

Interbasin Compact Committee
Southwest Basins Roundtable Meeting
Durango Public Library
Durango, Colorado
July 9, 2014

Members Present:

Ken Beegles	Industrial Representative	John Porter	SW Water Conservation District
Mike Canterbury	Agricultural Representative	Rod Proffitt	San Juan WCD
Anthony Edwards	San Juan Municipalities	Jenny Russell	San Miguel County
John Ey	Florida WCD	Don Schwindt	Dolores WCD
Steve Fearn	San Juan County	Bruce Smart	Montezuma Municipalities
Steve Harris	Legislative Appointment	John Taylor	Hinsdale County
Tim Hunter	Recreation Representative	Ed Tolen	At-Large Member
Gary Kennedy	Mancos WCD	Val Valentine	At-Large Member
Carrie Lile	Local Domestic Water Provider Rep.	Chuck Wanner	At-Large Member
April Montgomery	CWCB Appointment	Bruce Whitehead	Animas-La Plata WCD
Ann Oliver	At-Large Member	Mely Whiting	Environmental Representative
Mike Preston	At-Large Member	Ed Zink	La Plata County

Liaisons Present:

Kara Chadwick (San Juan National Forest), Craig Godbout (Colorado Water Conservation Board), David Graf (Co. Parks & Wildlife), Kara Hellige (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Kelly Palmer (Bureau of Land Management)

Public:

Russell Burwell (Sullivan Ditch), Marc Catlin (Montrose County), Matt Clark (Trout Unlimited), Bill Frownfelter (Russell Planning & Engineering), Tom Hartnett (La Plata Conservation District), Roger Kugle (Sullivan Ditch), Darlene Marcus (Representative Scott Tipton), State Representative Mike McLachlan, Monte Miller (Thompson-Epperson Irrigation Ditch), Sterling Moss (Natural Resources Conservation Service), Caroline Munger (Sullivan Ditch), Denise Rue-Pastin (Water Information Program), Brian Sheffield (Pine River Irrigation District), Laura Spann (Southwestern Water Conservation District), Todd Street (Leonard Rice Engineers)

1. Introductions & Review Agenda

Chairman Mike Preston called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Introductions were made.

2. Administrative Reports

Minutes Review and Approval

Minutes from May 14, 2014 were approved as corrected.

Officer and IBCC Representatives Reports

April Montgomery, Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Chairperson, updated the Roundtable on changes to the criteria for WRSA grants. There will be a scoring matrix for the CWCB to consider, which has been sent out to the Roundtable members.

Committee/Task Force Reports

No reports were given.

WSRA Basin Roundtable Fund Balance

Mike Preston reported that the fund balance was \$635,000. With July requests and state disbursements to the fund, the balance will increase to approximately \$760,000 in September.

3. Basin Implementation Plan

Draft Plan for Submittal to CWCB (Discussion)

Carrie Lile reported on the Open House Workshop held before the meeting to discuss the final Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) draft. The draft is now available to the public. Feedback provided by Roundtable members included the

need for 1) a clear summary at the beginning of the plan on southwest basin priorities, including conservation and criteria for considering future transmountain diversions (TMDs), 2) differentiation between water supply shortages versus gaps, and 3) the inclusion of language on the interaction of state and federal policy. Roundtable members asked questions and provided additional feedback. There was consensus to circulate language drafted by Bruce Whitehead on the interaction of state and federal policy to the Roundtable for possible inclusion in the final draft BIP. There was general consensus to accept the final draft BIP with the suggested additions from today's workshop.

Discuss Future Funding Needs for BIP

Carrie and Ann provided an update on funding for BIP development. The original 2014 grant amount was \$76,142. To date, the Roundtable has spent \$54,890, which is about 72%. In addition, the Southwestern Water Conservation District provided gap funding in the amount of \$10,000. Carrie and Ann proposed requesting an extension of the original grant through 2015, as well as applying for an additional \$36,000. Steve Fearn moved to make a request for additional funding to support development of the BIP in the amount of \$36,000, two thirds coming from the Basin WRSA account and one third from the Statewide WRSA account. Ed Zink seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent. There was discussion around the importance of investing in a strong argument for the water needs in the southwest basins.

Draft Plan for Submittal to CWCB (Presentation)

On July 16, Carrie and Ann will present the BIP to CWCB at board meeting, during which they will highlight conservation, TMDs, data needs for environmental and recreational gaps, the importance of considering the Water Plan as a living document, and the unique nature of southwestern Colorado. Comments will be due on July 18, and the final draft is due on July 31. Carrie and Ann responded to questions.

4. Public Comment on Basin Implementation Plan & State Water Plan

Mike Preston invited the public to comment on the Colorado Water Plan. Sterling Moss, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), announced that the recently created Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is accepting initial proposals for funding through July 14 and invited local water districts and others to apply. Proposals seeking funding partners for RCPP may come before the Roundtable.

5. IBCC Update

Water Conservation

Steve Harris, IBCC Representative, reported on the most recent IBCC meeting, at which three types of statewide goals were proposed: 1) per capita use limitations, 2) outside/inside use ratios, and 3) best management practices implementation. On a separate water conservation subcommittee, Steve was initially the only representative from the Western Slope. Now the subcommittee has been reconfigured for more equal representation. Nevertheless, there has been little willingness to consider a statewide conservation goal. Carrie has confirmed that many southwestern municipalities have an outside/inside water use ratio of 60-40 or better. Front Range water providers have not been forthcoming with information on their outside/inside water use ratios.

The Interim Water Resources Review Committee will hold a hearing on SB-017 (Lawn Irrigation Limitations) on August 6. The hearing agenda does not yet include testimony from any bill proponents and/or Western Slope representatives. Discussion followed. Roundtable member suggested broadening the statewide water conservation to include people not directly involved with water management, as well as continuing discussions around agricultural efficiency legislation.

Transmountain Diversion

Bruce Whitehead, IBCC Representative, summarized the seven points identified for a conceptual agreement for future negotiations on a potential new TMD:

- 1) The East Slope is not looking for firm yield from a new TMD project and would accept hydrologic risk for that project;

- 2) A new TMD project would be used conjunctively with East Slope interruptible supply agreements, Denver Basin Aquifer resources, carry-over storage, terminal storage, drought restriction savings, and other non-West Slope water sources;
- 3) In order to manage when a new TMD will be able to divert, triggers are needed;
- 4) An insurance policy that protects against involuntary curtailment is needed for existing uses and some reasonable increment of future development in the Colorado River system, but it will not cover a new TMD;
- 5) Future West Slope needs should be accommodated as part of a new TMD project;
- 6) Colorado will continue its commitment to improve conservation and reuse; and,
- 7) Environmental resiliency and recreational needs must be addressed both before and conjunctively with a new TMD.

These seven points were agreed upon by the IBCC and distributed in a draft conceptual agreement dated July 1, 2014. Separately, the Colorado River Basin Roundtable has adopted similar criteria to that developed by the Southwest Basins Roundtable for considering TMDs. Roundtable members questioned how realistic it is that the East Slope would accept “hydrologic risk” with a major capital investment like a TMD, and requested that conservation be a clear prerequisite to developing a TMD. There was discussion.

The IBCC cancelled their August meeting, which would have been held in Durango. It is possible the October IBCC meeting will be held in Durango. The IBCC has never met in southwestern Colorado.

6. Review of WSRA Applications and Concept Proposals

WSRA Application: Redburn Ranch Diversion Improvement

Matt Clark, Trout Unlimited, presented the application for \$50,000 from the Basin fund and \$98,500 from the Statewide Fund to improve a “push up” diversion dam on the Dolores River 15 miles north of the Town of Dolores. The push up dam, located on U.S. Forest Service (USFS) land, is maintained by Redburn Ranch and often blocks fish passage for the majority of the year and inhibits the ranch from accessing its full water right. Funding would support the construction of a permanent diversion dam to restore fishery connectivity, reduce maintenance, provide safe recreational boat passage, improved instream habitat, and ensure that the Redburn Ranch’s water right could be accessed reliably. Roundtable members asked questions and provided suggestions about the application. There was extensive discussion regarding the application and USFS permitting. Jenny Russell moved to approve the WSRA application as submitted and described. Ed Zink seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

WSRA Application: Thompson-Epperson Ditch Stabilization

Monte Miller, Thompson-Epperson Ditch Company, presented the concept proposal for \$30,000 from the Basin Account to support the installation of 600 feet of pipe in a section of the ditch to prevent leakage, collapse, and liability. The Ditch Company intends to undertake the stabilization of this section of ditch before the next irrigation season to avoid seepage down to the shale layers that could trigger another landslide. Funding will also be sought from the Southwestern Water Conservation District. Roundtable members asked questions about the application. Ed Zink moved to approve the WSRA application for \$30,000. Steve Harris seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Concept Proposal: Sullivan Ditch Stabilization

Russell Burwell, Caroline Munger, and Roger Kugle presented the concept proposal for \$40,000 to support the stabilization of a steep section of Sullivan Ditch that follows a ridge next to the Pine River. Given that the soil and location are similar to that of the Thompson-Epperson Ditch, which collapsed in April 2014, the Sullivan Ditch would like to preempt similar damage by piping 750 feet of the ditch. The total estimated cost of the ditch improvement is \$60,000, of which the shareholders will assume \$20,000. Roundtable members asked questions about the application and recommended that a full application be submitted for consideration at the September meeting.

Concept Proposal: Montrose County Maverick Draw Reservoir

Marc Catlin, Montrose County, presented the concept proposal to support feasibility and engineering investigation for proposed reservoir site at Maverick Draw #1. Work will include topographic mapping and base map preparation, dam

foundation drilling, permeability testing, and excavation of exploratory test pits. Roundtable members asked questions and expressed concerns about the application. There was consensus to recommend that a full application be submitted for consideration at the September meeting.

7. Upcoming Events

2014 Bi-Monthly Meeting Schedule

September 10 in Cortez

November 12 in Durango

8. Announcements

Roundtable members announced the following events:

- Colorado Water Congress' Summer Conference will be held August 20-22 in Snowmass, Colorado.
- The Ditch and Reservoir Company Alliance will host a Water Plan Workshop at the Florida Grange on Saturday, July 19 from 7:30 a.m. to noon.
- The Interim Water Resources Review Committee will hold a hearing on SB-115 (Procedural Requirements Applicable to State Water Plans) at the Durango Public Library on Wednesday, August 27 from 6 to 8:30 p.m.
- This year's Water 101 Seminar will be held in Telluride on Monday, September 22.

9. Adjournment

Chairman Mike Preston adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.