will be sent electronically to the RT members by separate email. It was noted that these scholarships also apply to the CO Water Congress, which will be held in conjunction with the Jan CWCB meeting.

V. New Business:

None

VI. Set Next Meeting: The next meeting will be held Tuesday, Oct 26, 2010 (7-9PM, FS Conference Room). The date for the November meeting (Nov. 23) was also established in order to establish the required lead-time for WSRA application to be forwarded to the CWCB 60d in advance of their Jan 25, 2011 meeting.