

**Interbasin Compact Committee Basin Roundtable**  
**Rio Grande Interbasin Roundtable**  
**ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES**  
**May 9, 2017**

**Attending - Those who signed in are as follows:** *Rio de la Vista, Ron Brink, Megan Holcomb, Dwight Martin, Charlotte Bobicki, Bethany Howell, Ralph Curtis, Jim Ehrlich, Robert Getz, Wayne Schwab, Ivan Geroy, Mario Curto, Travis Smith, Chuck Finnegan, Cleave Simpson, Susan Wolfrey, Adam Moore, Patrick O'Neill, Kelly Baily, Emma Reesor, Matt Hildner, Don Thompson, Pete Clark, Gene Farish, Keith Holland, Eugene Jacquez, Stan Moyer, Heather Dutton, Ann Bunting, Mac McFadden, Anne Steinhoge, Ryan Unterreiner, Christi Bode, Ruth Heidi, Nathan Coombs.*

**Welcome and Introduction:** Chair Nathan Coombs called the meeting to order at 2:01pm 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.

**Approve Agenda:** Dwight Martin motioned to approve the agenda, Heather Dutton seconded the motion and the motion carried. The agenda was approved.

**Approve April 11, 2017 Minutes:** Dwight Martin moved to approve the April minutes. Ron Brink seconded the motion, which carried unanimously

**Public Comment:**

- Chuck Finnegan has been appointed by Conejos County and will be replacing Lawrence Gallegos as their Roundtable representative. Chuck is a resident of La Jara. He is involved in farming and ranching and is active with the current water changes taking place.
- Eugene Jacquez suggested that the Roundtable send a card to Dale Weiscamp's family expressing our condolences. The Roundtable members agreed. Travis Smith encouraged the Roundtable and water community to reflect on the contributions that Dale has provided to the Roundtable. He will be greatly missed.
- Rio de la Vista update the Roundtable on the CPW Bill that was discussed at the last meeting. Unfortunately, the bill didn't pass the Senate Finance Committee.
- Emma Reesor announced that the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project and Willow Creek Reclamation Committee will host their annual fundraiser the Runoff Runoff on June 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Colorado Open Lands, Judy Lopez:** Judy presented an overview of the Colorado Open Lands (COL) to the Roundtable. COL is a private, non-profit organization working statewide with a mission to help landowners conserve properties with outstanding natural and agricultural values through conservation easements. A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a landowner and a land trust which contains permanent restrictions on the use or development of land to protect certain values of the property. COL's mission is to preserve the significant open lands and natural heritage of Colorado through private and public partnerships, innovative land conservation techniques and strategic leadership. COL holds conservation easements of all sizes and each easement looks different depending on the area, size and values of the land. It is an incentivized program in which landowners are compensated based on the appraised value of the land. COL partners with our local land trust, the Rio Grande Headwaters Land Trust. In addition, significant work has been done by COL in Costilla County

to help preserve the land and culture surrounding the acequia system. COL has worked with the acequias to help create by-laws and the legal support needed to protect their water rights. Eugene Jacquez is the acequia liaison for COL and he expressed gratitude for all the work that COL has done to help the acequias and local community. It has been a great partnership in Costilla County, protecting land, water and benefiting the community as a whole.

**SLV Aquifer Mapping Project by Mosca-Hooper Conservation District, Patrick O'Neill:**

Patrick, the president of the Mosca-Hooper Conservation District, presented a funding preview to the Roundtable for an Aquifer Mapping Project sponsored by the Mosca-Hooper Conservation District. This project has the goal of identifying recharge sweet spots in the San Luis Valley. The M-H Conservation District and partners began by asking two questions 1) can we find a farm, ditch service area or response area location where recharge could happen with greatest efficiency; 2) if the need arises that a replacement well be drilled, can we improve the odds of not drilling a dry or low-yielding well. Patrick provided a background on the Mosca-Hooper Conservation District. The proposed project would work with Zeigler Geologic Consulting, based out of Albuquerque, that specializes in groundwater resource management for rural agricultural areas. The project combines geologic mapping with subsurface geological data, tritium isotope technology, and trace metal water chemistry to identify potential points of recharge. The goal is to complement and inform existing groundwater monitoring and model efforts so water users may focus recharge efforts where they have the greatest effect. This project will be a multiyear with opportunity for collaboration between agencies and water user groups. Patrick answered questions from the Roundtable about the project and the funding preview.

**Cloud seeding informational report, Joe Busto, CWCB:** Joe Busto with Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) provided the Roundtable with a presentation on the history of cloud seeding in Colorado. The Colorado Department of Natural Resources oversees cloud seeding in Colorado and CWCB provides funding through their Cloud Seeding grants program. In 2005, California and the Lower Colorado River Basin was concerned about declining levels in Lake Powell and Lake Mead. This started conversations with Colorado to fund more cloud seeding operations in the Upper Colorado River Basin to help increase precipitation and raise levels in the reservoirs. Cloud seeding was discovered by accident through early experiments in the 1940s. Silver iodide (AgI) is primarily the substance used for cloud seeding and it has no known immediate or long term environmental effects. It is used for rain and snowpack augmentation and hail suppression across the West. The AgI is released over a propane flame which disperses it into the atmosphere. Better results occur at higher elevations where temperature inversion is avoided. Joe showed the Roundtable some examples of cloud seeding machines around the state. Joe gave an overview of the research and information available through the DWR and CWCB. He also covered different permitting, technical assistance, and funding opportunities. Joe answered questions from the Roundtable about cloud seeding and the different opportunities that could exist in the Rio Grande Basin.

**CWCB Update:** CWCB Program Manager Megan Holcomb provided the Roundtable with an update on the progress of the SWSI update work. They are currently reviewing methodologies with the technical teams. Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) are representative peer review teams. TAG participants will review methodologies and collect comments before the TAG meetings in July. TAG members from the Rio Grande include – Heather Dutton, Rio de la Vista, and Travis Smith. At the next CWCB board meeting there will be two grant requests, both from the Rio Grande Basin. The Projects Bill is still pending in the legislature, but the final verdict should take place soon and the outcome is looking good.

Megan provide the Roundtable with an overview of the Colorado River Risk Study. This is a hydrologic study of future water availability in the Colorado River Basin. The state is involved in the process because of implications with compact compliance. To prevent any conflict moving forward, CWCB has taken a mediating role throughout the study process. The study was funded through WSRF by western slope Basin Roundtables. They will hold regular webinars monthly to review progress of study for those that are interested in being involved in the process. If you are interested in being involved in the Outreach committee, let Megan know. The purpose of the outreach is to keep the Roundtables informed throughout the process. Finally, the search process is underway for the new CWCB director to replace James Ecklund.

**Division of Water Resources, Kip:** Kip distributed handouts showing current snowpack and projected streamflow. Current snowpack across the Basin is at 99% of average. Most Snowtel sites across the basin are around 100% of average.

The 2017 projected index for the Conejos is 435,000 AF with the Compact delivery obligation at 208,000 AF. The projected index for the Rio Grande 760,000 AF with the Compact delivery obligation at 223,000 AF. The NOAA forecasts show above average temperature and a 40% chance of above average precipitation over the next 3 months.

**Inter Basin Compact Commttee Update, Cleave Simpson:** Cleave provded a brief update from the last IBCC meeting in Keystone on April 20. They reviewed many of the same updates that Megan provided in her CWCB update, including the SWSI progress and Projects Bill. In addition, there was lots of discussion about Agricultural Transfer Methods (ATMs) and possible applications in the Rio Grande Basin. They also discussed future options for funding Colorado Water Plan activities, including water tax fee, beverage bottle tax/fee, tourism tax/fee, marijuana fee, etc. The next meeting will be in August or September. Travis Smith added that as we have new members transitioning on the Roundtable, we need to make sure they have access to the Basin Implementation Plan and continue to update and revisit priorities.

**Subdistrict Update, Cleave Simpson:** Progress continues in the formation of Subdistricts. Most recently, Subdistrict No. 4 (San Luis Creek) petitions were presented to the RGWCD. This will be smallest Subdistrict formed. They are also working to finalize SD 5 and SD 6. A reminder that the Rules and Regulations trials is set for early 2018.

The meeting adjourned.

Next Executive Committee Meeting: June 13, 2017 at 1:00pm  
San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District  
623 Fourth Street, Alamosa, CO

Next Roundtable Meeting: June 13, 2017 at 2:00pm  
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