

South Platte Basin Roundtable Meeting Agenda

**Tuesday, July 14, 2015
2009 N 112 St.
Broomfield, CO 80020
4:00PM-7:35PM**

South Platte Basin Roundtable Business Meeting

1. Welcome/Introductions (5 min)

The meeting came to order at 4PM. South Platte Basin Roundtable (“the Roundtable”) members and members of the public made introductions.

2. Approval of Meeting Summary (5 min)

Per Joe Frank, a request was made of Matt Betz to spell out all instances of “IPP” (“identified planned projects”) in the June minutes. Approval of the minutes was moved to the next meeting.

3. Agenda – additions or changes

Discussion of the Greenway Foundation was pushed to the August meeting agenda. Completion of the member recognition agenda item was moved to the August agenda as well.

4. SPBRT Member Recognition (10 min)

Joe Frank spoke to the legacy Harold Evans had given to the Roundtable. Bert Knight spoke further to the efforts and legacy of Harold Evans in Greeley specifically and in Colorado generally. Harold Evans spoke of his commitment to the Roundtable, beginning with the very first Roundtable meeting, extending through the adoption of the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan.

5. Greenway Foundation (5 min) *moved to August Roundtable meeting*

6. Committee Updates

- a. WSRA Needs Committee (Boring – 15 min)
 - i. McFarland Reservoir Rehab – Letter of Recommendation

Jeffrey Boring spoke to the Ducks Unlimited (“DU”) McFarland Reservoir Rehabilitation project, which had already received approval from the North Platte Basin Roundtable before the South Platte Basin Roundtable meeting in July. DU was seeking South Platte Basin Roundtable support to move to the Colorado Water Conservation Board (“CWCB”) to seek funding. The applicant felt there were multiple environmental benefits to the project including the propagation of water fowl, as well as the irrigation of hay. Discussion ensued on the increase in storage capacity rehabilitation of the reservoir would allow. Boring called attention to the state-mandated nature of the rehabilitation of the McFarland dam. The rehabilitation of the dam would allow the state to continue to maximize 17,000 acre-feet of water per interstate compacts. Jim Yann moved to pass the motion and Mike Shimmin seconded; the motion passed without discussion or consent.

Jeffrey Boring made a call-to-action to the Roundtable to issue a press release noticing the Water Supply Reserve Account (“WSRA”) deadline in October and submission guidelines. Joe Frank, Jeffrey Boring, and Joel Schneekloth discussed the merit of adding such a press release to the education and outreach discussion

taking place at the end of July. Sean Cronin asked if there were other ways for interested parties to learn of the WSRA funds and the Roundtable. Discussion, pushed by Schneekloth, focused on the outreach meeting on July 28th and evolved into the reporting requirements by WSRA grant awardees. There was general consensus that the reporting requirements had not been strictly maintained. Cronin argued the CWCB should have a list of all WSRA awardees, which should be used as a way of distributing targeted notice of upcoming WSRA deadlines and news. Mike Shimmin asked that the CWCB forward a copy of the WSRA awardee final report to the Roundtable for general distribution. Schneekloth suggested materials from past WSRA awardees be posted to the website as well. Ralph Topper asked what the account balance for the Statewide account was.

Kevin Lusk asked which WSRA applications the Roundtable was able to see—all applications, or only those which were recommended. Greg Kernohan responded nearly all recommended applications were followed through. Cronin clarified that without a full application or an applicant's pursuit of a Roundtable recommendation, proving there would be more apparent interest, it was nearly impossible to gauge the intention for complete follow-through. Boring's ultimate hope was to push applicants or potential applicants to the website. Boring hoped the next press release of WSRA details would go out in August, concurrent to a CWCB notice.

b. Groundwater Subcommittee (Hall – 10 min)

Jim Hall reported there were still high flows in the South Platte Basin and those were contributing to high-groundwater in the LaSalle/Gilcrest area. Still, the dewatering program of that area recently turned on in a non-call period and was proceeding as planned. Hall reported the CWCB would be evaluating the HB1178 guidelines soon to allocate those grant funds. The plan, Hall reported, was to add additional wells into the LaSalle/Gilcrest area for additional dewatering. High groundwater levels in the area, as of July, were actually higher than they were during the prior year. Hall reported the dewatered water could be used for a multitude of purposes, not least of which included sending the water to independent farmers.

c. Environmental-Recreational Needs/Phreatophyte Update (Kernohan – 10 min)

Greg Kernohan reported there was nothing to update. Frank asked all Roundtable members to continue to consider sustained Roundtable maintenance of the Phreatophyte Committee. Kernohan suggested the Roundtable dissolve the Phreatophyte Committee and it was thus dissolved.

d. Education Subcommittee (Schneekloth – 15 min)

Joel Schneekloth reported an upcoming conference call would solidify the agenda for the July SPBRT/Metro Education and Outreach Committee for the July 28 meeting at Cabela's in Thornton, from 10AM to 2PM. Joe Frank and Joel Schneekloth discussed some of the major components of the Education and Outreach discussion and philosophy. Frank clarified the upcoming meeting would not be focused on next-steps for the Basin Implementation Plan ("BIP")—a second meeting would be conducted to address those next-steps. Discussion ensued on the presence of Roundtables/Roundtable members at the next meeting and whether or not it was a joint meeting of the Roundtables, or simply open to all. Sean Cronin called attention to the significance of the meeting and the power the education and outreach arm of the Roundtables would have. Schneekloth called attention to the limited interest in the print media. Jeff Belt called attention to the strength of West Slope print media marketing and newspaper-based discussion. Schneekloth argued the need for a full-time employee to do digital education and outreach was present and should be seriously considered.

Sean Cronin argued the West Slope story was romantic and the Front Range needed help to romanticize the story. Joe Frank discussed the West Slope translation of the South Platte BIP into a kind of trans-mountain blueprint for securing new supply. Discussion ensued as to the merits of condensing and romanticizing the Front Range message. James VanShaar spoke to the need for consistent and credible social media presence by the South Platte Basin Roundtable. Further discussion ensued as to the need for multi-faceted discussion on the environmental and

recreational advantages of storage, as an example of the need for greater focus on effective rhetoric in Roundtable messaging. There was general consensus that education and outreach was a necessary component of Roundtable efforts going forward. Cronin called attention to the mostly missing statewide interest in storage, even at a high administrative level. VanShaar called out the 1.3M acre-feet that left the state in May and June 2015 alone—he felt this was a prime opportunity to capitalize upon.

Sean Cronin reiterated the need for professional assistance to articulate, strategize, and implement a unified education and outreach plan. There was additional discussion on the need to address aquifer storage and groundwater storage. Greg Kernohan stressed the need to stand-up for storage interests and NISP. On July 22 at the Hilton in Fort Collins, the hearing was set to start at 6PM and go until its completion, and repeat on July 23 at the Weld County Administrative Building in Greeley, with the same schedule as the 22nd. Mike Shimmin pointed out the Colorado River Conservancy District had been charged with drawing opposition to east slope trans-mountain diversions and they had become effective in executing that charge. Shimmin argued today's journalists who are writing on water interests weren't as vested in the story of natural resources as they once were. Gene Manuella argued the term "new" needed to be added to "storage" so talking points focused on "new storage".

e. At-large Nominating Committee (Cronin – 30 min)

Sean Cronin took the floor to present on the three at-large position vacancies and their nominations. Cronin pointed out the three successful nominees: John Stokes (environmental), Randy Ray (water rights), and Jim Hibbard (local domestic). Two of those nominees attended the Roundtable meeting and presented their qualifications and their backgrounds to the roundtable. Jim Hibbard was the first, stating he was based in a small jurisdiction, covering roughly 270 square miles, housed in a Berthoud office. Hibbard noted he had roughly 40 years of experience in water in Northern Colorado.

Randy Ray from the Central Colorado Water Conservancy District presented on his history in Colorado water, which began right out of college. After college, Ray working his way up in Central Water from the bottom to the top. Ray's District spanned a large area, under which were two alluvial aquifers, which collectively provided water to roughly 1100 private wells. Central Water had some major concerns with the gap, which were being addressed under his purview.

Mike Shimmin thanked the nominating committee for their work in bringing the successful nominees to the Roundtable. Shimmin made a motion to nominate John Stokes (environmental), Randy Ray (water rights), and Jim Hibbard (local domestic) to fill the vacancies for at-large positions. Jim Yahn seconded. Sean Cronin contested the motion arguing the by-laws required nominees to attend in-person in order to be nominated. Greg Kernohan cautioned against nominating Stokes given his position within the Larimer County jurisdiction: Kernohan was concerned with the geographical weighting of individuals from Larimer and Weld counties. Cronin identified the many qualifications of Stokes and called out the Committee's decision to recommend him. The motion carried.

Dinner | 5:45-6:15

4. IBCC Update (Yahn – 30 min)

Jim Yahn reported the IBCC meeting on July 13 was long and got deep into discussion on the conceptual framework, which commanded the bulk of the meeting timeline, although the agenda was organized differently. Yahn reported there was lots of ruminating at the meeting. Yahn reported the conceptual framework was still in a draft state, but the Metro and South Platte stakeholders had concerns about trans-mountain diversions and their articulation in the framework. According to Yahn, there were loose definitions of "high conservation" and "stretch goal" in the document which were not effective in the context of the framework. Some of the framework pillars shifted the onus of conservation from municipal and industrial water projects to agricultural ones, which was easy to do, but dangerous to employ. Yahn stressed the need for those who are reviewing the framework to hone in on their concerns and make sure their needs were being addressed appropriately.

Eric Wilkinson called attention to the draft Conceptual Framework that was distributed to all those in attendance. Wilkinson addressed the nearly 400,000 acre-feet that come into the South Platte Basin which could potentially be attributed to either the South Platte Basin current trans-mountain diversion supply or to the inter-state compact along the Colorado River. Jim Yahn pointed out the major issue with the framework mishandling the term and idea of risk. Wilkinson moved through the framework, pointing out topics that were copacetic and topics that were contentious, discussing the reasons for opinions on each. Sean Cronin asked if the points outlined in Provision 2 would need to be approved by the West Slope and Wilkinson argued their approval was not necessarily required, but their buy-in was. Without the West Slope buy-in, approval or not, Wilkinson stated, trans-mountain diversions would not be developed. Wilkinson raised significant concern with Lake Powell dropping to the power-pull threshold (Powell has been at an 8.5M acre-feet average over the past 10 years), which would halt delivery of 7.5M acre-feet and would bring in federal administration of the Upper Colorado Basin since they would become River Master in such a situation. Wilkinson also called attention to the growth of Colorado into its current water projects and the increasing difficulty in identifying enough water, and the difficulty in strategizing a system of involuntary curtailment thereafter. Furthermore, Wilkinson called attention to the special consideration given to the Yampa/White/Green and Southwest basins.

Sean Cronin added in his eyes the Conceptual Framework highlighted a statewide unification in the protection of diversions within the state, whether they are giving water to the east slope or the west slope. Eric Wilkinson argued that although such a unification and joint protection may be apparent, it was giving away a false positive. Mike Shimmin asked how the principles of the Framework wouldn't stifle collaboration of a truly joint project, and Wilkinson responded it was because those principles were part of a negotiation. Wilkinson argued the conceptual framework was a framework for discussion, at least. Discussion then moved onto the more subtle nuances of the Framework, calling out those who must meet low and no regrets and those who must meet high conservation standards. Further consternation about discrepancies between all projects and new trans-mountain diversions came to light in discussion of Colorado's Water Plan section 6.3.1, regarding the application of state water plan language to permit issuance by state and federal agencies. Moderate and high conservation standards were defined in SWSI 2010, for the purposes of backing discussion items in the Conceptual Framework and Colorado's Water Plan. There was considerable discussion amongst Roundtable members about the conservation numbers contained within the South Platte BIP and Colorado's Water Plan and the logic of the conservation numbers and the legitimacy of satisfying those numbers. Wilkinson called attention to the danger of maintaining 400,000 acre-feet of conservation in Colorado's Water Plan. Cronin requested members of the IBCC who understand the numbers, who may come to present on those numbers to the Roundtable, provide a written summary of their understanding before attending.

Joe Frank asked if there could be a separate committee, joint between the South Platte Basin Roundtable and the Metro Roundtable, to get as many Roundtable members as possible to review Colorado's Water Plan and compare the document to the South Platte BIP. Julio Iturreria recommended the South Platte Basin Roundtable develop its own committee to join forces with the Metro committee. Janet Bell suggested conservation may also include storage and limited release. Bruce Gerk expressed significant concern with the push to develop a Conceptual Framework and a state water plan that works for Colorado, rather than developing a plan to satisfy a deadline requirement. Additional concern was expressed surrounding the development of legislation based on Colorado's Water Plan and the figures and strategies therein. Julio Iturreria argued the period between the July Roundtable meeting and the September due-date of comments was a crucial opportunity to oppose issues presented in Colorado's Water Plan. Frank identified the large amount of attention given to conservation and the downplayed attention given to storage—he argued that attention should be flipped, or at least more balanced. Frank argued conservation needed to be more aggressively addressed, especially in how such conservation would address the gap.

Janet Bell argued greater attention should be given to developing and marketing an interconnected depiction of the South Platte Basin and its contributing watersheds. For Bell, that depiction in an easily digestible format was integral to the success of initiatives targeting revision of the BIP. Mike Shimmin added he wanted to see strategies for implementation of conservation projects. In reality, Shimmin argued, the realization of the 400,000 acre-feet presented in the plan was interpretive at best, and therefore potentially capable of stalling the development of new projects. Discussion ensued as to the highly qualitative nature of the plan, without strong quantitative backing to develop future projects seeking state assistance or approval. Joe Frank pointed out the high likeliness that such restriction would push agricultural producers to

buy-and-dry. There was consensus to submit comments on Colorado's Water Plan both as a Roundtable (unified voice) and on an individual basis.

Discussion again returned to Eric Wilkinson's parsing of the draft Conceptual Framework. Mike Shimmin moved to instruct the Roundtable IBCC representatives to reject any part of the Framework that strayed from direct applicability to trans-mountain diversion projects. Julio Iturreria seconded. Wilkinson felt the document, although in a draft state, would be pushed out for comment, ultimately to become an addendum to Colorado's Water Plan. The motion carried without consent. For clarification, Jim Yahn and Eric Wilkinson were charged with gathering additional information from the IBCC and CWCB on the logic and philosophy behind the language in the current (as of the July Roundtable meeting) draft Conceptual Framework.

Mike Shimmin added clarification that there are additional concerns with different and inconsistent standards—again, no quantitative backing for purely qualitative benchmarks. Shimmin argued conservation should be an important part of Colorado's Water Plan, but balanced by storage and other philosophies. Sean Cronin added there should absolutely be additional explanation by other members of the IBCC and by members of the CWCB on the Conceptual Framework.

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5. Legislative Update (5 min)

No update was made.

6. Basin Implementation Plan (35 min)

Matt Cook took the floor to address a June 26 Rio Chato and Metro Executive BIP discussion to address remaining HDR funds. During the call, a scope of work amendment was considered as part of ongoing efforts to address task 800. Cook spoke to the pending draft status of the one-page explanation of the Roundtable and South Platte BIP. Cook also identified some funds to host a September Rio Chato and Metro Executive BIP meeting to focus on understanding conservation in the plan—the focus would be to dive into those issues, develop scopes of work, and create budgets to address those issues as well. Joe Frank added there should also be a one-page insert for the Republican River as well. Frank and Cook discussed the potential for presentation of the Republican River one-pager. Cook stated he had developed a standard presentation of the South Platte BIP, which was being uploaded to Dropbox to use by members of the Roundtable. Cook also stated HDR was working on comparing the 2nd draft of Colorado's Water Plan and compare it to the first draft as well as compare it to the South Platte BIP. Cook stated HDR wanted to have comments collected from the South Platte Basin Roundtable and Metro Roundtable and condensed for distribution to the South Platte Basin Roundtable by the August meeting. Cook stated about \$25,000.00 would be devoted to the work just discussed.

7. Public Comment (10 min)

John Stencel took the floor to make a request for Roundtable support for the bi-annual Colorado Ag-water Alliance conference, three specifically, to be held in various parts of the state. Stencel made an ask for the Roundtable to contribute \$1000.00 to the Ag-water Alliance. Joe Frank queried if the ask was related to Roundtable matters. Stencel argued there was not strong enough discussion about ag-water across the state and the Alliance was working to facilitate that discussion. The conference was educational and more in tune with Colorado's Water Plan, versus the South Platte Basin Roundtable or South Platte BIP. Discussion ensued on whether or not to commit those funds from the South Platte Education and Outreach funds to the Colorado Ag-water Alliance conference. Sponsorship of the conference would set a precedent so the South Platte Basin Roundtable wanted to be careful with how it was allocating its funds. Greg Kernohan asked if WSRA funds would be an appropriate funding source for that \$1000.00 the Colorado Ag-water Alliance ask. Mike Shimmin clarified the Education Committee would need to make a recommendation to the Roundtable for allocation of funds, specifically in terms of the Colorado Ag-water Alliance ask, if that ask was to be satisfied. Those funds would be required by the first week of December.

8. Meeting Schedule

- a. Next Roundtable Meeting - August 11, 2015 - Weld County Service Center

The meeting adjourned at 8:50.