

**Interbasin Compact Committee Basin Roundtable**  
**Rio Grande Basin Roundtable**  
**MINUTES**  
**June 9, 2015**

**Attending - Those who signed in are as follows:** *Dwight Martin, Ed Nielsen, Dale Wiescamp, Kevin Terry, Wayne Schwab, Christi Bode, Stan Moyer, Charlie Griego, Juanita Martinez, Adam Moore, Susan Wolfrey, Charlotte Bobicki, Karla Shriver, Lindsay George, Nicole Langley, Mac McFadden, Nathan Coombs, Anne Steinhage, Bea Ferrigno, Steve Vandiver, Travis Smith, Rio de la Vista, Brenda Felmlee, Larry Crowder, Peter Clark, Marty Asplin, Ruth Heide, Cindy Medina, Cathy Morin, Charles Spielman, Noah Baen, Don Thompson, Michelle Lanzoni, Craig Godbout, Gene Farish, Emma Regier, Mike Gibson, Heather Dutton, Craig Cotten.*

**Welcome and Introduction:** Chairman Mike Gibson called the meeting to order at 2:07pm at the offices of the San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District, in Alamosa, CO. A quorum was established, those in attendance were introduced, and all were welcomed.

Cindy Medina was recognized for receiving the David Getches Flowing Waters Award for her work with the Alamosa River Keepers and the Terrace Reservoir Project. Congratulations to Cindy for this honor!

**Approval of Minutes of March 10, 2015:** Karla moved that the minutes be approved, Cindy seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

**Administrative Issues - Executive Committee Update**

Mike updated the Roundtable on the work of the Executive Committee relating to the bylaws and funding guidelines. The committee has been working on amending the bylaws. These will be ready to present at the next Roundtable meeting. The committee has also been working to create funding requests guidelines. These guidelines will aid people and entities looking for funding through the WRSA and help make the application process more accessible.

**WSRA Funding Pre-View: Upper Rio Grande Watershed Assessment:**

Heather Dutton with the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project provided a funding preview for the Upper Rio Grande Watershed Assessment. This is one of the projects being considered in the Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan. The project proposes to work with partners to create a study similar to the 2001 Study from South Fork to the Headwaters, including major tributaries. The study will look at environmental conditions (including riparian

habitat, aquatic habitat, geomorphology, flow regimes, floodplain function, adjacent upland habitat, infrastructure) as well as the economic impact of recreation in the area. The study will identify causes of concern and identify and prioritize projects in the study area. This project brings a lot of different partners and stakeholders to the table, including Trout Unlimited, the US Forest Service, Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, National Resource Conservation Service, Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team, RGHRP, local communities, recreationists, and more. The budget has not been finalized yet, but is expected to be approximately \$450,000.

Mike gave some brief background on the 2001 Study. The Study was prompted by local stakeholders and funded by the CWCB through WSRA funds. It analyzed the condition of the riparian area and structures along a 91-mile reach of the Rio Grande and provided recommendations for improvement. The RGHRP was formed to implement the findings of the 2001 Study. The planned Upper Rio Grande Assessment will complement the work of the 2001 Study. The RGHRP will be the applicant for this Upper Rio Grande Watershed Assessment, but will work closely with all the partners to bring the project to fruition.

#### **Update on the Rio Grande Basin Water Implementation Plan:**

Mike discussed the Colorado Water Conservation Board Meeting that took place in Sterling, CO on May 20th. Five people from the Rio Grande attended the meeting. Heather Dutton and Emma Regier made the Rio Grande Basin's presentation for the Basin Implementation Plan update and it was well received. Heather and Emma presented the video and presentation that they gave to CWCB to the Roundtable.

The final Executive Summary of the Basin Plan has been printed and is available to the public. More will be printed soon, so at a future meeting they can be dispersed.

The revised Plan is complete and will be available for everyone to view online. Five public meetings will be held around the valley to share the Basin Plan with the public.

Rio de la Vista commented that the plan is a great tool for those applying for Roundtable funding. If project fits with the goals of the plan, it will have more merit to be funded.

**Report from the Colorado Division of Water Resources:**

Craig Cotten from DWR gave an update on our water situation. To date, the Rio Grande Basin has experienced over 300% of average precipitation. There have been some minor flooding issues in the north end of the Basin. The North Crestone Creek campground was closed because of high water and along Saguache Creek there has been some flooding. For the most part there haven't been any major problems. There was a day that peak flows reached over 6000 cfs. Even with the high water, the flows for the Rio Grande and Conejos are forecasted to be around 80% of average this year. Currently the flows are above average, but they are expected to drop off later in the summer.

The Division of Water Resources finished up the Advisory Committee meetings and the final work on the rules and regulations are being done. They are still working on the response functions, but are hopeful that they will be done soon.

**Update on the Sub-Districts - Rio Grande Water Conservation District:**

Steve Vandiver provided the following update on the Sub-Districts:

- For Subdistrict No. 1: The Board of Managers has been meeting to make edits to the plan of water managers and will be submitting those to the court. The most controversial change to the Plan will be a change in the fee structure which would allow the water managers to increase the fees when the aquifer is dropping and decrease the fees when the aquifer level is increasing. These changes will be submitted to the court.
- For Subdistrict No. 2: Every well has been signed into the plan thanks to Karla and the Sub District 2 work group. A final review from the attorneys is occurring now and after that the plan be submitted to the courts.
- The RGWCD has been working hard to make the Well Rules and Regulations make sense for the Valley. They have been completed but we have yet to see them.

- Work on the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) continues, Chris Ivers has been working with this and recently has acquired more core habitat adding significantly to the acreage of core habitat under the HCP.
- The building project for the new RGWCD offices has started and dirt work has begun!
- There have been staffing changes at the District and several positions now need to be filled. Cleve Simpson and Martha Archuleta have.
- At a recent CREP event, it was reported that cover crops that have been planted are doing better than they originally expected.

Nathan Coombs mentioned that the Confined Aquifer Sustainability Study is working water users and other groups to work on the Subdistrict for the Conejos area. A recent meeting had over 200 people in attendance and it was very productive.

**Report from IBCC Representatives:** Travis Smith commented on the Basin Plan. The Plan is a product of two years of hard work by a lot of volunteers and is something that we can all be proud of. The Plan tells the story of the valley and the work we have been doing. It is a great product, but this isn't the end. This Plan is a springboard for lots of projects to come. Travis specially thanked Heather and Mike for completing the final edits of the Basin Plan.

The IBCC had a meeting in April in response to all the public comments coming in on the Colorado Water Plan. Agricultural viability is a huge discussion within the plan. In addition, funding for environmental and recreation has been elevated to a high level in the plan. There is on going discussion about a Conceptual Agreement regarding any new transmountain diversions. The next CWCB meeting will be in July in Ignacio. Travis received positive comments from CWCB board members on the presentation that Heather and Emma gave at the meeting in Sterling, CO.

### **Announcements:**

Rio de la Vista announced that the Legislative Water Resource Review Committee will visit the valley on August 10. She suggested that it would be good to show them the presentation that Heather made to the CWCB to showcase the valley and the work we are doing on the Basin Plan.

Mike G. mentioned the possibility of organizing some field trips for the Roundtable to get out and see some of the projects funded by the Roundtable. Travis Smith suggested that we coordinate field trips with Judy Lopez and the future outreach work she is organizing. The Executive Committee will work on the details for a future tour.

Emma Regier announced that the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project will hold their annual fundraiser with the Willow Creek Reclamation Committee on June 13 in Creede. The event is called the Runoff Runoff: Run along the Rio and includes a 6K, half marathon and marathon race and an after party. Volunteers are needed to help run the event. Contact Emma or Heather Dutton for more information.

Adjourn

Next Meeting scheduled for: July 14, 2015  
Conference Room, San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District  
623 Fourth Street, Alamosa, CO