

Interbasin Compact Committee
Southwest Basins Roundtable Meeting
Durango Recreation Center
Durango, Colorado
April 12, 2017

Members Present:

Sonny Frasier	Dolores Municipalities	Al Pfister	San Juan WCD
Karen Guglielmono	San Miguel Municipalities	Mike Preston	At Large Member
Steve Harris	Legislative Appointee	Jenny Russell	San Miguel County
Celene Hawkins	At-Large Member	Don Schwindt	Dolores WCD
Megan Holcomb	CWCB	Charles Smith	San Juan County
Dan Huntington	La Plata CD	Doug Stowe	Dolores County
Tim Hunter	Recreational Representative	Ed Tolen	At Large Member
Greg Johnson	CWCB	John Taylor	Hinsdale County
Brandon Johnson	At-Large Member		
Eric Kuhn	River District	Mely Whiting	Trout Unlimited
James Lambert	Montezuma County	Bruce Whitehead	Animas-La Plata WCD
Carrie Lile	Domestic Water Representative	Bob Wolff	SW Water Conservation District
Ann Oliver	At Large Member	Ed Zink	La Plata County

Public:

Guy Stees (Big Stick Ditch Company), Troy (Big Stick Ditch Company), Steve Fearn (Colorado Water Congress), Bill Frownfelter (Russell Planning & Engineering), Buck Skillen (Public), Ryan Unterreiner (Colorado Parks & Wildlife), Mike Weist (Public), David Graf (Colorado Parks and Wildlife), Travis Wheeler (Southern Ute Indian Tribe), Kate Greenberg (National Young Farmers Coalition), Shannon Manfredi (Animas Rivers Community Forum), Jordan Dimick (SGM, Inc), Ellen Roberts (Former State Senator), Louis Meyer (SGM, Inc.), Peter Orego (Ute Mountain Ute Tribe) and Gina Espeland (Recorder)

Introductions & Review Agenda

Chairman Mike Preston called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Introductions were made.

1. Administrative Reports

Minutes Review and Approval

Minutes from January 11, 2017 were approved. Roundtable meeting documents and other files for reference are housed online for public and Roundtable use at <http://swwcd.org/resources/southwest-basin-roundtable>.

Officer and IBCC Representative Reports

Bruce Whitehead said that the IBCC had nothing to report. Bruce reported that the CWCB Projects Bill appears moving forward as expected. Steve indicated that the bill will include \$10 million for the water supply reserve account, \$3 million of which will go to the Basin Fund accounts. This will be confirmed when the legislation is passes and is signed into law.

Basin WSRF Fund Balance

The fund balance was approximately \$237,305 (Accounts for \$50K Norwood, \$20K McElmo Flume, and \$7,500 Northstar).

2. Update PEPO and Water Information Program

Ed Tolen (PEPO Liaison) presented the Public Education, Outreach, and Participation Action Plan. The Roundtable approved an education action plan back in November but CWCB asked for a revisions reflecting refinements in the PEPO process. There will be a handout that describes how the money can be spent prior to June. The changes in the Plan proposed by Ed were accepted by unanimous consent.

Ed announced that Elaine Chick is the new Water Information Program Coordinator. She is already fast at work on the Children's Water Festival. Elaine brings decades of event coordination experience and a desire to collaborate with our many partners to continue delivering quality water education to southwestern Colorado. Welcome, Elaine.

3. Report from San Miguel Stream Management Plan Workshop

Seth of Lotic Hydrological presented the San Miguel Pilot Project: Phase 1, which is wrapping up. The Stream Pilot is an effort to identify recreational and environmental needs and gaps in the San Miguel Watershed. The San Miguel Watershed Pilot may provide a template for similar work in other SWBRT sub-basins. The Stream Management Planning Model purpose and scope includes: assess existing conditions, determine goals and ID opportunities to evaluate implementation potential. Key attributes under Environmental Assessment are Channel Dynamics, Riparian Health and Aquatic Habitat. In the aquatic habitat, R2-cross was applied. The Recreational Assessment was completed with the help of American Whitewater with key attributes: Whitewater, and Angling.

Jenny Russell previewed Phase 2 of the pilot which will involve stakeholders in identifying opportunities to align and address stakeholder goals. Jenny stated that they have worked closely of the San Miguel Watershed Coalition and identified stakeholders including the Federal and State Agencies. There have been meetings with the stakeholders including ditch companies on the San Miguel to talk about the process and what was going to come out of it. There will be a series of meetings with stakeholders and public to make sure that all getting have access to the information and opportunities for feedback. Mike has offered to help with the initial public meeting to orient stakeholders, and talk about opportunities to align in addressing the agreed upon needs and opportunities related to Phase 1 of the Pilot.

Al Pfister stated in the San Juan Sub-Basin, they are interested in going forward with a stream management plan and have talked with CWCB applying for funds allocated to Stream Management Plans. Mike asked Al to keep the Roundtable informed as they move forward and to feel free to borrow and learn from the San Miguel Pilot as they set their objectives and methods.

4. Update Colorado River Development and Curtailment Risk Study

Mike referenced the letter posted from the Roundtable Chairs and the two Conservation Districts (Southwestern and CRD) to get the next phase of the West Slope Risk Assessment, approved. Eric Kuhn stated the CWCB did approve the Risk Assessment. The Assessment Framework will begin to quantify existing uses and a reasonable level of future West Slope development as a tool to help avoid involuntary curtailment. The Curtailment Risk Study does not include a new transmountain diversion in keeping with the "Conceptual Framework: Principle 4 beginning on 8-13 in the Colorado Water Plan. Separate elements in the Conceptual Framework address TMDs.

Eric and Bruce Whitehead indicated that negotiations to gain approval for this next phase of the Curtailment Risk Study resulted in continued transparency to interested parties on the Front Range via technical webinars, participation by CWCB in helping to frame and support the Assessment, while insuring protection of and sensitive information relative to compact negotiations with other states. Steve Harris suggested that it may be time for another joint West Slope Roundtable meeting to follow on a similar meeting in 2014 where the Risk Study concept was formulated.

5. Next Round of SWSI

Greg Johnson introduced Megan Holcomb who started in January and is the new SWBRT liaison. Greg reported that CWCB has selected contractors to update SWSI so as to provide a relatively uniform platform for organizing and evaluating technical data relative to water supply, demand, and related water supply gaps, now and in the future. The SWSI Analysis will inform future BIP and CWP refinement. It will be a 3 phase process. Phase I – 1a Methodology Development and 1b data and info collection and review. Phase 2 – technical review and analyses and Phase 3 reporting in Q1 2018. There was discussion on the methodologies and how to keep Roundtables informed so they can provide input and make the most of the finished SWSI products. Mike asked for regular concise updates to Roundtables.

6. Open Discussion – Implementation of Southwest Basin Implementation Plan

Mike asked Roundtable members to think about items in the Basin Implementation Plan that warrant special focus and attention by the Roundtable. We need to keep this question in the forefront. Mike stated that he would like to see incentives for irrigation and municipal efficiency brought into sharper focus. Mely stated that there were questions concerning water quality that need to be considered. Greg stated that they are trying to bring water quality into the methodology. Ann stated that Implementation Issues will be included in their Waterplan handbook.

Ann Oliver stated that since July 2015 when the BIP was finalized the Roundtable has approved WSRA funding for a number of IPPs involving several SWBRT sub-basins. These projects have include a mix of consumptive, non-consumptive and multi-benefit projects. Mike stated that there will be a discussion about BIP Implementaiton at every Roundtable meeting going forward.

7. Sharing Success Stories – Completed Projects with WSRA Funding

Mountain Village Water Line – Bill Frownfelter with Russell Engineering worked with the Town of Mountain Village with a WRSF grant two years ago that extended water service lines and greatly improved fire flow. SWBRT contributed \$30K to this project which leveraged a variety of other funding sources. Bill thanked the Roundtable on behalf of Mountain Village for the benefit of the WSRA contribution.

Ed Tolen on the La Plata Archuleta Water District – Roundtable funds supported the The Master Plan which helped kick off the successful establishment of the District and accelerated the building of infrastructure vital to the water needs that the District was established to serve. The District now has a mil levy, tap holders and plans for further expansion into the service area of the District.

Megan Holcomb stated that a revised WSRF application is being developed to more streamlined and informative to applicants.

8. Review of WSRF Applications and Concept Proposals

WSRF Application: Animas River Community Forum, Shannon Manfredi and Ellen Roberts

Shannon Manfredi presented the application for \$28,919 from the Basin Account in support of the Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) as they continue to work through the impacts of the Gold King Mine spill, and be prepared for future incidents that both effect and unite the communities. The ARCH is striving to complete the Animas River Report Card, fine-tune communication and response networks, define education needs, and attain and interpret coordinated watershed data. Through these actions, Animas River Community Forum (ARCF) will help communities along the Animas and others better understand the opportunities and consequences of this incident, improve our ability to respond in the future and assess the “state” of the Animas River water quality to inform collective action going forward.

Ellen Roberts stated stated that she wanted to take everyone back to the banks of the Animas River waiting for the slug to come down from Silverton. There were many people trying to figure out what to do, but a complete lack of readiness tomount a response and informing residents. A second year of ARCF funding will solidify the lessons learned and relationships to be prepared for future emergencies. Ellen said abandoned mines are a ticking time bomb all over the State, and she sees the ACRC findings and community response lessons as a resource to the entire State.

Ann Oliver recused herself because she is on the committee forum.

Ed Tolen stated that he supports the application, but asked how long grant funding would be needed. Shannon and Ellen replied that with one more year of support, participating communities will be in a positon to decide if and how to carry the forum forward.

Ann stated that an ARCF objective is to assess what monitoring information exists or does not exist on the Animas River including what concerns people have and what data exists to address those concerns. That data will be the basis for a report out to the public that they are referring to as a “report card.” Steve Harris moved to approve the WSRF request of \$28,919 from the Basin Account. Ed Tolan seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent with Ann Oliver Recusing.

WSRF Application: Lightner Creek Canal Improvement, Big Stick Ditch Company

Guy Stees presented the application for \$30,000 in support of Lightner Creek Canal Improvement and Water Efficiency. The Lightner Creek Canal is an earthen ditch with an absolute water right of ten cubic feet per second (cfs) for irrigation of 4,968 acres, domestic and storage uses (Priority No. 1966-60A). This delivery system experiences significant losses (greater than 70 percent) due to seepage.

The Big Stick Ditch Company proposes cleaning and re-grading the Lightner Creek Canal within its existing right of way from the Sawmill Canyon headgate to the La Plata River and lien sections of the canal with soil amendments of bentonite and lime with the existing clay soils on the ditch bottom and sides to help prevent seepage losses. In addition, portions of the ditch traveling through gravel and fractured rock will be treated with sac-crete to prevent further seepage. Five culvert pipes and hand-wheel controlled gates will be installed along the ditch to allow it to be drained during the winter months, helping to prevent ditch backup and erosion.

There were questions on the continued maintenance on the upgrade. Bruce Whitehead stated that it is an older ditch and needs a lot of work to bring more water into the system. Bruce Whitehead moved to approve the WSRT request of \$30,000 from the Basin Account. Ed Tolan seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

WSRF Concept Proposal: Interactive Water Exhibit: Investing in the Future of Western Colorado Kids, John McConnell Math and Science Center

Jennifer Moore, John McConnel Math and Science Center, presented the concept proposal for approximately \$10,000 to support the new interactive water exhibit. The exhibit as proposed by Reynold’s polymer has an estimated cost of \$233,000. The Southwest Roundtable would be joining the Colorado Basin Roundtable, the Gunnison Basin Roundtable, the Colorado River District, Ute Water and Clifton Water in sponsoring this exhibit.

In recognition of this gift, the John McConnell Math and Science Center would like to name the new hydrology exhibit in honor of Roundtable investments in the new facility. As the focal point of the new building the hydrology exhibit would receive more than 17,000 visitors a year and will be an interactive water table with multiple hands on tanks that demonstrate principles of hydrology, river dynamics, water cycle, agriculture and municipal use, conservation and water law for kids and parents of all ages to enjoy and learn.

The John McConnell Math and Science Center has been inspiring western Colorado students for over 25 years. From humble beginnings in the back of one man’s car, to now serving thousands of students, the Math and Science Center is changing the lives of our youth, one science experiment at a time. Jennifer stated that they are going to all the west slope roundtables for support. Ed Tolan stated that he gives his support and recommendation to return with a full application. Bruce Whitehead agreed and the Roundtable assented to a full application.

9. Upcoming Events

SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	July 12	Cortez	Dolores WCD
SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	October 11	Durango	Durango Public Library
SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	January 10	Cortez	Dolores WCD

10. Adjournment

Chairman Mike Preston adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.