

Interbasin Compact Committee  
**Southwest Basins Roundtable Meeting**  
Dolores Water Conservancy District  
Cortez, Colorado  
January 10, 2018

**Members Present:**

John Ey	Florida WCD	Carrie Padgett	Domestic Water Representative
Sonny Frasier	Dolores Municipalities	Al Pfister	San Juan WCD
Karen Guglielmone	San Miguel Municipalities	Sarah Pisano	Montrose County (by phone)
Steve Harris	Legislative Appointee	Mike Preston	At Large Member
Celene Hawkins	CWCB Representative	Don Schwindt	Dolores WCD
Tim Hunter	Recreational Representative	Charlie Smith	San Juan County
Phil Johnson	Montezuma Municipalities	Ed Tolen	At Large Member
Brandon Johnson	At Large Member	Bruce Whitehead	Animas-La Plata WCD
Eric Kuhn	River District	Mely Whiting	At Large Member
James Lambert	Montezuma County	Bob Wolff	Southwestern WCD
Ann Oliver	At Large Member	Ed Zink	La Plata County

**Public:**

Tom Brossia (Ducks Unlimited), Matt Clark (Trout Unlimited), Ken Curtis (Dolores WCD), Kari Distefaro (Town of Rico), Glen Fish (Dolores WCD), Pete Foster (Wright Water Engineers), Bill Frownfelter (Russell Planning & Engineering), Mark Garcia (Town of Ignacio), Kenny Heldman (Colorado Cooperative Company), Megan Holcomb (CWCB Liaison), Ann McCoy-Harold (U.S. Senator Cory Gardner), Jim Mimiaga (Cortez Journal), Aaron Kimple (Mountain Studies Institute), Kristina Kline (Bird Conservancy of the Rockies), Godwin Oliver (Dolores WCD), Doug Pickering (Colorado Division of Water Resources), Jason Roudebush (Ducks Unlimited), Jeremy Schulz (Town of Ignacio), Ethan Scott (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation), Buck Skillen (Five Rivers Trout Unlimited), Bruce Smart (Dolores WCD), Laura Spann (SW Water Conservation District, Recorder), Andrew Straub (Southern Ute Indian Tribe), Robert Stump (U.S. Bureau of Reclamation), Aimee Tooker (Colorado Cooperative Company), Ryan Unterreiner (Colorado Parks & Wildlife), David Varner (Tamarisk Coalition), Jerry Zink (Animas Air Park)

**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 October 11, 2017 were approved with one correction to change the name of the San Miguel Stream Management Plan to Environmental and Recreational Needs Assessment. 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**

Celene Hawkins, CWCB Board Member, reported that the next CWCB meeting will be held in conjunction with the Colorado Water Congress Annual Conference in late January. Among the principal concerns before the CWCB is the decline in severance tax revenues, which Megan Holcomb will address later in the meeting.

**Basin WSRF Fund Balance**

The fund balance was approximately \$496,617.

**2. Election of Officers, IBCC Reps, Vacant At-Large Seat (April 2018 Meeting)**

At the April 11 meeting at the Durango Recreation Center, the Roundtable will elect officers and IBCC representatives. Once Celene Hawkins' position on the CWCB Board is confirmed by the Colorado legislature, Celene will become the CWCB Representative to the Southwest Basin Roundtable, and will no longer be an At-Large member. Therefore, her At Large seat will be vacant. Public notices soliciting interested applicants will be published in area newspapers in early March, with applications due the first week of April.

### **3. Success Story – Redburn Ranch Diversion Structure**

Matt Clark, Trout Unlimited, reported on the completed replacement of the cobble push-up diversion dam on the Dolores River above Redburn Ranch on U.S. Forest Service land. Due to its disrepair, the porous push-up dam was a poor diversion structure and also acted as a fish barrier for several months of the year. Thanks to funding from the Roundtable, SWCD, NRCS, Trout Unlimited and the landowner, the diversion structure has been relocated and rehabilitated. Restoration work has been completed along the banks. The diversion structure no longer has to be rebuilt each irrigation season and the fish pass easily now. Overall, this multi-purpose project was a success. In addition, the project came in \$30,000 under budget.

### **4. Input on San Miguel Environmental and Recreational Needs Assessment**

On behalf of the Colorado Cooperative Ditch Company, the Farmers Water Development Company, Lone Cone Reservoir Company, Aimee Tooker and Kenny Heldman expressed concerns that water users in the lower San Miguel basin were not adequately consulted in the initial drafting of the San Miguel Environmental and Recreational Needs Assessment. The CC Ditch Company submitted a letter highlighting these concerns to the SW Water Conservation District, which was provided to the Roundtable Chair. On behalf of the Roundtable, Mike wrote a letter of response to describe how those concerns had been incorporated in the draft plan and what steps were being taken to rectify concerns going forward. Mely Whiting spoke on behalf of the pilot project proponents and described the process to work through the Roundtable member subcommittee to begin the assessment, then review it with the community with the goal of identifying projects to complete moving forward with stakeholder consensus. One lesson learned is that relying on Roundtable representation of all stakeholders at the start of the effort was not sufficient. Currently, comments on the draft assessment are being processed and addressed as part of the review. Mely invited the public to provide additional comments. Interested stakeholders from the lower San Miguel basin were encouraged to fill the open seat from Montrose County Municipalities on the Southwest Basins Roundtable.

### **5. Future Role of IBCC, West Slope Caucus**

Steve Harris summarized discussion at the December IBCC meeting. The IBCC formed three subcommittees to 1) develop a “water 101” white paper for 2018 electoral candidates, specifically gubernatorial candidates, to ensure the political leadership going forward is versed in statewide perspectives on water, and 2) implement the seven point conceptual framework outlined in the state water plan, and 3) develop options to address long-term sustainable funding for water projects and protections going forward. IBCC may vet funding requests from each Roundtable and possibly prioritize projects based on available funding and water plan goals to address gaps. The next IBCC meeting is February 18. A West Slope Caucus call will be held on January 11, tomorrow. As part of that call, there will be discussion about the results of Phase II and planning for Phase III of the West Slope Risk Assessment study with the goal of minimizing intrastate conflict.

### **6. Colorado River Drought Contingency Plans**

Eric Kuhn, River District General Manager, will officially pass the torch to Andy Mueller in mid-January, but will continue as Colorado River issues advisor to River District and Southwest Basin Roundtable representative. Impacting Colorado River basin management is the gloomy forecast for this water year. Currently the forecasted inflow to Lake Powell is 50% of average, a loss of about 30 feet of elevation. A warm, dry spring is also likely in a La Nina weather pattern. The Upper Colorado River Commission’s drought contingency planning has included extended reservoir operations, supply augmentation (tamarisk removal and cloud seeding), and demand management (temporary fallowing). As part of Phase III of the West Slope Risk Assessment, there will be more basin-specific questions and modeling.

### **7. State Funding Update**

Megan Holcomb, CWCB Liaison, explained that as a result of the Colorado Supreme Court decision regarding severance tax dollars owed to BP, in addition to low commodity prices, there will be zero Tier II funding for entirety of fiscal year 2018-2019 and zero severance tax revenue beginning in January 2018 and extending through June 30, 2019. The Colorado Department of Natural Resources is currently exploring various options to address the funding shortfall and its ongoing implications. As a reminder, the 2017 CWCB Projects Bill did anticipate this funding gap and back-filled the WSRF with an additional \$10 million. It is possible the third disbursement of that back-fill fund (\$3

million remaining) may not be distributed on April 1 as anticipated, but spread out over a longer disbursement schedule or forfeited all together.

## **8. Funding Workshop Report Out and Discussion**

Ed Tolen summarized the high points of the water funding workshop held prior to today's meeting, including revisions to the Southwestern Water Conservation District grant program guidelines, how to utilize the CWCB's various grant programs, and a summary of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's WaterSmart program. The presentations will be available on the Southwest Basins Roundtable webpage.

## **9. Basin Implementation Plan**

### **Progress on Measurable Goals and Outcomes**

As part of the ongoing updates to the Identified Project and Process (IPP) list, Carrie Padgett and Ann Oliver developed a short form for proponents of IPP to fill out. These forms will then be presented to the Roundtable so that IPPs can be considered for inclusion in the list. Carrie and Ann also conducted a progress review of the Southwest Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) goals and measurable outcomes, which was presented to the Roundtable for review. Some of the measurable outcomes were not very "measurable," so for a future discussion and review of the BIP, it may be necessary to revise those.

### **Upcoming Workshops: CAWA and Stream Management Planning**

Carrie Padgett and Ann Oliver announced the Colorado Ag Water Alliance Workshops (Mancos – January 30 and Arriola – January 31) and the Stream Management Plans Workshop (February 15, 10am-2pm, Durango Recreation Center).

## **10. Review of WSRF Applications and Concept Proposals**

### **WSRF Application – Upper San Juan Stream Management Plan**

Aaron Kimple, Mountain Studies Institute, presented the WSRF application for \$22,545 from the Basin Account to begin formation of a workgroup in the Upper San Juan Basin. Phase I of the stream management plan project would be to bring together relevant stakeholders. This group, convened with the leadership of Mountain Studies Institute and Trout Unlimited, would develop an understanding of water needs, as well as identify and evaluate opportunities for cooperative management to meet the needs of diverse water community. Phase II will support a needs assessment related to the identified values and share outcomes with the watershed group. Phase III will identify projects and processes to support stream management with the watershed group and steering committee. The request is for Phase I, with an estimated total project cost of \$108,000. Ed Zink moved to approve the WSRF application for \$22,545 from the Basin Account. Karen Guglielmon seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

### **WSRF Application – Town of Rico Water System Analysis**

Kari Distefaro, Town of Rico, presented the WSRF application for \$30,000 from the Basin Account and \$30,000 from the Statewide Account to support an evaluation of the Town of Rico's water system, with the goal of increasing efficiency, quality and capacity. Currently, the Town of Rico cannot increase their use from the Dolores River due to the instream flow held by the CWCB, so redundancy in the system is needed. The evaluation would include a feasibility study to run both supply systems (one is currently unavailable) and upgrade plan to address a 42% water loss from the well system. A request for \$30,000 will also be considered by the Southwestern Water Conservation District. The total estimated project cost is \$120,000. Bruce Whitehead moved to approve the WSRF application for \$30,000 from the Basin Account and \$30,000 from the Statewide Account. Bob Wolff seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

### **WSRF Application – Sambrito Wetlands**

Jason Roudebush, Ducks Unlimited, and Ethan Scott, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, presented the WSRF application for \$75,000 from the Basin Account and \$170,000 from the Statewide Account to support replacing failing infrastructure to restore hydrology to existing wetland areas in the Sambrito Wetlands Complex spanning Colorado and New Mexico. The total project cost is estimated at \$229,717, with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation participating at \$154,717. There was significant Roundtable discussion. Ed Zink moved to approve the WSRF application for the reduced amount of \$50,000 from the Basin Account and \$170,000 from the Statewide Account, with the conditions

that 1) references to the yellow billed cuckoo be removed from the application, 2) long-term operation and maintenance be addressed, and 3) the benefits to Colorado be further highlighted. Ann Oliver seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

### **WSRF Application – Town of Ignacio Irrigation Utility Improvement Project**

Mark Garcia presented the WSRF application for \$48,750 from the Basin Account to improve the Town of Ignacio's raw water irrigation system with the completion of a water model and improvements plan. This water model will help the Town fully understand the system's capabilities and capacity, which is needed for potential improvements and future residential development. The improvements plan will be based on the water model, including some anticipated improved such as storage pond enhancements, system pressurization, pipeline looping improvements, and infiltration gallery improvements. The total project cost is \$130,000, with \$32,500 coming from the Town of Ignacio. Ed Tolen moved to approve the WSRF application for \$48,750 from the Basin Account, and encouraged the applicant to educate residents regarding less water intensive landscaping. Karen Guglielmone seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

### **WSRF Application – Florida Canal Diversion Structure Rehabilitation Project**

Pete Foster, Wright Water Engineers, presented the WSRF application from the Florida Consolidated Ditch Company for \$45,000 from the Basin Account and \$54,000 from the Statewide Account to support rehabilitation of the Florida Canal Diversion Structure. The diversion structure delivers pre-Compact irrigation water rights to the Florida Canal headgate for irrigation of 6,900 acres on the Florida Mesa. The current diversion structure is a low head dam that impedes upstream fish and aquatic organism passage. The total project cost is \$253,000. Steve Harris moved to approve the WSRF application for \$45,000 from the Basin Account and \$54,000 from the Statewide Account. Bob Wolff seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

### **WSRF Application – Animas Air Park Water Distribution System**

Jerry Zink presented the WSRF application for \$43,000 from the Basin Account to support the construction of municipal water line to serve commercial, industrial and residential properties along North Skylane Drive. This phase is 1335 feet of pipe with a tee and valve included for the next phase of extension. The City of Durango will pay for upsizing the line to 12" to have future capacity in the Animas Air Park distribution system for transmission of their ALP water from a future treatment plant at Basin Creek. The City will accept the design, inspect the construction, and include the pipeline into its municipal system. The total project cost is \$109,000. Bruce Whitehead moved to approve the WSRF application for \$43,000 from the Basin Account. Ed Tolen seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

### **Concept Proposal – Rural Ditch Companies and Urban Encroachment**

Ed Zink presented the concept proposal to generate a manual with a consistent set of concepts and tools for small to medium rural ditch companies to ensure their ability to keep their ditches operating smoothly in perpetuity in areas of rapid urbanization. There was consensus to encourage the Animas Consolidated Ditch Company to develop a full application for the Water Plan Implementation, Education and Innovation Grant Fund.

## **11. Upcoming Events**

SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	April 11	Durango	Durango Recreation Center
SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	July 11	Cortez	Dolores WCD
SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	October 10	Durango	Durango Public Library

## **12. Adjournment**

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