

South Platte Basin and Metro Roundtable Meeting

Thursday, October 27, 2016

Embassy Suites

4705 Clydesdale Pkwy

Loveland, CO 80538

4:00PM-6:30PM

Social Hour with refreshments (3:00 pm to 4:00 pm)

Meeting Agenda:

Deb Daniel, Bruce Gerk, Garret Varra, Burt Knight, Kent Swedlund, Jim Yahn, Sean Cronin, Julio Iturreria, Jim Hall, Sean Conway, Kevin Lusk, James Ford, Randy Ray, Jason Roudebush, Eric Englund, Dan Brown, Larry Howard, Rich Belt, James Ford, Brent Nation

The meeting commenced at 4:07.

1. Welcome/Introductions at 4:00 pm (10 min)

Introductions were made by members of the South Platte Basin and Metro Roundtable members, and then by the public.

2. South Platte Basin Implementation Plan Section 4 Overview

a. Sections 4.1 – 4.4 Overview (10 min)

Joe Frank took the floor to discuss Chapter 4 of the South Platte BIP. He started with an overview of Sections 4.1 through 4.5. Frank touched on how the BIP would be used to guide planning and projects in the South Platte Basin, including its sub-basins like the Denver Metro area and the Republican River Basin.

b. Section 4.5 – Env. & Rec. Projects and Methods (10 min)

Jason Roudebush took the floor to provide an update on Environmental and Recreational activities. Roudebush reported several meetings had recently taken place, bringing in former members of the Roundtable to provide input and provide a history of where the group had come from and what the philosophy was behind defining its current goals. Per Roudebush, the Committee was focusing on what data was available, what was missing, and what would be the most effective uses of that material. Additionally, Roudebush reported, the Committee was looking at what other groups in the State were working on and their goals. Roudebush also reported the Environmental and Recreational Committee had been merged with the Phreatophyte Committee. The merge was done to provide a joint approach to addressing a broad range of environmental concerns and their relationship to environmental interests. A recent presentation to the Committee focused on providing a baseline for tackling riparian area improvement in terms of environmental, and most notably, phreatophyte concerns.

c. Section 4.7 – IPP Updates (45 min)

Joe Frank drew attention to the portion of the gap that would be addressed through development of IPPs. Frank reported that if the projects had a high success rate (appx. 80% or greater), 232K AF would be carved out of the combined gap in the South Platte Basin.

Tim Fien took the floor to update the group on the Chatfield Reallocation Project. This project reallocated a significant amount of storage from the reservoir to municipal, industrial, and agricultural uses. Fien reported the Chatfield Reallocation project was largely talking about reallocating storage water that would raise the water level by approximately 12 feet. In

October of 2015 all the participating entities entered the necessary agreements required to execute contracts and move the project forward. Since those consultants had been awarded, a significant amount of engineering had occurred. Fien estimated plans were expected to be submitted by early 2017. Of the 20,600AF estimated for reallocation, approximately 2,700AF was planned for a separate environmental pool. Fien reported there would be a significant mitigation effort tied to the Reallocation project. The full mitigation effort totaled approximately \$55M and would focus heavily on the Plum Creek area. There was a plan in place to relocate recreational facilities that would be impacted by the sharp rise in water level in the reservoir. The overall associated project costs were over \$158M. Fien pointed out there was an operational account used to fund the operations and maintenance costs of the project. The goal was to substantially complete the project within a three-year period.

Mark Waage took the floor to report on Gross Reservoir. The project was located on South Boulder Creek above Eldorado Canyon. The Fraser River would feed the reservoir through an established diversion structure. This project would enlarge Gross Reservoir and provide new supply. This project was also planned to strengthen and cure existing vulnerabilities in the system. Per Waage, the northern end of the system was prone to drought and the project would be reducing that risk. The project would include a 125 foot raise on the dam on South Boulder Creek. Total project cost was estimated at \$380M. Waage reported the project started in 2013 and the final EIS was completed in 2014. Officially, the required permits were projected to be issued in 2017. This project was at the center of major negotiations and discussions with the West Slope. Sean Cronin asked if the cities of Boulder and Lafayette had bought into an environmental pool on the project. Waage reported that was true and the goal was to provide a better fishery on South Boulder Creek. The improvement would come in the retiming of water to benefit the fishery.

Jeff Drager took the floor to update the group on the Windy Gap Firming Project. Drager said the Windy Gap Project was very close to the Gross Reservoir Project. A brief history of the project and CBT facilities was given and ultimately, Drager reported, identification of a firm yield from the project had been difficult. The project would be building a reservoir immediately to the west of Carter Lake to store water brought over through the Windy Gap project. The motivation behind the project came from Horsetooth inability to store Windy Gap water if it was already full with CBT water. The required permits were projected to be issued in early 2017. The Chimney Hollow Reservoir would be designed to hold 90,000AF. A 350' rockfill dam would be built to control the reservoir. The dam would potentially be the second highest in the state. A firm yield of approximately 25,000AF would be provided on an annual basis and would roughly align with market prices for water in the area. The most difficult part of establishing the project, Drager reported, was negotiations with the West Slope.

Jerry Gibbons took the floor to report on the Northern Integrated Supply Project. Gibbons reported the project was moving forward with Northern Water at the helm and the support of 15 participating projects. The project would provide capacity and new yield to the northern Front Range. The project had recently received approximately 4000 pages of comment, and the final EIS was expected to be completed in 2018. Gibbons reported a series of negotiations had resulted in a proposal for delivering yield through releases from Glade Reservoir and through piping of the water along with CBT deliveries. The project in discussion would remove dry-up points from the Poudre River and would set a minimum flow of 18 CFS throughout the River system. At present the project was working through the state mitigation plan and through flushing flow programs with the City of Fort Collins and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. A Highway 287 bypass would need to be relocated to the east of Glade Reservoir – construction would start on that in 2019 and construction on Glade Reservoir would start in

2020. The plan was to have Glad Reservoir ready to fill in 2025 and water delivery would start 3-4 years after completion. Water quality was a major part of the raw water delivery discussion. The total project estimate was \$700M.

Adam Jilkrest with the City of Fort Collins took the floor to report on the Halligan Water Supply Project. The project included a proposal to increase capacity to an existing reservoir. The project inception was back in the 1980's and was originally a joint project with several participants. The current proposal includes only City of Fort Collins and an increase of 81,000AF. Participants had withdrawn over the years, Jilkrest reported, due to the cost and delay of federal permitting. The proposed project would ultimately be flooding multiple areas, including endangered habitat for the Preble's mouse and wetlands. Acquisition of this additional storage, however, was identified as a critical need and would supplement limited storage, despite ownership of several senior water rights. The projected demand on future water supplies would be aided through the project and its development of additional storage. At the time of the presentation, there was not an EIS. The draft EIS was scheduled to be released in 2017. The project commencement date was currently estimated at 2019 with completion in 2022. Jilkrest reported there was a hope that the project would improve flow conditions in the downstream reaches of the river.

Burt Knight took the floor to update the group on the Milton Seaman Project. Knight reported this project would add storage to the City of Greeley's storage portfolio. The project would increase storage from 5,000AF to 53,000AF. The project would provide drought protection and additional system redundancy. At the time of presentation the draft EIS was projected to be completed in 2018.

Mark Koleber took the floor to provide an update on an IPP. The project would send water from north of Fort Collins down to the Denver Metro area. The construction of the project would begin in 2019 and completion was projected for 2025. A series of open houses were planned to talk with the public on where the pipeline would go. The proposed yield was approximately 17,000AF.

A representative from Aurora Water reported on the IPP of the Eagle River. The project was expected to bring 30,000AF over from the West Slope. The project completion date was 2035. Finally, Aurora reported it would be building a 32,000AF Wildhorse Reservoir outside South Park, CO. That project was expected to be completed before 2025.

d. Section 4.6 – In-Basin Multi-Purpose Projects (5 min)

i. South Platte Storage Study update (5 min)

Joe Frank took the floor to report on in-basin multipurpose projects. HB1256 was one approach to identify storage sites along the South Platte mainstem. Several teams came together to develop scopes of work and review proposals. A contract for a firm to work on the study was expected to run from December 2016 to December 2017. The outcome of the study would be an identification of storage opportunities throughout the Basin. A question was asked if the identification of storage sites would include an analysis of how those storage sites could integrate with IPPs and water availabilities throughout the Basin. Sean Cronin asked if there was more the Roundtable could do to move things along any faster than the current pace. Mark Waage responded the permitting process that had long been viewed as too slow was one such element that was being improved.

e. Section 4.8 – Inter-Basin Projects

i. Colorado River Risk Study update - Phase I and II (10 min)

Mark Waage took the floor to report on the West Slope Risk Study of the Colorado River and Compact Curtailment. Waage reported Phase I of the study was complete and Phase II had been approved. The Committee heading the study was going to approach the CWCB for additional funding for the study. Craig Godbout reported several Roundtables across the state were committing funding to the project, highlighting the importance and impact such a study would have on the state's watersheds. Phase I looked predominantly at Colorado River drought and resiliency to compacts calls in less-than-ideal environmental conditions. Waage reported Phase I involved the testing of several models to analyze impacts and various combinations of curtailment and call deliveries. The first phase of the study highlighted several ways of limiting demand reduction or adjusting the level of key reservoirs to build in buffers to the Basin's water budget. Waage reported the hydrology and climatic factors of the next several decades had a significant impact on the curtailment of risk or demand.

Phase II of the study included a proposition for additional river modeling to include water banking and demand reduction. Additionally, an additional Phase II portion would look at curtailment of junior water rights to the compact. That analysis would include giving up of water from reservoirs or other watersheds. The Front Range Council would be meeting soon to review options and levels of involvement in the study—at present the role of the Front Range was not as dynamic as some had hoped. Mark Waage reported one of the items under discussion was whether the West Slope/Colorado Basin should be in control or the State, given the impact of the study.

f. Discussion (15 min)

Julio Iturreria expressed concern that any study focusing on a specific river basin would be done through the lens of a statewide impact. Iturreria argued that a basin-wide analysis such as the one in discussion should have a set threshold above which the State would take control and guides analysis and discussion. Joe Frank added technical issues played a major role in the analysis, but had the potential to quickly get into political discussions. Mark Waage went on to discuss how any new transmountain diversions would need to anticipate multi-source supply and no firm yield from the West Slope. Additionally, Waage reported, there was a major issue with the lower Colorado Basin needing to go on a diet and the upper Basin showing that it was doing its part.

3. Statewide Water Supply Initiative – Update (10 min)

Craig Godbout took the floor to update the group on SWSI. Godbout reported that there was not yet an update on SWSI. The CWCB had recently held a meeting, but updates from that meeting had not yet been dispersed. Godbout reported a leader of the CWCB's Technical Action Group was not yet determined.

4. Water Supply Reserve Fund (WSRF) – Criteria & Guidelines update (10 min)

The CWCB, on Sept 22, approved revised WSRF Funding Guidelines. It was reported there would be a 25% requirement for applicant-match to WSRF funding requests, which would need to come with a letter of commitment if that match was to come from another source. A waiver option did exist and placed the burden of responsibility on the applicant to prove significant financial hardship, with support from the associated Roundtable. Craig Godbout reported statewide fund evaluation had been simplified and the funding guidelines were more in line with Colorado's Water Plan. Additionally, the requirement for estimated single contracts with a value over \$100K to be competitively bid was

loosened and allowed to be interpreted by the applicant. Finally, Godbout reported WSRF awardees would be required to include associated Roundtable chairs on project updates and deliverables. Lastly, administrative expenses were not allowed to exceed 15% of the total grant request. Joe Frank added the South Platte BRT would be reviewing its WSRF Criterion Guidelines to check their alignment with the State's guidelines.

5. Roundtable / Public Comment (15 min)

Casey Davenport asked how the South Platte Basin and Denver Metro Roundtables were addressing local prioritization of streams. One way the process could happen, Davenport recommended, could be through the Roundtables. Sean Cronin reported he had attended the last Environmental and Recreational Meeting and the Colorado River Basin Roundtable was applying for a grant to develop a framework for the individual stream management plans to come together with some consistency. Sean Cronin reported the grant had a rolling-application deadline.

6. Upcoming Meeting Schedule

- a. Next South Platte Basin Roundtable Meeting – November 15, 2016 – TBD**
- b. Next Metro Roundtable Meeting – November 10, 2016 – Denver, CO**
- c. Ag Water Summit – November 29, 2016 – Jefferson County Fairgrounds**

The meeting adjourned at 6:20