

Interbasin Compact Committee
Southwest Basins Roundtable Meeting
Durango Community Recreation Center
Durango, Colorado
April 11, 2018

Members Present:

Ken Beegles	At Large Member	Al Pfister	San Juan WCD
Glen Fish	Dolores WCD	Mike Preston	At Large Member
Sonny Frasier	Dolores Municipalities	Doug Stowe	Dolores County
Karen Guglielmone	San Miguel Municipalities	John Taylor	Hinsdale County
Steve Harris	Legislative Appointee	Ed Tolen	At Large Member
Kenny Heldman	Montrose Municipalities	Val Valentine	At Large Member
Tim Hunter	Recreational Representative	Jim Wells	San Miguel WCD
Phil Johnson	Montezuma Municipalities	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
Carrie Padgett	Domestic Water Representative		

Public:

Steve Anders (U.S. Geological Survey), Ken Beck (Pine River Irrigation District), Ken Curtis (Dolores Water Conservancy District), Dave Eppich (Southern Ute Indian Tribe), Steve Fearn (Colorado Water Congress), Bill Frownfelter (Russell Planning & Engineering), Tim Funk (Southern Ute Indian Tribe), Kate Greenberg (National Young Farmers Coalition), Megan Holcomb (Colorado Water Conservation Board), Emily Kasyon (Southwest Conservation Corps), Amanda Kuenzi (Mountain Studies Institute), Paul Panther (Last Dollar Ranch), Duncan Rose (Trout Unlimited), Russ Sands (Colorado Water Conservation Board), Don Schwindt (Dolores Water Conservancy District), Buck Skillen (Five River Trout Unlimited), Brent Gardner-Smith (Aspen Journalism), Laura Spann (SW Water Conservation District, Recorder), Travis Stovall (National Young Farmers Coalition), Andrew Straub (Southern Ute Indian Tribe), Brad Switzer (Last Dollar Ranch), Ryan Unterreiner (Colorado Parks & Wildlife)

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 10, 2018 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

Roundtable officer elections will take place in July. Chair Mike Preston would like to step down soon. He was willing to either step down in July or serve another two-year term while training the first vice-chair to take over as chair. There was a proposal to designate IBCC representative alternates, in addition to IBCC representatives. Officer elections will go forward in July, with the possible advertising of a vacant At-Large seat, should Celene Hawkins be confirmed by the legislature as CWCB board member.

Basin WSRF Fund Balance

The fund balance was approximately \$257,322. All projects approved by the Roundtable were funded by CWCB at their March meeting.

2. West Slope Caucus – April 25, Ute Water, Grand Junction

The West Slope Caucus meeting on April 25 starts at 10 am at Ute Water Conservancy District in Grand Junction. At least 15 roundtable members and public expressed interest in attending.

3. Colorado River Risk Assessment Webinar, Path Forward

Before today's Roundtable meeting, John Carron (Hydros Consulting) led a webinar explaining the results of Phase II of the Risk Assessment Study. Eric Kuhn provided background on Phases I and II of the Risk Assessment Study funded by the West Slope Roundtables, the River District, and the SW Water Conservation District. Phase I looked at how often Lake Powell reaches critical elevation levels. Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) reservoirs extended drought operations reduce the risk, but in more severe droughts, demand management could be necessary to maintain critical elevations, and some of those volumes needed are large. Phase II successfully showed that StateMod and CRSS can be used together to answer specific questions about demand management under the external driver of Lake Powell operations. Phase III of the study could evaluate policy options and questions the West Slope Roundtables would like answered, which will be discussed further at the West Slope Caucus meeting. Eric Kuhn commented that this study is meant to inform policy decisions to be made by entities such as the River District, SWCD, and the CWCB. Webinar attendees reported out on the discussion, and further reviewed the Roundtable's role in drought planning. Some questions posed during the discussion were: what are the potential impacts for individual water users/projects? How will basin-specific impacts be evaluated in Phase III? How can we measure what demand management produces in "conserved" water? How much does the Western Slope want to reduce its risk? How much can we reduce our risk? CWCB staff will be presenting to individual Roundtables regarding drought contingency planning.

4. Future Role of IBCC

Since late 2017, the IBCC has been working on the following three efforts:

Conceptual Framework

Bruce Whitehead summarized activities of the IBCC subcommittee focused on point four of the conceptual framework for transmountain diversions. The group is discussing how water projects will be considered and garner statewide support, staying within the conceptual framework agreed upon as part of the state water plan.

Candidate Letter Task Group

Bruce Whitehead directed Roundtable members to the letter developed by the IBCC for 2018 candidates for elected office. The letter is a one-page summary describing the Roundtables and the water plan. There was Roundtable discussion regarding the distribution of the letter, including to local county and municipal candidates. Roundtable members were also invited to distribute the letter.

Funding Concepts Task Group

Steve Harris summarized recent discussion of the IBCC subcommittee focused on providing major state water-related funding in the millions of dollars annually. Potential ideas have been a bottle fee or designated sales tax revenue.

The next IBCC meeting will be held in Keystone on May 2.

5. CWCB Update

WSRF, Water Plan Implementation Funding Outlook

Megan Holcomb announced three new CWCB staff. There isn't enough severance tax revenue to cover Tier I programs or CWCB operations. To address this shortfall, the legislature has proposed HB 1338 to transfer \$30 million from the general fund. WSRF would receive \$2 million for FY2019. The proposed CWCB Projects Bill adds seven million to the water plan implementation grant program (\$3 million to storage, \$1 million to agricultural projects, \$1 million to conservation, \$1.5 million for environmental and recreation, and \$500,000 for education). A stable revenue source for state water project funding is a desperate need. Stream management planning funds may be used for planning efforts, as well as projects that result from the plans.

SW Basin Roundtable Funding Requests Limit

Roundtable members discussed how to manage the remaining \$257,322 in the WSRF Basin Account, as requests may soon exceed the available funding. There was Roundtable consensus to make the following adjustments to future funding consideration:

1. WSRF proposals will only be considered for funding approval in July and January which aligns with the schedule for consideration of Statewide funding requests.

2. WSRF Basin funding requests will be limited to \$25K so as to be able to cover more requests while WSRF funds remain scarce.
3. There is \$7 million in additional funding in the Projects Bill for the Water Plan Implementation grant categories. These requests do not require Roundtable approval but benefit from a letter of support signed by the Roundtable Chair.
4. Concept Proposals are welcome at all Roundtable meetings, as a step towards a full WSRF proposal (January and July), and to present a Water Plan Implementation Grant proposal for which a letter of support from the Chair will be requested.

Statewide Water Supply Initiative Update

Small technical advisory groups were formed to evaluate the methodology for each section of the Statewide Water Supply Initiative update. CWCB anticipates interim deliverables by December 2018, with the full final report available in 2019. Any questions regarding the factsheets can be directed to Megan. The CWCB expects SWSI to be a useful tool for each Roundtable. The next CWCB Water Availability Task Force call will be held on April 19.

6. Overview South Platte Storage Evaluation

Steve Harris summarized conclusions of the South Platte Storage Evaluation, initiated as a result of HB16-1256. The bill authorized the CWCB, the State Engineer, and relevant Roundtables to evaluate storage possibilities in the Lower South Platte river basin. Among the salient findings were: 1) between 1996 and 2015, an annual median of 293,000 af was delivered to Nebraska in excess of the South Platte Compact; 2) available water is much more at the stateline, which would encourage the idea of a large lower basin reservoir; 3) a large mainstem reservoir is the most cost effective and efficient, but the permitting hurdles make it infeasible; so 4) many off-channel storage options are feasible, if costly; and 5) many combinations of upper and lower basin storage options provide significantly more benefit than individual options. There was Roundtable discussion regarding the study results, and members were referred to the executive summary in their packet.

7. San Miguel Stream Management Pilot Update

Mely Whiting reported that Kenny Heldman and Celene Hawkins will serve as co-chairs for the stakeholder group for Phase II of the San Miguel Stream Management Plan. Carrie Padgett and Ann Oliver are drafting a grant to support a facilitated Phase II stakeholder group process. Remaining funds from the Phase I grant will also be used.

8. Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) Update

Report on Workshops: CAWA & Stream Management Planning

Carrie Padgett and Ann Oliver reported on the Colorado Water Ag Alliance and Stream Management Planning workshops held in January and February. All were well attended, with more than 30 participants. Topics identified in the BIP measureable outcomes for fostering further education include reuse, land use planning, and ditch urbanization.

Agricultural Education and Outreach Tool

Carrie reported on the development of a ditch company manual to address issues of urbanization and ditch company management. Roundtable members suggested holding workshops with ditch companies across the basin prior to developing the manual to garner interest in the effort and gather information.

9. Review of WSRF Applications and Concept Proposals

Concept Proposal – Willow Creek Lake

Paul Panther presented the concept proposal for an impoundment in the Willow Creek drainage on Hastings Mesa, located on private property. Current design proposals range from storage of 143 to 228 acre-feet. Agricultural, environmental, and recreational uses are all being contemplated. Construction engineering, water rights issues, environmental impacts, and preliminary design all needs to be completed. The presenter requested a letter of support for the project, and was not requesting funding. Roundtable members requested more information. There was consensus to encourage the applicant to add the proposed Willow Creek Lake project to the IPP list.

Concept Proposal – Animas River Phreatophyte Removal and Replacement Program

Amanda Kuenzi and Emily Kasyon presented the request for a letter of support from the Roundtable for the Animas River Invasive Phreatophyte Program, Phase II application to the CWCB Watershed Restoration Grant program. In Phase I, (2016-2017), Mountain Studies Institute and Southwest Conservation Corps removed 288.32 acres of Russian olive and 2.71 acres of tamarisk, conducted numerous presentations and coordinated with local landowners. Nearly four acres of willows were planted in their place. For Phase II, MSI and SCC are working with the City of Durango and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe for phreatophyte removal in the Bodo Park area. There was consensus for the Roundtable to submit a letter of support the Animas River Phreatophyte Removal and Replacement Program. Roundtable members requested that any letters of support submitted since the last meeting be provided as copies at the meeting in addition to being posted on the webpage.

Concept Proposal – Dolores River Stream Temperature Assessment

Duncan Rose presented the concept proposal to request \$5,000 to support their multi-year assessment of stream water temperatures in the upper Dolores River basin for the purpose of assisting in the protection of trout habitat. This assessment will compare data results with Colorado water temperature criteria for habitat protection, determine if there is in-location and upstream refuge for trout from warming waters, and use the data in computer modeling to predict temperatures in unmeasured waters (Dolores basins streams). There was consensus to direct Trout Unlimited to coordinate directly with CWCB to seek streamlined funding sources for this smaller request, or if necessary, submit a full WRSF application for consideration in July.

10. Upcoming Events

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

11. Adjournment

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