

Minutes of NPBRT Meeting: 3-27-18
USFS Conf. Room (3-5 PM) 100 Main Street, Walden, CO

Members/Liaisons Present

*Mike Allnutt
Deb Alpe
*Jim Baller
Paula Belcher
*Kent Crowder
*Blaine Evans
*Randy Miller (joined at end)
*Carl Trick II
Pat VanValkenburg
*Barbara Vasquez
*Ty Wattenberg
Tara Wertz
*Rick Wyatt

Members/Liaisons Absent

Pete Conovitz
*Scott Fischer
Debbi Heeney
*Mike Honholz
*John Rich
*Douglas Waldron
Jeremiah Zamora

Others Present

Matt Blecha
Craig Godbout
Caid Waldron

I. Introductions/Agenda Review

Agenda was accepted as proposed. Kent introduced Pat VanValkenburg as an agricultural user with a water right who would like to become a member of NPBRT. He was voted onto the round table and participated in the meeting as a voting member.

II. Approval of Minutes for NPBRT 7-11-17 & 1-18-18 meetings

The minutes of the 7-11-17 & 1-18-18 meetings were approved with minor corrections.

III. Discussion and Vote on WSRF Grant Application for \$150,000 in Basin Account Funds for the North Platte Basin Airborne Cloud Seeding Project Submitted by the Jackson County Water Conservancy District, Kent Crowder, President Jackson County Water Conservation District

Prior to discussion of the grant application, Barbara projected the current WSRF balances. The North Platte Basin has a balance of \$1,071,631, which reflects the approval of the OMP WSRF grant application forwarded by NPBRT in January and approved for funding by CWCB at their March meeting.

Grant application- Kent Crowder

Kent reviewed the key elements of the grant proposal for a 3-year cloud seeding program to be conducted as an extension of the Wyoming Water Development Office cloud seeding program in the Sierra Madre/Medicine Bow Mountains in southern WY. The seeding operations will be conducted aurally over the Never Summer Range using a plane provided by Wyoming Water Development Office. Wyoming is just completing an RFP for selection of contractor for this project. CWCB Weather Modification Program will provide the use of their radiometer for the first year. One of the unknowns is the internet bandwidth required for communication from the radiometer to the contractor making the decision whether to deploy the plane for cloud seeding in a particular storm system. The Weather Modification Program will also conduct and report on the results in the target area (Never Summer SNOTEL site) compared to adjacent control areas, which could include Rawah, Joe Wright and Willow Creek SNOTEL sites. A Phase II Report for the Wyoming Water

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Development Office prepared by Weather Modification International entitled “Airborne Cloud Seeding in Northern Colorado as an Extension of Seeding Operations conducted for Southern Wyoming” and published in Feb 2018 was not reviewed at this meeting, but is attached with these minutes. It was commissioned by Wyoming, in conversation with the JCWCD and NPBRT members, to determine the feasibility and potential costs of extending their program into Colorado. It states that since this is an add-on to the Wyoming program and Colorado will be paying only for flight time and seeding agent, seeding will be done in Colorado only when weather conditions are favorable in CO but not in WY. Although there are other cloud seeding programs in CO, this would be the first aerial program. This program in the North Platte Basin in Colorado will require a permit from CWCB, which requires public notice of Intent to Modify Precipitation in the affected target area as well as adjacent counties, followed by a public hearing.

Following some further discussion of aerial seeding, the voting Roundtable Members were polled and the grant application was approved and will be forwarded to CWCB for a funding decision.

IV. North Platte Basin Roundtable Education Report Update - Deb Alpe, Education Liaison

Deb reported on the Education and Outreach Committee meeting held 3-13-18 with Deb Alpe, Kent Crowder, Ty Wattenburg, Carl Trick, Deb Heeney and Wade Allnutt present. The committee proposal is to have a public event called “Want Water” to extend our outreach and educate local citizens regarding the North Platte Basin Round Table, the WSRF opportunities, some of the nonconsumptive attributes in the basin and the connection between flood irrigation consumptive use and nonconsumptive attributes. The event will be held June 7 at the River Rock. There is a proposed speaker lineup in the notes attached to these minutes. In addition, Moxiecran has proposed created a short video (see attached proposal) out of the library of material generated last year. Ty suggested that Tara Wertz (USFWS) and someone from CPW should be invited to share information as well. There were multiple comments that any presentations should be short, with the goal of keeping the event social and interesting.

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

IBCC: Mike Allnutt said he was unable to attend. John Rich was not at this meeting. Craig Godbout gave a brief update from the latest IBCC meeting. The Conceptual Framework Task group and the Funding Task Group are working in parallel on potential future trans-basin diversion from the West slope to the Front Range. Craig mentioned that there will be a meeting on the West Slope on April 25 as well as one on June 13 on the East slope which are both open to other RT members and the public if you want to learn more.

CWCB:

Ty emphasized that the Severance Taxes are and always have been a volatile funding source. \$10M has been placed in the CWCB account but it cannot be used until the clock runs out (perhaps 6 months more?) on the window of time for oil and gas companies to claim more refunds on overpaid taxes. No more funding from severance taxes is expected for the rest of this year or next year. Funding for projects will have to come from the \$7M allocated for Water Plan Grants, \$2M for Watershed Health and Stream Management grants and \$2M for WSRF (instead of the \$10M/year in previous years).

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The legal challenges to the Glade Reservoir, which has been in plan for decades for north of Ted's Place on the Poudre, had a decision from the judge to allow continuation of the project while the lawsuit brought by "Save the Poudre" goes forward. One of the complications of this project is how to get the stored water to the newly designated mitigation areas.

Ty commented that if Powell drops below 2535ft, they can still draw water for users but cavitation starts to interfere with power generation.

VI. Old Business/New Business

Old:

Carl Trick commented on the North Park Lysimeter Project. Wendy Ryan has worked hard with the German manufacturer of the lysimeter to get them to send a technician to North Park to make the lysimeters work. Deb Alpe said the technicians' name is Steve Earnhardt and we should expect him late April/early May (date tbd). At the last NPBRT meeting, there was discussion about possible discontinuation of the project so we wouldn't waste whatever funds are left, which Craig reported were about \$100,000 remaining to be used by Dec 2019. If the lysimeter cannot be tweaked to provide the required data, Barbara suggested Wendy & Debby push the manufacturer for a refund!

Three-State Agreement: There was a meeting on 3/22/18, which resulted in a mutual decision by CO, WY & NE to extend the agreement for another 13years (out to 2032) without any changes in the terms.

Carl and Ty mentioned that the Million Project (pipeline from Flaming Gorge Reservoir in Utah to front range users) has resurfaced. He is now pitching a 70cfs project with the takeout below the dam.

New:

None

VII. Date for the next meeting

The date for the next meeting was left open, pending an anticipated WSRA grant application for Coyte Reservoir. Watch your email for date/time.