

Minutes of NPBRT Meeting: 1-18-18
USFS Conf. Room (7-9 PM) 100 Main Street, Walden, CO

Members/Liaisons Present

*Mike Allnutt
Deb Alpe
*Jim Baller
Paula Belcher
*Kent Crowder
*Blaine Evans
Debbi Heeney
*Randy Miller
*Carl Trick II
*Ty Wattenberg
*Rick Wyatt
Jeremiah Zamora

Members/Liaisons Absent

Pete Conovitz
*Scott Fischer
*Mike Honholz
*John Rich

*Barbara Vasquez
*Douglas Waldron

Others Present

Matt Blecha
Billy Gascoigne-DU
Craig Godbout
Scott Hoffner
Keith Holsinger
Erin Light
Joe Mahoney
Coy Meyring
Jason A Roudebush-DU
Josh Roth-ANWR
Matt Sinclair- CPW State Forest
Pat VanValkenburg
Caid Waldron
J Rick Wamsley
acob Wilse- CPW State Forest

I. Introductions/Agenda Review

Agenda was accepted as proposed.

Prior to the meeting commencing at 3 p.m., Kent stated that Scott Hoffner wanted to make a brief statement to the Roundtable. Scott reported that the WSRF project "Stambaugh Reservoir Outlet Repair" approved by the North Platte Basin was completed this fall (not sure it's totally done?). He shared the following link to a 30 minute video he created that documents the project including the installation of the cured in place pipe liner.

Stambaugh video link: (FYI-I actually confirmed this is a valid link and watched the video.)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4cVs6K4aUI_aUhQLUY5N2N1cWc/view?usp=sharing

II. Approval of Minutes for NPBRT 7-11-17 meeting

Approval of the minutes of the 7-11-17 meeting were postponed until the next Roundtable meeting to give board members more time to read them.

III. Discussion and vote on WSRF grant application for \$116,300 in Basin Account funds for the Jackson County Water Structure Improvement Project submitted by Owl Mountain Partnership - Debbi Heeney, District Conservationist, NRCS

Prior to discussion, Craig Godbout gave an update on the current WSRF balances noting that as of January 2018 the North Platte Basin Account fund balance is \$1,187,931 and the Statewide Account balance is appx \$2.2M. Craig also offered information on other Basins' Account balances. During the upcoming March CWCB meeting, Craig expects there will be almost \$2M in grant requests made to the Statewide Account. (Please review the attached WSRF Balance Summary for fund balance details.) In addition, Craig reminded the board that funds generated through Severance Taxes are significantly down and are expected to stay that way through the current and possibly the next fiscal year.

Grant discussion-OMP application

Debbi Heeney gave an overview description of the Owl Mountain Partnership "Jackson

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County Water Structure Improvement Project”, then answered a few questions about the project. Ty Wattenberg asked if there was a budget contingency plan and after some discussion, including Craig Godbout pointing out that procurement does not approve of the inclusion of contingencies, Debbi explained that she overestimated project expenses a bit on the high end so any unexpected higher project costs could be accommodated. Kent Crowder asked whether the project would create any new irrigated acres and Debbi responded that the project improves infrastructure for over 7,000 acres of currently irrigated hay and pasture land. She noted that on the Darcy Ditch, the soils are such that it is possible a few more acres may be more efficiently irrigated after the upgrades occur. With both Ty Wattenberg and Carl Trick recusing themselves from voting to avoid conflict of interest, the board proceeded to approved this project with 6 yes and 0 no votes.

IV. Presentation by Ducks Unlimited regarding North Park Conservation Projects with links to agriculture – Jason A. Roudebush, Water Resource Specialist and Billy Gascoigne

Economist/Emerging Markets Specialist with Ducks Unlimited introduced themselves and the work of Ducks Unlimited. They informed the Roundtable that they are interested in getting more projects on the ground in The North Platte Basin and plan to start attending our Roundtable meetings in order to better understand our priorities and get to know the community better.

They presented a slide show (attached) featuring some of Matt Reddy’s prior work in the North Platte Basin and emphasizing the types of opportunities and projects they would like to explore with landowners to conserve and enhance duck habitat in conjunction with improving and maintaining irrigated meadows. Bill Gascoigne explained that he is currently developing a \$1M NAWCA grant that, if funded, would provide opportunities for projects in the North Platte Basin. Ty Wattenberg asked if DU is interested in working with private landowners as well as their state and federal partners. Both Jason and Billy emphasized that they are definitely interested in pursuing projects with private landowners.

V. CWCB/IBCC - Ty Wattenberg, John Rich and Mike Allnutt
CWCB:

Ty said the CWCB was scheduled to meet next week, Jan 22-23 in Denver. Agenda items will include financial issues and discussion on the Severance Taxes, Colorado River Issues in the face of short snowpack this year, Water banking, Weather Modification, Water Plan Grants, and how to keep the WSRF Program viable.

Ty emphasized that the Severance Taxes are and always have been a volatile funding source and that the CWCB-IBCC will have to deal with this problem and that they will be considering various taxation strategies for future funding. He suggested that the North Platte Basin Roundtable board members should share their ideas with Mike Allnutt to take to the IBCC meetings.

He also noted that storage capacity across the state is still in good condition despite the lack of snowpack thus far and that the North Platte Basin is faring well snowpack wise compared to other parts of the state that are exceptionally low thus far during this water year.

IBCC:

Mike Allnut attended the November meeting but unfortunately couldn’t find his notes. Craig Godbout helped him out by reporting a few items discussed at the IBCC.

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John Stulp and Staff presented issues to pursue for the year, committees for each of which have been formed.

- 1) Draft letter to the gubernatorial candidates emphasizing water issues.
- 2) Conceptual Framework-"7 points of light"-next steps to develop.
- 3) Discuss and articulate new funding strategies.

VI. Old Business/New Business

Old:

Carl Trick commented on the North Park Lysimeter Project progress report submitted by Wendy Ryan, who now works for Colorado River Engineering. He expressed concerns about all the problems we've experienced and that we continue to experience with the lysimeters and that, despite the hard work Wendy continues to put in on the project to resolve all the multiple equipment and flooding issues that continue to arise, he is worried the project is basically a failure since we are not getting the data we intended to acquire because this equipment apparently doesn't work in flood irrigation conditions, even though the company where it was purchased indicated it would work for our project. Carl raised the question as to how we should proceed. He also noted that he was aware that Deb Alpe plans to retire from Extension and wonders if Erin Light will support the project by allowing Matt Blecha to help Wendy with the project as Deb has been doing. Discussion included possible discontinuation of the project so we wouldn't waste whatever funds are left which Craig reports are about \$100,000 remaining to be used by Dec 2019. Deb Alpe assists Wendy on site as well and indicated that we may have resolved the flooding issues having finally successfully plugged the leaks on the lysimeter outside cans. Other thoughts were finding a way to work with the company we bought the equipment from to assist us in adapting this equipment to work in flood conditions, but unfortunately that most likely will not happen since the company is in Germany. In addition, Erin Light described how the bucket lysimeter is finally working over at the Carpenter Ranch in Hayden and perhaps we might want to consider installing that type in North Park. Ty emphasized that it would not be advisable to try to change the nature of the grant work plan at this point. Deb will visit with Wendy about this discussion.

Kent asked Deb Alpe if there was anything happening with the Education Action Plan and Deb responded that since updating the EAP request for this fiscal year, she has not managed to organize a meeting but will try to do so. Deb mentioned that perhaps creating one or more video clips working with Christi Bode and Moxicran Media might be an idea since Christi indicated she still has tons of footage she could expound upon. This led to a general discussion of the value of social media in getting out consistent messaging regarding Colorado water issues. Ty emphasized that educating the public is one of the most important jobs of the IBCC and the Roundtables. Ty also suggested developing a video to educate people on the reality of the cost and resources needed to improve or develop storage. Deb Alpe promised to organize an Education Committee meeting in the near future. In addition, Deb will be retiring from her position as the CSU Extension Agent in Jackson County but she is interested in continuing her involvement with the Roundtable and the Education Committee.

New:

Cloud Seeding

The North Park Water Conservancy District met and discussed weather modification with Joe Busto and the State of Wyoming regarding potential airborne cloud seeding and the

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associated costs. Ty Wattenberg provided a presentation to the North Park Stockgrowers' during their Winter Meeting held in December. During the next couple of months they will likely be developing a WSRF proposal to the Roundtable for review.

VII. Date for the next meeting

The date for the next meeting was left open. Watch your email for date/time.