

**Rio Grande Basin Roundtable**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 2:00 pm**  
**San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District**  
**623 Fourth Street**  
**Alamosa, CO 81101**

Chairman brought the meeting to order at 2:03 pm. Reminder to sign in. Introductions.

Those in attendance were: Ron Brink, Cindy Medina, Cleave Simpson, Judy Lopez, Nathan Coombs, Karla Shriver, Jim Ehrlich, Ronda Lobato, Ed Nielsen, Peter Clark, Wayne Schwab, Kristie Borchers, Daniel Boyes, Christi Bode, Bethany Howell, Dale Pizel, Greg Higel, Chuck Finnegan, Larry Sveum, Daryl Kohut, Bob Rice, Emma Reesor, Keith Holland, Cathy Morin, Rio de la Vista, Virginia Christensen, Gene Farish, Kevin Terry, Judy Daniels, Ann Bunting, Craig Cotten, Nancy Escalante, Ryan Unterreiner, Charles Spielman, Heather Greenwolf.

Agenda updates, instead of CWCB update as Megan Holcomb is not in attendance, Bethany Howell will preview her project proposal. Ron Brinkman accepted as amended, Karla Shriver seconded.

Reminder that the October meeting was cancelled, so the minutes reviewed are for the September meeting. Greg Higel motioned to accept the minutes as presented, Charlie Spielman seconded. No discussion on the minutes. All approved and the minutes passed.

**Public Comment**

No public comments.

December meeting discussed. Lunch meeting format was approved by general consent with short business in the beginning. Project proposals need to go out to the Roundtable members at least a week in advance. Executive committee will explore restaurant and catering options. Meeting will be at 1:00 pm on December 10<sup>th</sup>, location TBD.

**Basin Implementation Plan**

Chairman discussed the Basin Implementation Plan updates with the CWCB selected state contractor. Local Expert is hired by the central contractor to work with the individual basins. Application would be with the state contractor, Brown and Caldwell. Each basin receives \$290,000, of which half goes to the contractor, the other money is allocated for hiring of Subject Matter Experts and Local Expert. Subcommittees will need to be formed to update the goals for accuracy and validity. Examine project viability, process, cost estimates. Each basin is tasked with this list, which is not all inclusive or exclusive. CWCB will present at the January meeting to discuss the process. End of 2020 into beginning of 2021 is anticipated wrap up and submission to the state. Roundtable members were encouraged to look through the Executive Summary of the previous Rio Grande Basin Implementation Plan.

Questions were asked about having an overall committee as well as subcommittees. Funds will be provided by CWCB for community meetings. Charlie Spielman voiced objection to a general plan that comes from the top down and would like to see it done locally. Chairman explained that each basin felt

the same way and the contractor was required to work with each basin according to their unique needs. Discussion regarding project templates, CWCB's role with the Basins, and the list for local contractors.

Rhonda Lobato discussed the watershed assessment for Costilla County and the Culebra Creek Watershed. They are writing grants for funding for implementing the assessment and would like a letter of support. Rio de la Vista made a motion to approve writing a letter of support, Kevin Terry seconded.

Emma Reesor on behalf of the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project requested a letter of support for a project they are writing a grant for with the CWCB's watershed restoration program. Karla Shriver made a motion to approve writing a letter of support. Ron Brinkman seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Judy Lopez showed a Colorado Open Lands' video on acequias for the Roundtable. She requested a letter of support on behalf of Colorado Open Lands' Water Plan Grant to create six more videos on watershed topics to be used by teachers and students in classrooms across the state. The Roundtable gave common consent of approval. Judy also requested approval of using the Roundtable's logo on the videos that they would produce with this grant. The concern was brought up about the content of the video. It was decided that as videos are produced, the Roundtable can make a decision about allowing the logo to be represented on each.

Rio de la Vista from the Adams State University Salazar Rio Grande del Norte Center presented her water education survey regarding a water education minor at Adams State University. The Roundtable and community attending answered survey questions regarding skills desired for a new hire in their organization.

Judy Daniels of Soil Sage, LLC gave a preview for her project request to purchase agriculture soil moisture sensors to measure water use in hemp crops. Questions were asked about the most appropriate partner to provide funding, such as Colorado State University Extension or the SLV Water Conservancy District instead of the Roundtable, the single crop growth, and ownership of data by an individual entity. Concerns about other soil sensors available, project viability under the proposed parameters. The executive committee will stay in contact with Judy to find other options as there are multiple concerns with funding an individual entity for research purposes and project viability.

#### IBCC Update

Cleave Simpson gave a report on the most recent IBCC meeting. They held an abbreviated meeting regarding demand management on the Colorado River system and a joint meeting with the Interim Water Resources Committee, particularly regarding the use of demand management as an alternative to curtailment. The equity of water was also discussed with a variety of users and consumptive use. Cleave mentioned a small case study might be made about the use of curtailment in the Rio Grande Basin. The IBCC is evaluating temporary, voluntary, and compensated water management. Cleave also gave a subdistrict update – subdistrict 1 has successfully mitigated their injury to the groundwater system through pumping. Aquifer recovery is still a goal. There has been no opposition to Subdistrict 6 Plan of Management. Assessed taxes for next year's plan will be incurred early in 2020. Subdistricts 4 & 5 plans were approved by the district and are at the state engineer's office for review and approval.

Craig Cotten of the Division of Water Resources gave a presentation on the current river conditions and Rio Grande Compact. On the Rio Grande, flows were 925,000 AF at Del Norte, 142% of normal.

Decreased 55,000 AF from the August estimate with recent dry conditions. Obligation to downstream states was 3257,000 AF, 39% of index. The anticipated end of year status is +1,900 AF.

The Conejos system flow is 430,000 AF, a decrease of 20,000 AF from last August. Obligation to downstream is 214,000.

The irrigation season is now completed but winter recharge is occurring on the Rio Grande. Craig reminded the roundtable that District 12 judge Pattie Swift is retiring. Judge Michael Gonzales will be the new chief district judge. We are also now out of Rio Grande Compact Article 7. We should have more than 700,000 AF of useable water stored in reservoirs in the foreseeable future.

Groundwater use rules are in effect since March 15, 2019; water users have until March 15, 2021 to be in compliance with regulations. Well users not in a subdistrict or an augmentation plan by that time will be shut off.

Cotten discussed the 2020 Abandonment Procedure which takes place every ten years. Surface and groundwater rights not used for ten years are placed in partial or full abandonment list. Voluntary abandonment avoids the rules, augmentation, and subdistrict requirements. Owners are notified in July 2020 and may appeal to the Division of Water Resources by contacting the division engineer's office.

Cotten pointed out that all the river systems in the San Luis Valley were below 2017 flows for August through November. Snowpack is estimated at 49% of average. Reminder that the division is still serving letters to well users for registering wells.

Chairman adjourned meeting at 4:17 pm.