

Four West Slope Roundtables Agenda

Thursday, May 26, 2011
Ute Water Conservancy District
2190 H1/4 Road
Grand Junction, CO
970-242-7491
10 am to 3:30 pm

10:00 Introduction /Expectations

10:10 The Colorado River Cooperative Agreement

Eric Kuhn, General Manager, Colorado River District
Peter Fleming, General Counsel, Colorado River District

10:50 The Bureau of Reclamation's Colorado River Basin Study

Ted Kowalski, Interstate and Federal Section Chief, Colorado Water Conservation Board

11:30 Water Bank Update

Steve Harris, Southwest Water Conservation District

Noon Working Lunch

12:20-1:00 "Filling the Gap: Commonsense Solutions for Meeting Front Range Water Needs." Bart Miller, Western Resource Advocates

1:15 Colorado River Water Availability Update

1:45 How Does the West Slope Respond to the Interbasin Compact Committee Report

Michelle Pierce, Chair, Gunnison Basin Roundtable
Mike Preston, Chair, Southwest Basin Roundtable

Thesis: The IBCC report to the governor advocates a four-legged action plan to meet the looming demand for more municipal water supplies across Colorado, but principally on the Front Range. The imperative is this: unless something changes in water planning, the current trend points to a rapid and severe erosion of agriculture on both sides of the Divide as irrigation rights are converted to meet population growth. Nobody wants to see that future.

The IBCC reported that the agreement taking shape seeks to balance meeting municipal, agricultural, and non-consumptive needs by using a mix of:

- New water supply development for West Slope and East Slope uses,
- Conservation
- Completion of IPPs, and
- Agricultural transfers.

All parts of this four-pronged framework should be pursued concurrently, the IBCC said. In this effort, the IBCC has agreed that a successful framework will be one that shares the burdens and the benefits across all water sources and demands, including consumptive and non-consumptive uses.

How does the West Slope respond?

The West Slope should respond to the IBCC report and direction in order to strengthen it. If we don't we give support to those who say the process is broken and the Roundtables should get out of the way. Interests on the Front Range are clamoring for the state to advocate for a big water development project. They also want to open up county 1041 project review powers for change. Clearly, entities in the state know how to study, engineer, permit and finance a water project. But the state does not know how to deal with conservation, reuse, ag transfer issues and land use in an equally concerted way.

- What should be done to round out this picture?
- What response should there be from the four West Slope Roundtables to assure that all needs, including those on the West Slope, will truly be addressed?
- House Bill 1177 does not articulate that the IBCC form a state water plan but rather basin-to-basin discussion. If somebody wants to propose a project, should they just address the West Slope, or an individual basin and strike a compromise modeled on the Colorado River Cooperative Agreement?

**3:00 Remarks by John Stulp, Interbasin Compact Committee Director,
Water Adviser to Gov. John Hickenlooper**

**3:15 Flaming Gorge Task Force Situation Assessment Stakeholder Dialog
Heather Bergman, Peak Facilitation Group**

The goal of the assessment was to talk to stakeholders around the state and determine if a Flaming Gorge Task Force would be a viable approach to the discussion about a possible Flaming Gorge Water Supply project. The Executive Committee overseeing the assessment process has recommended a free-standing, 17-person stakeholder dialogue (with State and federal agencies and project proponents participating as expert resources to the group). It recommends that the dialogue process examine a possible Flaming Gorge water supply project in three phases: 1) issue/interest identification, 2) assessment of threshold questions and critical barriers, and 3) identification of preferred criteria or components of a Flaming Gorge project if one were to be built.

Phases 1 and 2 would end with a decision point about whether to proceed to the next phase. The goal of the process will not be to find agreement on whether to build a Flaming Gorge project or which such project to build. The goal of the process will be to advance understanding and awareness of the potential benefits and impacts of a Flaming Gorge project and to provide insight into ways to maximize the benefits and minimize the impacts of a project should one be built.

3:30 Dismiss