Arkansas Basin Roundtable
June 8, 2011
Meeting Notes

Roundtable Business

Chairman Barber called the meeting to order at 12:34 pm. Members and visitors introduced themselves. Twenty two (22) members were present. There are 38 active roundtable members at this time - 18 is a quorum.

May Minutes

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the May meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Review agenda

Introduction: New Lincoln County Rep – Dave Taussig

Public comment – none

IBCC Report – Jeris Danielson, Jay Winner

The next IBCC meeting will be held on the 23rd of this month.
Jeris – John Stulp's memo lays out a schedule for the IBCC to follow in terms of addressing issues, work products, etc.
Jay – The Alternative Ag Transfer sub-committee met with Colorado Ag and Water Alliance. They support what the IBCC is doing. The governor and four cabinet members make up this group. The Governor wants a plan ready within the next five years to meet the gap out to 2050.
A joint CWCB/IBCC meeting has been scheduled. Roundtable members are always invited to attend IBCC meetings.

The CWCB was putting Basin-only grant apps on a consent agenda, but now will be discussing each one.

WSRA Grant Update

Needs Assessment Committee – procedure to submit an application

Get the grant application to Jay Winner
Jay will convene a Needs Assessment Committee meeting
Committee reviews the application, makes suggestions to applicant
The application is then brought to the Roundtable for review and approval
60-day lead time is needed to get the app to the CWCB

YOU TOO CAN BECOME A MEMBER OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE. Please let Gary and/or Jay know if you are interested in participating on this committee.

Non-Consumptive Quantification

One of the applications brought last year was for additional quantification of non-consumptive needs. SeEtta asks the roundtable for a continuation of that grant in order to complete the recommendations section of the report. This step is within the scope and funding of the original grant. SeEtta's request for continuation was approved by consensus.

Ag Rotation Fallowing Public Policy Working Group

This application has gone out to other roundtables that haven't met yet. Our Roundtable has committed $5,000. The Platte and the Metro Roundtables have approved $5,000 each from their basins. In order to keep this app on the schedule for the July CWCB meeting, would we be willing to backfill this grant in case other basins do not approve? This request passed by consensus.

Basin Needs Report – Todd Doherty and Nicole Rowan
Section 7 Executive Summary/Recommendations
Todd and Nicole presented a draft summary, the Roundtable discussed the document at length, and revisions were made during the meeting, with the following results:

Major Findings and Priorities:

The estimated basin wide M&I gaps for the Arkansas basin for the year 2050 are as follows:

- Low gap (IPPs at 100 percent success) = 36,000 AFY
- Medium gap (IPPs at 90 percent success) = 64,000 AFY
- High gap (IPPs at 75 percent success) = 110,000 AFY

The gaps for the Urban Counties, and thus the entire basin, include an additional 13,500 AFY for the replacement of nonrenewable groundwater.

The Arkansas Basin Roundtable has identified the following priorities:

- Maintain agricultural viability in the lower basin
- Provide for in-basin augmentation in the upper basin
- Provide for adequate water quality to meet all needs
- Ensure adequate water for future needs including M&I, agricultural, recreational, and environmental purposes

Recommendations

- Implementation of the Arkansas Basin's IPPs is critical to meeting future M&I demands as outlined in the roundtable's Resource Document: Projects & Methods to meet the Needs of the Arkansas Basin Roundtable. The roundtable recognizes the importance of the following IPPs in addressing the Basin's M&I needs: Preferred Storage Option Plan (PSOP), Arkansas Valley Conduit, and Southern Delivery System.

- The Arkansas Basin agrees with the IBCC's recommendations of needing the "four legs of the stool" to meet future M&I demands. The Arkansas Basin Roundtable defines the four legs of the stool to include: active and passive conservation, implementation of all the IPPs, alternative agricultural transfers, development of Colorado River supplies.

- Storage is essential to meeting all the Basin's consumptive and nonconsumptive needs. The roundtable has recognized the important of the PSOP for meeting the basin's future needs. In addition, Aquifer Storage and Recovery should be considered when examining future storage options. Also, storage is an important element to make the “four legs of the stool” successful and minimizes the risk associated with each leg of the stool.

- Development of portfolios to meet the basin's future needs and associated trade-offs can inform development of risk management strategies.

- A critical gap that needs to be addressed in the future in the basin is replacement of nonrenewable groundwater and the sustainability of designated groundwater basins.

- The Basin Roundtable recognizes that there are many advocates for M&I demands in the basin. However, environmental, recreational and agricultural interests are important in the basin and the issues related to the needs of these interests need to continue to be supported by the roundtable.

- The Basin Roundtable's Nonconsumptive Committee has identified focus areas in the basin. The committee plans to continue prioritizing environmental and recreational areas in the basin and also to identify areas for further quantification.

- It is equally important to determine the agricultural water needs gap as well as the M&I gap. Agriculture is integral to the economic and social fabric of the basin and the roundtable recommends that further effort be considered by the roundtable in defining an agricultural "gap" for the basin. The roundtable recommends that this gap be a production based gap and build upon other efforts the roundtable has conducted through the CWCB's Alternative Agricultural Transfer Grant program.

- With respect to future agricultural to urban transfers, the Basin Roundtable recommends that the framework developed in their "Considerations for Agriculture to Urban Water Transfers" report be utilized.

Presentation

Colorado River Water Availability Study – Ray Alvarado and Matt Brown, AECOM
Public Comments/Responses from the Arkansas Basin

This presentation is regarding Phase One of the availability study, which dealt with water use under current conditions. The Colorado River Water Availability Study came out about a year ago. Not all RT members have read it or seen a presentation regarding the results. This workshop is directed to comments that were received during the comment period after the study was released.

Global Climate Models and Compact Issues were the two areas most commented on after the study was completed. Trying to be complete by the end of the year, incorporating comments from all of the BRTs. Every comment will have a response in the final document, which will be a Refined CRWAS Phase I Report and Refined CRWAS Online Data.

Commenting Entities: 1 Federal agency, 4 State agencies, 6 counties, 16 water organizations, 4 basin roundtables, 4 consultants, others.

Comments focused on technical issues:
- GCMS – Global Climate Models
- Compact
- Instream/NCU
- Modeling Approach
- Uncertainty/Probability
- Report Use/Limitations

CRWAS Phase I Completion – by the end of the year
1. Response Matrix
2. Public Outreach
3. Analysis Refinements
4. Refined CRWAS Phase I Report/Refined CRWAS Data Online

1) Response Matrix
   - Include all formal comments in final matrix
   - Post final matrix for public review
2) Public Outreach
   - CWCB Board directive
   - Workshops tailored to each basin
   - Discussion on issues with statewide significance

Round 1 – Comment/Response BRT Workshops
Purpose: Engage stakeholders on comments/responses
Goal: Input on potential Study refinements
Round 2 – Study Results BRT Workshops
Purpose: Engage stakeholders on Study results

Goal: Better understanding how results can be used
1st Round BRT Outreach Workshops (that's what this is today)

3) Analysis Refinements
   - Refine Climate Projection Selection
   - Refine/Temp/Precip Data Sets
   - Result – Refined Basin Runoff Hydrology
   - Refine CDSS Model
   - Result – Refined CDSS Hydro/Operations

4) Reporting Refinements
   - Update Technical Content
     - Analysis refinements
   - Clarify Narratives
     - Goals, limitations, assumptions, use of results, lessons learned, value to stakeholders
   - Post Report and Data

Common Statewide Comments were about adopted methodologies, range of study results, and value of the study.

Understanding adopted methodologies –

- Used best available data, science, techniques, tools
  - Climate models
  - Downscaling
  - Hydrology models
  - Operations models
- Peer review/methodology coordination
  - Basin Roundtables
  - CCTAG
  - JFRCCVS
  - Reclamation

Understanding Range of Study Results

- Study Basis
  - Previous studies
    - Historical hydrology
  - CRWAS Direction
    - Start with historical hydrology as basis for comparison
    - Add paleo and climate change hydrology
    - Analyze climate-impacted runoff
    - Compare ranges of results
- Approach
  - CCTAG
  - JFRCCVS
  - Reclamation
- Uncertainty
  - Climate Models
  - Downscaling
  - Hydrology Models

Understanding Value of the Study

- CRWAS is a progressive study combining:
  - Global climate model downscaling
  - Basin-level hydrology/water rights modeling
- CRWAS forecasts potential trends for planners, such as:
  - Potential earlier runoffs
  - Potential more rain vs. snow
  - Potential major effect on Ag water needs
- CRWAS allows basis and coordination with other studies
  - IBCC/BRT
  - CWCB SWSI
  - CWCB State Drought Plan

CWCB Colorado River Compact Compliance Study
Data Sharing
CRWAS allows comparison with similar studies
JFRCCVS
Reclamation Study
Lower Basin states' studies?
CWCB ahead of the curve in understanding

The project itself:
Looked at historical hydrology
Looked at future climate projections

The State of Colorado had already developed CDSS models, so that they could really see how water rights and reservoir storage would be impacted. This is the first time that crop demands were considered in climate projections. The study only looked at the Western Slope.

Climate change hydrology – West Slope
Temperature increases of 3.3 – 3.7 degrees F
Winter Precipitation increases of 6 – 13%
Summer precip decreases of 4 – 10%
Range is due to differences in elevation and latitude
Crop Irrigation needs increase 20% basin-wide
Natural flows increase in the Yampa
SW watershed flow decreases
Water available will decrease
Available flow increases in April and May
Reservoir use will vary more

The Arkansas Basin will be impacted by these effects on Homestake (transmountain diversions).

Consultants will be back with a second round of workshops that will address the study as it relates specifically to each Basin.

Announcement – Steve Miller, from CWCB, let Jeris know that there is money available to study salinity issues in the lower Arkansas. Ask Jeris for more information if you are interested.

Review of the next meeting's agenda

Next meeting August 10th. No meeting in July.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jay Winner