

**Inter Basin Compact Committee Basin Roundtables
Rio Grande Basin Roundtable**

MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, October 9, 2018 at 2:00 – 5:00 P.M.
San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District
623 Fourth Street,
Alamosa, CO 81101

In the absence of Chairman Nathan Coombs, Cindy Medina acted as the facilitator for the meeting. Medina called the meeting to order at 2:01 pm.

Those present/signed in: Judy Lopez, Ron Brink, Cleave Simpson, Keith Holland, Hannah Thill, Kelley Baily, Brenda Anderson, Ed Nielsen, Megan Holcomb, Russ Sands, Cindy Medina, Stan Moyer, Donald Valdez, Travis Smith, Charlie Speilman, Chuck Finnegan, Virginia Christensen, Patrick O'Neill, Kate Zeigler, Victoria Blumenberg, Peter Donovan, Mario Curto, Cary Aloia, Erin Minks, Wayne Schwab, Don Thompson, Benda Felmler, Rio de la Vista, David Warsh, Matthew E Galleger, Steve Crosby, Sheldon Rockey, Ann Bunting, Karla Shriver, Jim Ehrlich, Craig Cotten, Peter Clark, JoAnn Slivka, Gene Farish, and Nicole Langley.

Nathan Coombs, Emma Reesor, Heather Dutton, Bethany Howell, Gwen Nelson, and Ronda Lobato had excused absences.

Approve Agenda

Cleave Simpson proposed a subdistrict and Mosca Hooper update be added after agenda item 6. Ed Nielsen moved to approve the agenda with the amendment and Ron Brink seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Approve September 11, 2018 Minutes

Judy Lopez moved to approve the minutes for meeting on September 11 and was seconded by Wayne Schwab. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

Charles Spielman shared his thoughts after attending a Rio Grande City EDC meeting and Cleave Simpson's presentation of "A Tale of Two Rivers". He made the point that the Rio Grande Basin's agricultural economic input has reached its practical maximum contribution. Improvements to efficiency can be made, however, future economic improvements and growth will need to come from other industries and businesses.

Rio de la Vista commented that the "Tales of Two Rivers" presentation mentioned by Charlie has a video that will be available soon on YouTube.

Medina closed public comment.

Funding Request: *Recharge Zone Mapping Project, Patrick O'Neill, Mosca-Hooper Conservation District*

With members having more time to review the funding request application, Medina turned it over to Patrick O'Neill and Kate Zeigler to field final questions before voting. They went on to clarify that the budget was not revised to include electronic logging devices brought up in the previous meeting. However, they are willing to consider them in the future if funding becomes available.

Questions were raised about the starting location of the project. O'Neill clarified that the pilot project is looking first within the Mosca Hooper conservation district focusing on active pumping wells in the unconfined aquifer. They have not identified which township to begin, but are in conversation on which location will be most optimal. Their decision will be based on voluntary participation of landowners and by examining well data to find good geological control.

Rio de la Vista moved for a vote on approving funding for the project. Ron Brink seconded. Charles Spielman abstained from voting on the notion that the project does not include e-logs in drill holes.

The funding request was approved unanimously, with one abstention (Charlie Spielman).

Statewide Water Supply Initiative (SWSI) and Basin Roundtable Planning Update: Russ Sands, CWCB

Russ Sands presented SWSI's technical update to the Colorado Water Plan as part of an informative tour to all Roundtables. The new update is aimed to complement the Colorado Water Plan (CWP) and Basin Implementation Plans (BIPs) as well as include scenario planning models, more rigorous hydrology models, and refined methodology and data sets. This new iteration's goal is for the information to be presented in a concise and understandable manner, integrate feedback from Roundtables, and to provide a toolbox of data to inform the CWP and BIPs. Some of the new data sets included are the municipal water demand of each basin and conservation data which will allow for more robust assessments of future water availability. However, the information is still a work in progress as there were many misconnections in data. For example, the municipal demand projection had the Rio Grande water demand per person almost twice the amount the metro area. Cleve Simpson interjected that the discrepancy could be due dividing the number of people by all water pumped from municipalities, some of which was not consumed by humans.

The SWSI update is on phase one, methodology review and development. Next spring, they will begin phase two, technical evaluations, and form an implementation working group that will include 3 members from each roundtable. The last phase, reporting, will happen next fall where they hope to hold a statewide summit in September before moving into BIP updates. A few members suggested the summit should be in October to accommodate harvest schedules.

For more information and to view SWSI factsheets visit the CWCB website or go to:
<http://cwcb.state.co.us/water-management/water-supply-planning/Pages/SWSIUpdate.aspx>

Subdistrict Update: *Cleave Simpson, RGWCD*

Cleave Simpson began his update by demonstrating how to access the unconfined aquifer graph online. It can be found by going to rgwcd.org and then clicking on *well information*. The page contains three graphs of the confined aquifer study area, mostly within subdistrict 1, and is updated every month. Simpson highlighted the challenge that Subdistrict 1 is facing with a 900,000 AF deficiency to replace within the next twelve years. Subdistrict 1 board members have a meeting October 17th to reach out to constituents for their thought and ideas.

Last week the order to create Subdistrict 6 was signed by Judge Swift. This will be the second largest subdistrict that contains around 800 confined wells in the Alamosa-La Jara response area. The board of directors will appoint the subdistricts board of managers next week. Last month the board had a meeting to adopt plans of water management which triggered a 10-day window for citizens file opposition to the district court. The 10 days have passed with no opposition.

Craig Cotten added that confined wells have seen improvement. Confined aquifer sustainability is uncertain, but an upcoming 10-year study will investigate the aquifer system.

Interbasin Compact Committee Update: *Cleave Simpson*

Simpson provided information on the IBCC meeting that will be held at Fort Lewis College in Durango at 9:30 am Thursday, October 18th. Topics will include a state drought briefing and the big river issues update.

The Keystone group, which has experience in fundraising, has been working to secure funds for the Colorado Water Plan. The group met with IBCC funding task group which has identified 5 categorical buckets of need, those being: healthy rivers, water quality, sustainable ag, conservation and efficiency, and infrastructure. As part of the conversation, the Keystone group suggested a 6th bucket titled Colorado Compact obligations, which lead Simpson to suggest healthy aquifers to be added as an additional bucket.

Division of Water Resources Update: Craig Cotten

Craig Cotten prefaced the update that the numbers this month are not happy due to the severity of the drought.

Reporting on the newest 10-day report, the Rio Grande annual flow forecast is 280,000 AF which is about 43% of the average flow of 650,000 AF. This year's compact obligation is 71,000 AF which has been exceeded.

On the Conejos system, predictions state 160,000 AF for the year which is 50% the average flow of around 300,000 AF. The system owes 25,000 AF towards the Compact.

The good news is that Colorado doesn't owe a great amount to the compact and the bad news is, due to lack of storage, water will continue to be paid to the southern states throughout the winter with an over delivery prediction of around 17000 AF. They are in conversation with water users to potentially extend the irrigation season to minimize over delivery. Water commissioners will be contacting people over the next several weeks about what to do with individual systems.

Cotten also gave a brief update on the new reservoir at Ortiz. It will be around 6000 net AF and benefit people on San Antonio River which runs dry most years.

This upcoming winter outlook is more hopeful. A weak El Nino year is predicted which brings more moisture to the southern US. However, SLV is on the border between north and south which leaves some uncertainty on how much southern precipitation we will receive.

Lastly, Cotten gave an update on the compact lawsuit, Texas vs New Mexico. It is currently moving toward a trial. The trial will focus on models created by each state, Colorado included, which may complicate decision making.

Colorado Water Conservation Board update: *Megan Holcomb, CWCB Staff*

Megan Holcomb had no additional comments and opened up for questions.

Upon request from Cleave, she gave an update on WSRF funding. WSRF funding is dependent on severance tax which has made predicting available roundtable funding difficult. They will shift the schedule to a year out to improve predictions. That means the projects bill would not happen at the same time as WSRF funding and separating them will create less uncertainty in funding.

With no more questions and comments, Cindy Medina adjourned the meeting at 3:47 pm.

Next Roundtable Meeting
Tuesday, December 13, 2018 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm
Calvillos Mexican Restaurant
400 Main St
Alamosa, CO 81101