

Minutes of NPBRT Meeting: 1-21-14
USFS Conf. Room (3-5 PM) 100 Main Street, Walden, CO

Members/Liaisons Present

*Mike Allnutt
Mike Alpe
*Jimmer Baller
Paula Belcher
Jason Brey
*Kent Crowder
*Blaine Evans
David Graf
*Tom Hackleman
*John Rich
*Barbara Vasquez
*Carl Trick II
*Rick Wyatt
*Ty Wattenberg

Members/Liaisons Absent

Deb Alpe
*James Carothers
*Scott Fischer
Debbi Heeney
*Mike Honholz
*Randy Miller
Ann Timberman
Hunter Townsend

Others Present

Jan Berry (Walden Town Manager)
Pepper Canterbury (CPW)
Craig Godbout (Program Manager, Water Supply Planning Section, CWCB)
Shawna Grieger (Club 20)
Greg Johnson (Wilson Water Group)
Erin Light
Kara Sobieski (Wilson Water Group)
Cade Waldron

I. Agenda Review

The agenda was accepted as published. Craig Godbout was introduced; he has taken Greg Johnson's former position as Program Manager, Water Supply Planning Section, CWCB and will be working with the NPBRT.

II. Approval of Roundtable Minutes: Dec.17, 2013 Meeting

Draft meeting minutes were distributed. Final minutes approval was postponed to the February meeting.

III. North Platte Basin Implementation Plan- *Follow-up Items - Briefly answer or discuss approach on how to address questions from previous BRT Meeting- Measurable Outcomes - Review current BIP Goals with specific emphasis on Measurable Outcomes- 1940 vs. Current Irrigated/Irrigable Acreage Analysis - Presentation of potential opportunities to expand agricultural use in the basin and discussion on potential irrigation supplies in terms of proposed direct flow and storage projects- Future Efforts - Discuss the further investigation on the feasibility of proposed non-consumptive and consumptive use projects –*

Greg Johnson, Wilson Water Group.

Greg & Kara briefly answered questions remaining from the 12/17/13 NPBRT meeting's presentation on the North Platte Decision Support System (NPDSS) and data derived from it.

- Crop coefficient of 0.83? -yes

- Lagged return pattern assumptions/representation in the model?

There is a route in the model for rediversion. The model uses every headgate. Both ground and surface return flows are included. State Consumptive Use (CU) Model uses approximately 60%

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lag return. The NPDSS assumes 85% of surface lag return to make it to the point of return in the first month.

- Pasture grass coefficient applicability/background? (Where developed? What grass varieties are included?) Kara said she would send out details on the grass varieties used as a basis for the model.

- What are modeling assumptions/operations to account for initial and winter-carryover soil moisture? Winter carryover is not used in the model. Soil moisture is a variable in the model, but not much is carried over to spring.

- Requests for additions to analysis:

- Bar on shortage graphs showing monthly data on water stored in the "soil reservoir" (not just CU from soil)

- Graphs for all subbasins showing monthly streamflow next to total irrigation and storage diversions

Greg initiated a review and discussion of the NP BIP Basin Goals and Outcomes. Details are available in his presentation. These minutes will reflect some of the discussions triggered by the draft presented for Section 1 of the NP BIP. At the next meeting, Greg will provide a new draft that will contain input from this meeting

NP BIP Goal/Outcomes

- 1) Irrigated acreage – maintain basin entitlement. Storage goal was initially stated as doubling the current allowable under the decree. In order to do this, the storage for irrigation purposes could be no greater than allowable under the decree, so coordination with entities storing or planning to store water for non-irrigation purposes (piscatorial, wildlife, environmental) would need to be pursued.

- 2) Economic development - new business development discussion focused on recreation. In last month's meeting, Erin Light raised the point that there is no augmentation plan for the North Platte Basin. She reminded us that such a plan would provide much needed flexibility for future development.

- 3) Maintain Infrastructure

- 4) Healthy Rivers –When discussing measurable outcomes, David Graf suggested we might consider an actual fisheries metric such as biomass of fish per acre of lake or per stream mile. The discussion shifted to CPW SWA agreements. Carl Trick mentioned that landowners in general don't like signing up for perpetual leases. He challenged CPW to 'think outside the box'. Is there a structure where you might incentivize private landowners with stream or lake fishing resources on their properties to allow public access without the perpetual leases? He threw out as an example...perhaps 50 private elk hunting licenses in trade? David responded that he would carry back the challenge, but the CPW needs to be responsible to get the greatest benefit to habitat and public access from their investment, so there would need to be a reasonable time frame associated with any agreement.

- 5) Multipurpose Projects

- 6) Gaging Stations –Install and bring into operation 2 new gages by 2020. The issue is not so much the capital cost of purchase and installation, but the operational budgets for operation (reading) and calibration. Erin light reminded us that if you want a good record, the USGS or Division of Water Resources are really the only two entities to consider for operation.

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Calibration and definition of new rating tables is critical to quality records.

7) Forest Helath

8) M&I Conservation

Carl mentioned concerns about 'one size fits all' conservation goals. For example, if we have legislation mandating conservation, but we're losing 30% of the water put into the system due to leaky infrastructure AND the Town of Walden doesn't have the money to fix it, he can't see how conservation goals can be met.

Greg & Kara went on to detail and discuss potential next steps for the modeling in support of our BIP. The primary suggestion was to move to subbasin analysis of irrigated acreage and available water to find best possible matches for increase of irrigated acreage. Kara showed some maps of subbasins with graphs of average and dry season diversions on particular ditches as a starting point to stimulate discussion of next steps. Narrowing down to candidate ditches provides further refinement of potential dry season legally available flow versus crop irrigation requirements (CIR). Combining this analysis with land ownership, topology, known irrigation infrastructure and existing water right data would provide a starting point for finding best matches between potentially irrigable land and existing water. This is similar to some of the work done previously for Matt Reddy, DU in support of the Irrigated Hay Meadows project in the North Platte Basin. Similar analysis could lead to support for selection of possible increased storage in existing reservoirs or identification of best candidates for new reservoir sites. Other future efforts for discussion and analysis include:

- overlay of nonconsumptive needs
- support for development of an augmentation plan for the basin
- identification of sites for new gages

It was agreed that the next step would be a agricultural irrigated land technical working meeting between Wilson Water Group, members of the Jackson County Water Conservancy District and individual agricultural water rights owner in the basin to go over each subbasin in detail. Low hanging fruit was identified as increasing irrigated acreages with junior (new) water rights. The problem is that water for this acreage would be unlikely in low water years. The question was asked whether ANWR has any plans to irrigate the Pinkham Creek property. Carl Trick expressed concern how to get uninterested owners to participate in such meetings and to get behind efforts to increase irrigated acreage.

Discussion shifted to storage. There was apparently a storage study done for this basin in the '70's (Kent Goodman?) but nobody seems to have a copy. Folks who could recall is thought it pointed to storage on the middle fork of the Arapaho. It was done before Deb Heeney's start at NRCS..likely done when Al White was here. If anyone can find a copy, please share it. It was noted that there is essentially no storage in the Grizzly subbasin and that might be the place to start analysis.

When you review the powerpoint provided by Wilson Water Group for this meeting, you will find a number of pages following the 'next steps' discussion that detail the modeling tools and data analysis capability for consumptive use in the basin.

IV. *Potential Projects in North Platte Basin- Pete Conovitz & David Graf, Regional Water Specialists, Colorado Parks & Wildlife*

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David introduced himself. He and Pete Conovitz perform similar functions as regional water specialist, with Pete responsible for water in the northeast and David in the northwest regions of the state. This was his first meeting with NPBRT. CPW has multiple property interests and a portfolio of water resources in the North Platte Basin. With the consolidation of Parks and Wildlife into one organization, management is in discussion about whether Pete (who could not attend this meeting) or David will be our primary liaison. An inventory of CPWs water resources and potential planned projects is being developed as input to the State Water Plan. David hoped that by next meeting a North Platte Basin project list would be available as input to the NP BIP. He explained that CPW is reaching out and wants to hear from RT and the public how they can help.

V. CWCB/IBCC Update –
IBCC: John Rich/Mike Allnutt

John passed out a 4 page document from CWCB entitled “Basin Roundtable Feedback Opportunity to the Interbasin Compact Committee”. Quoting from the document: *The IBCC is inviting feedback on preliminary language for three “new supply topics”: risk management, sequencing of strategies and the relationship between agricultural transfers and new supply. Deadline for feedback is Feb. 7. IBCC will discuss any feedback at the Feb 18 IBCC meeting.*

CWCB: Ty Wattenberg In the interests of time, Ty deferred comments on CWCB business until next meeting.

VI. Old Business - None

VII. New Business - None

VIII. Dates for the next meeting

Date for the next meetings: February 25 (3-5p.m.).

Reminder: the Statewide Water Summit will be held on March 6 in Denver.

IX. Meeting Adjourned