



Arkansas Basin Roundtable

PLANNING OUR
WATER FUTURE

ROUNDTABLE MEETING NOTES

September 11, 2019 – Pueblo Community College, Pueblo, CO

www.arkansasbasin.com

Roundtable Business

Mark Shea called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm. Members and visitors introduced themselves. Twenty-three (23) members were present.

Approval of minutes of prior meeting

The meeting notes of the August meeting were approved by consensus.

Public Comment – none

REPORTS:

Executive Committee – Mark Shea

- The Request for Proposal process has begun for selecting a General Contractor (GC) for implementation of the BIP Update statewide. RT Chairs have been asked to participate in the selection process. September 25 will be the first meeting of the selection committee, on the first morning of the C9 Roundtable Summit. Each basin roundtable will have funds to hire a local expert that will work with that GC. The GC will likely be hired by the end of September. Will want input from the GC regarding our RFP for a local expert and the criteria for selection. We hope to have our local expert on-board by end of year or early January. BIP heavy work will occur during 2020, with finishing touches in 2021.
- Please review the Master Needs List, this will be our starting point for the BIP update.
- Mark has been participating in a new initiative started by USFS and the National Wild Turkey Federation. It's called the Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative and will focus on forest management and wildlife habitat work. They hope to choose one or two focus areas where they will aim to be transformational – increasing force and landscape scale in some areas of the state. Three locations are being considered, including the I-25 corridor along the central front range, the I-70 corridor through Summit County, and a location in SW Colorado. Stakeholders from these locations have been asked to put together proposals. Please follow up with Mark directly if you have questions or would like to hear more.

CWCB Report – Jack Goble, Ben Wade

- CWCB will meet next Wed & Thu in Alamosa. There will also be an annual finance meeting on the Tuesday prior. CWCB will review 12 WSRF grants totaling just over \$1 million for approval. Three of the grants are from the Arkansas Basin. \$307,000 will remain in our basin account if all three are approved.
- WSRF is funded by Severance Taxes. CWCB has backfilled the program with funds from elsewhere the last few years. It is fully funded from Severance Tax this year, which is good news. 40% distribution is in July, 30% in January, 30% in April.
- A bill has been approved that changes how funds are distributed. Funds are now distributed in arrears, after taxes have already been received. Funds will be more secure, and not called back.
- Regarding the Drought Management/Demand Management working groups. There will be a total of four workshops of each group.
- CWCB hired a new staff member, Amy Ostdiek. She's been an attorney for the AG's office. She'll oversee the coordination of Demand Management efforts.



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- The RFP for statewide BIP General Contractor is in motion. Deadline is next week.
- C9 Summit will be held September 25, 26 in Winter Park. The agenda has been published.
- There still are a couple of spots left on the Wednesday afternoon tours.
- There is also still limited funding for reimbursing costs for RT members who are traveling to the summit.

IBCC Report –Jeris Danielson

- The IBCC last met in July. October 23rd is the next meeting, which will be a joint meeting with CWCB.

PEPO – Amber Weber

- Huerfano Water Day – see pamphlet
- Putting together the demand management working group. Let her know by email or phone if you are interested in participating.
- Statewide water education plan was distributed, and Amber provided feedback.
- Several webisodes are still pending.

Needs Assessment – Mike Weber

- Brian MacPherson came and spoke about the ArkDSS project last month. They will be applying for a \$150,000 Water Smart grant from USBR and have asked the roundtable for a Letter of Support. The Needs Assessment Committee has reviewed the project and recommends saying yes to a letter of support. Mike asked the Roundtable for questions and for their support. The funds will be for expanding the Colors of Water and forecasting tool, as well as adding the Purgatoire River to the DSS.

This request for a letter of support was approved by consensus.

- Mark wanted to mention that he will likely be coming back for a letter of support regarding the Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative.
- The next round of WSRF grant apps are due by December 1st.

Environment/Recreation Committee – Bob Hamel, Rena Griggs

- We didn't meet in August.
- Chelsey and Bob met with Canon City Council regarding Black Hills, Oil Creek etc. They discovered that the projects get muddled together, and City Council members are skeptical and apprehensive of the Black Hills property. Could be many years down the road before a project is possible.
- BLM Eastern Colorado Resource Plan is complete. Comments are due by September 20th. Please read the Executive Summary and make comments if possible. Their preferred proposal is D, which could be harmful to watershed health.
- Water Forum committee would welcome new members. Let Bob know if you'd like to participate. Next year's forum is in Salida.

Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative – Chelsey Nutter

- Lake County – Fuels Mitigation Projects, Chipper Program
- Chaffee County – Monarch Pass Forest & Watershed Health Project
- Fremont/Custer County – DeWeese Reservoir Feasibility Study and Stream Mgmt Plan
- Hayden Pass Fire & Flood Recovery Project
- Huerfano County – Spring Creek Fire and Flood Recovery Projects



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- Lower Basin – Water Quality Working Group Projects, Science Plan
- Basin Wide – Update ARWC Strategic Plan, development of sustainable funding
- In the Works – Canon City River Corridor Project, Fuels Mitigation Projects in Lake, Fremont, and Huerfano Counties.
- Chelsey showed photos of the work that has been done post-fire and pre-flood, and how that work ameliorated floods that happened this season.

BREAK

PROGRAM - Please check out full presentations at www.arkansasbasin.com.

For the Love of Colorado Coalition – Tim Wohlgenant

Fully Implementing Colorado's Water Plan

Tim asks for a letter of support for an Education & Innovation Water Plan grant application that would fund education regarding the coalition. The \$3.6 million education campaign is focused on the need to implement the Colorado Water Plan. Asking for \$400,000 from CWCB. There will be a \$3.2 million match from other sources, with \$500,000 already secured. The Education & Innovation Water Plan bucket stands at over \$500,000 at this time. CWCB will only fund up to half of their remaining budget on any given project.

The Challenge:

Colorado's population is expected to reach 8.5 million by 2050. How to sustain Colorado's character, quality of life, and robust economy in the face of increasing demand for water and diminishing supply. There is currently a \$3 billion gap in funding – over the next 30 years. That's \$100M per year.

Tim discussed the formation of the coalition, which was convened in 2018 by the Keystone Policy Center, with the mission of finding the way to fill the gap in funding the Colorado Water Plan. Over 30 organizations were involved, and an 8-member steering committee was founded.

Funding Needs & Distribution

- Healthy Rivers
- Watershed Health and Water Quality
- Conservation and Efficiency
- Productive Agriculture
- Infrastructure
- Colorado Compact Obligations

Ballot Issue DD – Greg Brophy

DD is the Sports Wagering Measure – it would be licensed through the mountain casinos. It would authorize this type of betting. The casino's profits would be taxed at 10%. 93% of that 10% would go to the Colorado Water Fund. An estimated \$29 million would be raised each year, and \$26 million of that would go to water. It would be like GOCO for water and would be administered by CWCB through a similar process as the Colorado Water Plan grant program. The pots of money would be reflective of those under For the Love of Colorado, excepting the category of compact compliance.

This measure will be on the ballot this November. Less than 60 days away from the ballots being mailed out.



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If you are in support, please go to Yesondd.com. Click on endorsements. There is a form to fill out to add your name to the endorsement list.

Greg is here to ask for our support as a roundtable. The Rio Grande Basin voted unanimously to support DD.

Members asked questions and discussed whether to endorse the measure. WSRF has been funded from the bottom-up from its beginning – going through each basin’s roundtable. Some members consider it a problem that the Colorado Water Plan grant funds are being approving from the top down. These new funds would not be controlled by the roundtables, but by the state.

This money would be dedicated to furthering the Colorado Water Plan. Basin funding can be used for projects (like headgate replacement) that don’t directly benefit the Colorado Water Plan. CWCB BOD and staff are supportive. It makes sense that CWCB administer the funds, since that’s already their mission. It was also noted that if these funds don’t go to water (with this measure passing); the measure will likely return, with proceeds going elsewhere. Having the first chance at this is beneficial in starting to meet the \$100 million funding gap for water.

Roundtable members decided to move decisions regarding the above two requests to the end of the meeting.

WeCO Update – Meg Meyer and Jayla Poppleton

Water Education Colorado offers all Basin Roundtable members a free subscription to Headwaters magazine. They just need to know where to send it. Go to this link to prove them your name and address:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/basin-roundtable>. Meg and Jayla provided an overview of the history and development of WeCO (formerly Colorado Foundation for Water Education), which was formed by state legislation in 2002. They talked about services and products that are provided, partially listed below.

- Public information events
- Headwaters Magazine
- Citizen’s Guides
- River Basin Tours
- Water Leaders Program
- PEPO Facilitation
- Sustaining Colorado Watersheds Conference co-facilitation – October 8-10 in Avon: The Human Element
- Water Fluency Program
- CFWE became WECO
- Fresh Water News – email on Wednesday
- SWEAP – Statewide Water Education Action Plan – hope to finalize by November.
- Next Citizen’s Guide: CG to CO Groundwater – Under Construction
- Water Educator Network – over 100 members, since 2014
- Annual River Basin Tour – coming to the Lower Arkansas June 2020.

WeCO has applied for Colorado Water Plan education and outreach dollars, but did not ask for a letter of support, since they didn’t go through the Needs Assessment process. Roundtable members had questions about scope of work specifics.



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Jayla and Meg invited roundtable members to join them for happy hour following the meeting, at the Gold Dust Saloon, at 217 S. Union Avenue.

REQUEST FOR LETTER OF SUPPORT/BALLOT ISSUE DD

The discussion continued regarding the request for a letter of support for a grant application for For The Love of Colorado Coalition. Roundtable members agreed that this could not be approved, since it didn't go through the proper Needs Assessment Committee process.

Discussion turned to Ballot Issue DD, and whether the roundtable would officially support the ballot measure. Unsure as to the legality of such an action, especially without members consulting their various constituencies, they were unable to reach consensus, and members were encouraged to take this information back to their constituencies.

MEETINGS/LINKS:

- Next Meeting – October 9th, Pueblo Community College
- C9 Statewide RT Summit – September 25, 26. The 25th is tours and a dinner. The 26th is the main business.
- Oct 23 – IBCC meeting in the morning, Water Resources Review Comm mtg in the afternoon.
- Arkansas Basin Roundtable: www.arkansasbasin.com
- PEPO: www.pepoarkbasin.com
- Arkansas River Basin Water Forum: <http://www.arbwf.org/>
- CWCB: <http://cwcb.state.co.us/Pages/CWCBHome.aspx>
- Colorado Water Plan: <http://coloradowaterplan.com/>
- Colorado Flood Threat Bulletin: www.coloradofloodthreat.com
- Stream Management Plan Resource Library: <https://coloradosmp.org/>