

Minutes of NPBRT Meeting: 7-22-14
USFS Conf. Room (7-9 PM) 100 Main Street, Walden, CO

Members/Liaisons Present

*Mike Allnutt
Deb Alpe
Mike Alpe
*Kent Crowder
Michael Dixon
*Blaine Evans
*Tom Hackleman
*Randy Miller
*Rick Wyatt
*Carl Trick II
*Barbara Vasquez

Members/Liaisons Absent

*Jimmer Baller
Jason Brey
Paula Belcher
Debbi Heeney
*Mike Honholz
*John Rich
Ann Timberman
Hunter Townsend
*Doug Waldron
*Ty Wattenberg

Others Present

Craig Godbout (CWCB)
Erin Light
Caid Waldron
Wendy Ryan
James Hughes
Alicia Langton

I. Agenda Review

The agenda was accepted as published.

II. Approval of Roundtable Minutes: The minutes from 5/13/14, 6/17/14 & 6/24/14 NPBRT meetings were approved unanimously with slight modifications. Final minutes will be distributed.

III. Report on Presentation of North Platte Basin Implementation Plan at CWCB Meeting 7/16/14 – Rick Wyatt & Greg Johnson, Wilson Water Group

Greg could not be present at this meeting, but the presentation he made to the CWCB was projected and briefly discussed. Both Rick and Craig Godbout commented on the effectiveness of the presentation. Rick said, when he had the opportunity after Greg's presentation, that he asked the CWCB why anyone would conserve water when it might lead to eventual appearance on the State Water Engineer's abandonment list. Kent commented on Rick's detailed but circuitous and perhaps confusing response to the CWCB question about the Equitable Apportionment Decree.

Carl asked Craig about the timeline, and to what extent the RT might expect to be involved in the further evolution of the NPBIP. Craig commented on the requested Phase 2 funding (\$750k) for the combined Metro/S Platte BIP effort as an example of how different the completeness of the BIPs are across the state. Barbara asked Deb A. about the education and outreach efforts to educate and/or solicit input on the NP BIP. Deb said she had finished committing the Committee's funds, and will have to pull together the Education/Outreach Committee to discuss the next year's EAP as well as how what tasks the Committee thinks Edu/Outreach should take on as the BIP and SWP are finalized. Kent explained he had already been contacted to

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participate in and help organize a meeting on 9/16 in Walden for the Water Review Committee. Randy Fischer and K.C. Becker will attend. It's part of a statewide, all-basin program to solicit public input about the Colorado Water Plan. This may serve as a public education/input opportunity for the NP BIP as well.

Craig said the Colorado Water Plan webpage is soliciting public comments on the WP but will check to see if it's structured to take inputs on particular BIPs as well. Craig explained that CWCB is trying to get the family of related documents (BIPs, SWSI updates & Colorado Water Plan) on a cycle of every 2 years for one of the documents, resulting in a 6 year cycle for updating each individual document. Craig commented on the timeline (sent out with the 5/13/14 meeting minutes) published by the CWCB which shows a draft CWP out for public comment in Sept, with deadline for those comments mid-October, draft CWP delivered to CWCB in Nov and final draft to the Governor in Dec 2014. Carl asked whether there were new funding sources envisioned in the CWP that could be used, in part, to implement projects in basins like the North Platte where the outcomes may not be directly tied to solving the state-level water challenges. Craig said there had been discussions about the legislature creating additional funding avenues, but had no more details.

Kent commented on a request Barbara had made for consistency in highlighting (by double asterix) multipurpose projects in the NP BIP. In addition, she had pointed out that the map on Figure 23 created some confusion because it is labeled "Proposed Projects" but the title of the Figure is "Consumptive Use Projects". It was agreed that there would be consistency in identifying multipurpose projects, that the title to the Figure 23 would be corrected to "Proposed Projects" and the revised draft would be mounted on the web.

IV. Presentation of WSRA Grant Application: Re-establishment of lysimeters in North Park to determine high altitude, hay meadow crop coefficients – Wendy Ryan, Colorado Climate Study Center

Wendy's presentation material accompanies these minutes. She presented on the WSRA Grant Application provided to RT members (emailed 7/8/14). This doesn't meet our 30day requirement, but Kent felt it should be expedited (to meet the timelines for consideration by CWCB in September), something the RT has done for a few other applications. The grant application is requesting \$194,102: half from Basin, half from State funds.

Wendy explained in detail the new lysimeter system proposed for installation at the Cowdrey weather station site (C. Trick's ranch). Wendy was clear throughout the presentation that there wasn't much field experience with this iteration of the lysimeter, but that the company (UMS...a German company) has manufactured lysimeters for over 30 years and the European ag community in general has more experience with lysimeters than we do in the US. Prior to this meeting, she had also sent us a string of email conversations which she had had with other users and the company Decagon, which sells the UMS lysimeter. The grant application calls for redundancy, with two independent lysimeters hooked to the same data logger at the Cowdrey location. In each lysimeter there are soil moisture probes designed to help maintain the same conditions in the soil plug in the lysimeter as exists in the hay meadow adjacent to the lysimeter. There is a bi-directional pump that moves water into and out of the lysimeter canister to/from the

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storage canister to maintain that match. There were several questions about the potential of the lysimeter getting inundated by flood irrigation. Part of the art of this lysimeter is the installation of the canister, which contains a plug of soil removed from the hay meadow. The depth of that plug is to be defined, based on cross-section of the hay meadow which Carl Trick offered to help create. The goal is to have it installed deep enough to capture the full roots of the grasses. And the lip of the canister must sit high enough above the surroundings to eliminate the opportunity to flood during irrigation. Wendy had consulted with Deb Heeney prior to this meeting and was told the rooting depth in North Park is 12-18". Carl asked Erin Light her opinion of this lysimeter. She made comments comparing it to the lysimeter installed last year at the Carpenter Ranch. The soil around the lysimeter is still poorly recovered with grasses, so it heats up more than the more distant hay meadow, raising concerns about the match of the lysimeter data to the actual hay meadow conditions. In addition, it's very labor intensive and they wouldn't be able to run it if the Carpenter Ranch folks weren't willing to provide most of the labor. She said she didn't know enough about the UMS lysimeter, but was looking forward to seeing how it worked for us and would be interested in adopting it for other locations if the results are positive. Barbara asked Erin if she'd be willing to write a letter of support to be included with the delivery of the application to the CWCB and she said she would. Both Rick W and Blaine E expressed concern about the potential for lightening damage to the equipment. Wendy remarked that the weather stations have been in place here for 5 years and, so far, no such events. Craig commented on the Scoring Matrix that is being finalized by the IBCC-CWCB committee on criteria and guidelines, that it might be helpful for Wendy to review it. Barbara asked about customer support, with a German manufacturer. Wendy said that her information from other users was that the support was excellent and that the manufacturer seemed quite committed to avoiding any bad PR. Kent called for the question, and the application was approved unanimously by the voting members present at the meeting. The application, with a letter of support from Kent, will be forwarded to the CWCB for funding consideration at their September meeting.

V. CWCB/IBCC Update - Ty Wattenberg, John Rich and Mike Allnutt

CWCB: Representative not present; no update.

IBCC: No meeting since the previous NPBRT, so no update.

Vi. Old Business/New Business

Old: None

New: None

VI. Date for the next meeting

Date for the next meeting: Tue, August 26, 7-9p.m. to be held in the FS Conference Room at 100 Main Street, Walden.

VII. Meeting Adjourned