

South Platte Basin Roundtable Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, July 12, 2016
Elks Club
113 Main St
Central City, CO 80427
4:00PM-8:00PM

South Platte Basin Roundtable Business Meeting

ATTENDANCE: Joe Frank, Sean Conway, Gene Manuello, Bert Weaver, Kevin Lusk, Brent Nation, Larry Howard, James Ford, Randy Ray, Jim Hibbard, Kent Swedlund, Bruce Gerk, Lynda James, John Stokes, Garret Varra, Sean Cronin, Jim Hall, Jim Yahn, Mike Shimmin, Matt Betz, Lisa McVicker, Greg Kernohan, Burt Knight, Dan Brown, Karen Martinez

The meeting commenced at 4PM

1. Welcome/Introductions (10 min)

Daniel Miera took the floor to welcome the Roundtable to Central City. Following, Miera's introduction, the Roundtable and audience made their own introductions.

2. Approval of Meeting Summary (5 min) (action required)

Sean Conway moved to approve the June Roundtable minutes, with changes, Jim Yahn seconded. The motion passed without discussion or contest.

3. Agenda – additions or changes

No additions or changes were offered.

4. Tamarisk Coalition (30 min)

a. Presentation

Rusty Lloyd and Shannon Hatch from the Tamarisk Coalition took the floor to present their work to the Roundtable. Hatch provided background on the Coalition, their staff, locations, funding sources, and partner agencies. She also addressed the Coalition's goals—specifically assistance with SB14-195, the Invasive Phreatophyte Program, workshops, and the South Platte Phreatophyte assessment. SB14-195 focused directly on evaluating growth of invasive phreatophytes after the 2013 flood. The focus of the study was the “lower” South Platte Basin, i.e. the area below Gilpin and Clear Creek Counties, and the projected completion date of the project would be December 2016. One of the Coalition's projects—a workshop that occurred in May 2016—shared best management practices for Russian Olive and Tamarisk mitigation and abatement strategies. Lloyd also reported the total amount of funding for the South Platte was \$385,000. The Tamarisk Coalition was particularly interested in the re-establishment of the South Platte Basin Roundtable's Phreatophyte Committee. The philosophy behind this interest was the Coalition's support of a top-down approach. John Stokes asked for clarification on whether or not more aggressive phreatophytes that may out-compete

others were appearing in greater numbers at lower elevations and further down in the watershed.

b. Question and Answer

The Coalition opened the floor to questions. Bert Weaver asked what quantities were available for the amounts of water phreatophytes used and subsequently returned to the river after their eradication. Rusty Lloyd reported that since different phreatophytes moved and expanded in different ways, it was difficult to fully determine the surface area alone that these plants cover. The Coalition stated they were ready and willing to provide support and guidance on the eradication of phreatophytes. John Stokes reported the Environmental and Recreational Committee would be meeting soon and was a natural fit for additional discussion of the phreatophyte topic—specifically the re-establishment of the Phreatophyte Committee. Weaver argued for additional evaluation of previously addressed areas in order to determine if eradication strategies were effective.

Sean Conway asked what the Tamarisk Coalition's successes have been in the past. Rusty Lloyd argued the Coalition had been learning about challenges to and best practices of eradication and land reclamation. Lloyd reported the Coalition paired with other organizations to analyze and address a wider range of topics and areas, and that their annual conference would be in Fort Collins, February 7-9, 2017. Mike Shimmin added clarification to the Roundtable's interest in the Phreatophyte Committee and its analyses by citing a recent study that phreatophytes accounted for 20% of river depletions. Ultimately, Shimmin argued, tying phreatophyte eradication to Basin-wide water budgets was critical to fostering and maintaining interest from the South Platte Basin. Discussion ensued on the topic of the quantitative connections the Tamarisk Coalition has had with recent research and studies of river depletions.

5. Committee Updates

a. WSRA Needs Committee (60 min)

i. North Poudre WSRA Application (action required**)**

Scott Humberg and David Rattle, representing the Livermore Tunnels Rehabilitation Project took the floor. The project was being led by the North Poudre Irrigation Company, serving approximately 300 square miles (appx. 36 square miles of irrigated land). The water was estimated to serve 75% municipal ownership and 25% agricultural ownership—under this system 75% of the use was identified as agricultural and the remaining 25% as municipal. Rattle reported the system was originally constructed in 1913, and developed with pre-compact water rights. The purpose of the project in discussion was to repair damage to the tunnel and restore delivery capacity to the system, totaling over \$1.6M in work. At the time of the meeting, the North Poudre Irrigation Company was the largest holder of Colorado Big Thompson units. Background on the project and proposed repairs were discussed before the floor was opened to questions.

Sean Cronin asked how often the tunnel was inspected and when problems were first identified. David Rattle responded the tunnel had been inspected annually and small problems were identified early and had grown. The collapsed zones had not restricted flow through the tunnel, but they had hindered its movements. It was pointed out how this tunnel directly supports the northern Front Range almost exclusively. The project budget's inclusion of 35% contingency was discussed as well as the financing of the budget. The significance of the grant was discussed—ultimately the project would move forward even if the grant was denied by the Roundtable. Discussion ensued on the topic of the Roundtable's position on the Basin and State funding of the project through grants.

Jim Hibbard argued the project was fundamentally addressing maintenance and wasn't well suited to receive the WSRA grant seed money. Furthermore, the limited funding available to the Roundtable, as per the State severance tax issue was discussed—Sean Conway asked why the WSRA Needs Committee recommended \$50k to the Roundtable for funding. Joe Frank responded to Conway saying that based on previous project grants, the Needs Committee based their recommendation, but did so with the understanding that the Roundtable could fund more, less, or none of the recommendation. Discussion ensued as to past projects and previous grants and transitioned into grant support of a project with significance municipal buy-in.

Balances, as of May 1 (with projections) were as follow:

- Basin Balance: \$423,806
- Tentatively set-aside: \$130,000
- Available: \$293,806
- Available, if awarded: \$243,806
- Statewide Balance: \$2.3M

Gene Manuello expressed his opposition to the Committee's recommendation for \$50k. Dan Brown, on the other hand, saw the project as serving both the Roundtable's funding precedents and core philosophies. Further discussion ensued on the limited funding available to the Roundtable and the precedent for funding similar projects with similar budgets and grant requests. Jim Yahn sought to balance the discussion by stating that the Roundtable had denied similar projects and many similar projects had been funded without grants.

Sean Cronin made a motion to deny the application for \$50k and recommended the applicant reapply for future projects. Bert Weaver seconded. The motion passed without discussion, 17 in favor, 3 opposed.

Dinner (45 min) (6PM-6:45)

7. Tribute to Greg Kernohan (Ducks Unlimited – 5 min)

Joe Frank took the floor to thank Greg Kernohan for his 11 years of service to the Roundtable. Jason Radebush took the floor to thank Kernohan as well. Greg Kernohan thanked the Roundtable for allowing him the opportunity to serve for so long.

5. Committee Updates

d. Education and Outreach (10 min)

Lisa McVicker took the floor to report on ongoing Education and Outreach Committee efforts. She committed to sending the Roundtable minutes from the recent Education and Outreach workshop. Additionally, McVicker reported a budget for the Education and Outreach Committee and Coordinator positions would be coming before the Roundtable soon as well. McVicker also reported there would be PEPO discussions at the fall Sustaining Colorado's Watersheds Conference in Avon, CO. At the next meeting, the Education and Outreach Committee would be presenting their findings on analyses of other basin's Coordinator positions. The budget and action steps for future work would be coming down the pipeline over the next year or so.

7. Committee Updates CHECK AGENDA NUMBERS

a. WSRA Needs Committee (60 min)

i. SPBRT Criterion Guidelines (**action required**)

Joe Frank took the floor to discuss changes to the WSRA Funding Guidelines. Frank moved through the document to discuss changes, adding additional detail to the removal of specific examples from funding categories based on comments at the June Roundtable meeting. Randy Ray addressed some of his proposed changes and the attention to and definition of the "efficiency" of water projects, discussing the importance of improving water infrastructure and implements, but debating if it was a federal priority or a Basin priority. Discussion ensued on whether such language was appropriate in the document, given the other changes proposed. Agricultural conservation as a water supply improvement strategy was discussed by several members of the Roundtable.

John Stokes addressed the Environmental and Recreational funding category language, backing up the proposed changes with a discussion of why changes were made and how they connected to other projects. Bruce Gerk asked what kinds of projects would fit into the category, as it was defined per the proposed changes, and Stokes described a multi-benefit project as an idea candidate.

Mike Shimmin applauded the Committee's hard work to incorporate comments from the June meeting into the Guidelines. Shimmin moved to approve and adopt the proposed version of the WSRA Funding Guidelines. Sean Conway seconded. John Stokes reiterated the importance of encouraging applicants to bring projects forward for funding, even if they aren't multi-benefit projects, were specifically addressing any one of the three gaps. The motion passed without contest. It was reported that the final

guidelines would be posted on the SPBRT website, the CWCB website, presented to the IBCC, distributed to the SPBRT membership, and posted to the July meeting minutes.

- b. Environmental-Recreational Needs (15 min)
 - ii. Criterion Guidelines Priority Discussion

Completed as per previous agenda item.

- iii. Discussion of Potential Committee Chair

John Stokes reported he was the new chair of the Committee and would be setting up a meeting soon to reassess the Committee, its role and its priorities.

- c. Groundwater Subcommittee (Hall – 5 min)

Jim Yahn took the floor to provide an update on the ongoing dewatering project. He reported there would be a meeting on July 15 to discuss additional methods of dewatering the Gilcrest area. Additionally, the Subcommittee would be meeting with Representative Sein to report on the project's progress and budgetary efficacy. Hall reported water levels were currently low, but since there had been a call on the river in that area the pump had been shutoff and water would likely begin to rise again. Discussion ensued as to the Central and Aurora Water arrangement that would help manage that dewatering water.

- 8. Public Comment (10 min)

Public comment was added to Legislative Update.

- 9. At-large Nominating Committee (Cronin – 10 min)

Sean Cronin reported there were only unofficial inquiries at this time. Cronin reiterated Roundtable members should spread that notice to their networks. The deadline for applicants was July 29. It was clarified that letters of recommendation should be sent to Joe Frank.

- 10. Election of Second Vice-chair (10 min) (**action required**)

Given Greg Kernohan's resignation from the Roundtable, Sean Conway became the First Vice-chair, allowing for a vacancy. Lynda James nominated John Stokes as the Second Vice-chair. Garret Varra seconded. The motion passed without contest.

- 11. Legislative Update (15 min)

- a. HB16-1256 Technical Committee Discussion

Brent Newman took the floor to report the DWR and CWCB had been drafting a scope of work to be revised between the July and August SPBRT meetings. Joe Frank suggested the full membership review the scope and submit feedback to Joe Frank, allowing the Executive Committee to respond to CWCB with that material. Newman stated the

CWCB was currently considering Joe Frank as the Fiscal Agent for HB16-1256. Sean Cronin asked Frank if he had any particular concerns about acting the fiscal agent—if he felt there were any conflicts of interest; Frank did not. Frank commented that he would be working with his board to confirm the fiscal agent responsibility. Randy Ray asked if the Groundwater Technical Committee would be reviewing the initial and final draft of the scope of work for the Bill. According to Dan Gallen of Aurora Water, Lisa Darling from Aurora Water has volunteered to participate on the Technical Committee.

12. CWCB Update (5 min)

Brent Newman reported the CWCB would be meeting on July 20-21. According to Newman, discussions would revolve substantially around issues of funding.

13. Colorado River Development and Curtailment Risk Study (Yahn – 5 min)

Kevin Lusk reported the last three conference calls occurred relatively recently of the July 12 SPBRT meeting. Lusk reported demand reduction and risk profiles were being evaluated using complex equations and variables. Jim Yahn reported the situation was complex and would therefore require a complex solution. He also reported on the particulars of Front Range participation.

14. Meeting Schedule

- a. Next Roundtable Meeting – August 9th, 2016 – Longmont, CO**
- b. Joint Metro & South Platte Basin Roundtable Meeting, following South Platte Forum – (tentative) October 11, 2016, Embassy Suites, Loveland
- c. MRT Meeting - Thursday, August 11th, 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, Denver Water
- d. CWCB Meeting – July 20-21, 2016: Steamboat Springs, Colorado
- e. **CAWA Workshop at Morgan County Fairgrounds, 10AM-2PM**
- f. **IBCC Meeting August 15/16 in Metro**

Meeting adjourned at 7:52