

Arkansas Basin Roundtable
January 9, 2013
Meeting Notes

Roundtable Business

Chairman Barber called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm. Members and visitors introduced themselves. Twenty seven (27) members were present. There are 39 active roundtable members at this time - 20 is a quorum.

Public Comment –

Al Tucker – 19th Annual Arkansas Basin Water Forum will be held April 24-25 in Walsenburg.

November Minutes

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

Agenda Reviewed

Subcommittee Reports and Updates

Executive Committee – Gary Barber

RT Project Exploration Committee: Flaming Gorge

The last meeting was held on January 3rd. A draft report has been prepared which will be presented to the CWCB at their next meeting. The recommendation from the committee will be to move ahead with Phase 2 of this roundtable to roundtable dialogue with the purpose of talking about new supply coming out of the Colorado River Basin in some fashion.

The committee was asked to look at the issues and questions around Flaming Gorge as a possible new supply project, but also to answer the question ‘is a roundtable to roundtable dialogue about new water supply a viable method to have the conversation?’ In the course of the meetings, members came up with a process which suggests that in fact a direct dialogue between roundtables was the concept behind the legislation that formed the roundtables, that the idea was that the roundtables would have a communication with each other, and even potentially a negotiation and an agreement. The committee defined a flow chart which would take the roundtables through a process that would attempt to determine how much new supply might be available, how that new supply might be allocated, and how you would mitigate issues relative to a Lower Basin call on the Colorado River Compact.

Non-Consumptive Sub-Committee. The DOW made a presentation about the Greenback Cutthroat Trout, our State Fish. They currently exist in only one place in Colorado, in Bear Creek on the slopes of Pikes Peak. The presentation described the process of making this determination. Scientists retrieved DNA from museum specimens dating back to the 1800s. It was determined that the Greenback did not originally exist in the Arkansas Basin, but was a South Platte fish. It was also determined that earlier efforts to restock the Greenback Cutthroat used the wrong fish. The DOW will probably concentrate on propagating them in the South Platte, where they originated.

IBCC Report –Alan Hamel, Jay Winner, Jeris Danielson

Jeris Danielson - The IBCC met on November 15th with the CWCB. The group discussed scenarios and portfolios. No conclusions were made. The group also looked at the Flaming Gorge Project Exploration Committee’s process. There was discussion regarding implementation, and also regarding alternatives to Ag transfers. The IBCC meets again on March 5th in Denver. The frequency of meetings has decreased.

Jay Winner – Jay was most interested in the “no regrets” scenario. He thinks there need to be pilot projects for various scenarios in order to know for sure that there will be “no regrets.”

Alan Hamel – As you read the year-end report of the CWCB, it is stated that storage is important for each leg of the stool, but there was no storage included in any of the scenarios.

Todd Doherty – WSRA. The intent of the process with 5 different scenarios is to get to a point where we can wrestle with the issues and deal with difficult policy questions regarding how to develop the state’s

water supply in the next 50 years. We're now getting past the messy stuff, to a point where we can start planning for the future. It's possible that we will find that we cannot now look to the past to plan for the future. This process of developing scenarios that take into account different possible futures is a means to continue to move forward responsibly, within uncertainty.

The good news regarding the WSRA program is that, in the beginning of the fiscal year, on July 1, they had only 30% of the appropriation for the WSRA. Full appropriation would be about \$10 million. Six weeks ago it was up to 50%, and now projections are at 75%. It is looking much better for statewide and basin fund availability.

Gary Barber described the WSRA Grant Process. Statewide funds total about \$3 million today and are based on statewide eligibility criteria. At this time, Arkansas Basin funds total approximately \$228,000. Today's grants total about half of the current basin fund balance, although it sounds like the Basin will receive an addition \$80,000 in basin funds soon. The process we follow in this basin is that we have a Needs Assessment Committee that reviews grants first. The Needs Assessment Committee meets as needed, and meetings are triggered by the receipt of an application. If moved forward, the applications go in front of the roundtable. The roundtable moves grants forward by consensus. Consensus can include minority opinion, which would be included with the letter of approval. If not approved by consensus, the group can vote (by majority) to have a super vote the following month. The super vote must then pass with a 75% majority.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

Agricultural Economics and Water Resources: Methods, Metrics and Models – Specialty Workshop – Perry Cabot

Basin Funds Request: \$9,746 Applicant: Colorado Water Institute (CWI)

This grant request is for a specialty workshop. Experts from Colorado and outside the state will be brought in to discuss varied perspectives regarding the economics of agricultural. The workshop would be held in Colorado Springs in order to be in proximity to an airport. There would be 6-8 presenters.

Workshop Schedule – moderated dialogue

 Morning Session

 James Pritchett, moderator

 Questions submitted prior by audience attendees

 Afternoon Session

 Further interaction with attendees

 Format TBD (Roundtable or Breakout)

Deliverables:

Proceedings Document published by Colorado Water Institute in pdf format

Video documentation of event

No charge to attend. Workshop to be held in May or June of 2013.

After roundtable discussion, this grant application moved forward by consensus.

Fountain Creek Bank Restoration at Frost Ranch – Graham Thompson

Basin Funds Request: \$ 49,500

Statewide Funds: \$ 98,300

Proposed Project:

Non-consumptive demonstration project to restore 400' of rapidly eroding bank along Fountain Creek

Objective: Long-term stability of Fountain Creek

- Elimination of accelerated erosion
- Reduction of sediment supply to the Arkansas River

Demonstrate effective river restoration techniques using:

- Natural channel design methods
 - Geomorphic-based design
 - Mimic the natural river form, "kick start"

- Incorporation of native vegetation
 - Provide wildlife and fisheries habitat
 - Root mass for long-term erosion protection
 - Dense foliage for flood velocity reduction

Who benefits?

- Fountain Creek Watershed District
 - Techniques & sites
 - Establish design baseline
 - Bridge funding gap
 - Develop track record
- Ag Producers
 - Reduce loss of land
 - Reduce property damage
 - Flooding
 - Sedimentation
- Arkansas Basin
 - Non-consumptive focus area
 - Reduced sediment
 - Demonstration value
 - Report & presentation
- State of Colorado
 - Non-consumptive
 - Demonstration value
 - Outreach on natural channel design methods

Problems

- No riparian vegetation
- 70ft of lateral bank migration at one point
- Ten-fold increase in sediment load at site
- Property damage to agricultural land
- Loss of terrestrial & aquatic habitat

Objectives

- Restore 400 L.F. of eroding stream bank
- Habitat-sensitive restoration
- Reduce sediment supply
- Improve habitat and water quality
- Larger demonstration value

Site Selection

- Considered ~10 sites
- Right-sized problem
 - Bank height/length
 - Vegetation anchor
- Good access
- Landowner cooperation
 - Construction
 - Demonstration
- Existing data & analysis

Non-Consumptive Demonstration Goals:

- Method to effectively fix cut banks before their severe
- Reduce erosion & sediment supply from bank cuts
- Protection of agricultural lands
- Repair, protect & restore riparian habitat
- Reduce water quality concerns

Reduce flooding problems, erosion & sedimentation

- Protects agricultural lands
- Reduces downstream sediment deposition
 - lower Fountain Creek & lower Arkansas River
- Helps keep the downstream floodplain from spreading (no longer flooding from Upper Ark due to clear water)

Protect/improve water quality

Protect/restore natural habitat

Provide for non-consumptive recreation

Deliverable: Project Improvements. Once the method is refined a design report will be distributed and the project site will be accessible for viewing. The process will be able to be duplicated watershed-wide & state-wide.

After discussion and roundtable member comments, the Roundtable asked the applicant to change the amounts applied for to \$30,000 in Basin Funds, \$75,000 in Statewide Funds, and additional match funds from either the property owner or Colorado Springs Utilities, and to come back in February.

Update: Trinidad/Purgatoire River Reach 4 Demonstration Project – Jeris Danielson

The project was completed last August and came in far under budget.

The applicant would like approval to spend remaining grant funds of ~ \$26,000 and move to the next reach of the river with repairs and improvements.

A motion to approve the request to spend remaining grant funds on the next downstream reach of the Purgatoire River was duly made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Ordway Cattle Feeders Water Line Extension – Rick Kidd

Basin Funds Requested \$ 50,000

Statewide Funds \$225,000

This is a structural Public/Private project that includes a CWCB loan that will fund the majority of the improvements.

This project completes a waterline that will provide water to the Ordway Cattle Feeders feedlot from wells located on a local ranch owned by the company. The wells are decreed for irrigation and livestock watering. The Ordway Cattle Feeders already has in place a battery of four wells, two booster stations and 4.2 miles of pipe at the west end of the proposed system. Phase I, funded by Ordway Cattle Feeders in its entirety, includes re-establishing easements and the rehabilitation of the existing stretch of pipeline, wells and booster stations. Phase 2 completes the project with a third booster station, 10.5 miles of water pipeline, backup generators and a remote monitoring and control system.

The primary purpose of this project is to provide a consistent, viable supply of livestock drinking water, dust abatement, and compost conditioning water for the Feedyard. The Feedyard also intends to use this new water source to serve their feed mill in the future. In addition, the water supply will also provide an emergency source of water for fighting farmstead and wild land fires in the area from Crowley to Ordway.

There are several problems with the historic supply regimen, and corresponding opportunities provided by the proposed project. Transit loss from Pueblo Reservoir to Lake Henry is 26%. The evaporative loss from Lake Henry is approximately 50%. *In 2012, these losses totaled 850 acre feet of water.* This pipeline project eliminates the majority of that loss. The current water supply is not secure. The majority of Lake Henry water rights are held by Front Range cities. As water supply needs increase for the Front Range, less water will be available for purchase on the spot market, and Front Range providers will likely hold their water closer to home. With less water being stored in Lake Henry, evaporation rates will be even higher. Finally, water quality from project wells is of higher quality than water that is currently being used.

Non-consumptive benefits include dust control, improving air quality and public health in the vicinity. Additionally, water will be left in the Arkansas River, rather than be diverting through the Colorado Canal, improving riparian and aquatic habitat. Water will be drawn from wells that are located 36 miles further down the river.

Roundtable members discussed the application, which passed unanimously by consensus.

Ag-Following Public Policy Dialogue

We have been sponsoring this dialogue in conjunction with the South Platte Basin. It has been a facilitated discussion, with Todd also participating. We've had five meetings. We're going to stretch our funding to get a sixth meeting, but we're a long way from being finished with the conversation. Because of the drought, there's legislation coming around Ag Following and Interruptible Supply. The group is

asking to extend the grant by another \$12,000 in Basin Funds, with the understanding that they will also go to the South Platte Basin and ask them to split the price.

A motion to approve this request was duly made, seconded, and passed unanimously.

Other Business

February 13th – watch for notice of alternate location

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

Respectfully submitted,
Terry Scanga