

South Platte Basin Roundtable Meeting
Tuesday, October 8, 2019
Southwest Weld County Building
4209 Weld County Road 24 ½, Longmont, CO 80504
4:00-7:00 p.m.

South Platte Basin Roundtable Business Meeting Minutes

1. Welcome/Introductions (G. Varra – 5 min)

The meeting started at 4:05 p.m.

In attendance: Garrett Varra*, Loretta Daniel*, Craig Godbout, Russ Sands, Jim Yahn*, Joe Frank*, Bill Szmyd*, Matt Jones*, Shane Miller*, Kent Swedlund*, Jim Ford*, Dick Elsner*, Ken Huson*, Daylan Figgs*, Kelsea Holloway*, Larry Howard*, Bruce Gerk*, Kevin Lusk*, Jim Hall*, Stephen Larson*, Sean Conway*, Christy Wiseman, Corey DeAngelis, Erik Jorgensen, and multiple members of the public.

Jason Roudebush* and Sean Chambers* were excused from the October meeting. 19 SPBRT voting members were present (* denotes a voting member).

2. Approval of August 2019 Meeting Summary (G. Varra – action required)

There were a few corrections to the August 2019 Meeting Summary. First, Bruce Gerk noted that he was present at the August meeting, not Chuck Powell. Second, Jim Hall noted that page 3 of the proposed August 2019 Meeting Summary incorrectly references “problematic low water table levels.” Third, Craig Godbout noted that page 2 of the proposed August 2019 Meeting Summary incorrectly states that he is responsible for writing WSRF approval letters to applicants; Godbout clarified that the Chair of each Roundtable is responsible for writing the letters.

Bill Szmyd made a motion to adopt the August 2019 Meeting Summary with the corrections as discussed and Jim Yahn seconded. The motion passed without discussion or contest. The August 2019 Meeting Summary was edited to reflect these corrections; an updated redlined version is posted in the October 2019 meeting materials folder.

3. October 2019 Agenda Additions or Changes (G. Varra – action required)

There were no proposed changes to the October meeting agenda.

4. Presentation on Technical Update (SWSI) (Russ Sands and Kara Sobieski – 60 min)

Russ Sands of the CWCB and Kara Sobieski of Wilson Water Group presented on the recently completed Technical Update, also known as the Statewide Water Supply Initiative (SWSI), to the Colorado Water Plan. Sands and Sobieski explained how the Technical Update is an initial step in the process to update the Water Plan; the next step is the upcoming effort for each Roundtable to update their respective Basin Implementation Plan (BIP).

Sands and Sobieski explained the methodology behind the technical analysis, covering topics such as how urbanization, groundwater acreage sustainability, climate, and emerging technologies affect agricultural diversion demands. Notably, this Technical Update utilizes multiple climate change

scenarios (e.g., changes in precipitation due to climate change affect irrigation water requirements). Sands and Sobieski clarified that the analysis does not include Identified Projects and Processes (IPPs). SPBRT members asked various questions throughout the presentation. For example, members asked Sobieski about the presented statewide breakdown of water use among various industries and about the analysis' estimates of lost agricultural acreage due to 'buy and dry' techniques. At the end of the presentation, Russ Sands and multiple SPBRT members discussed the budget for the BIP update as well as the opportunity to combine the SPBRT's BIP update efforts with the Metro Roundtable.

Dinner was held from 5:30 p.m. - 5:50 p.m.

After dinner, Garrett Varra mentioned a few housekeeping items. Varra noted that the application deadline for Mike Shimmin's open At-Large Water Rights seat had passed. No applications were received so the seat is still open. Varra will inform SPBRT members when he receives any applications and will bring future applications forward for decision and review. He also noted that he has been emailing jurisdictions with open seats on the SPBRT in advance of the BIP update. After Varra's announcements, Sean Conway mentioned that though he anticipated he would transition out of Weld County's representative seat for the SPBRT (as announced at the August 2019 SPBRT meeting), he will continue to serve and attend meetings for the time being.

5. Committee Updates

a. SPBRT Basin & Statewide Account Balance (C. Godbout – 10 min)

Craig Godbout reported \$529,615 for the South Platte Basin balance and \$3,263,240 for the statewide balance.

b. Public Education, Participation, and Outreach (PEPO) Workgroup (C. Davenport – 10 min)

Kelsea Holloway provided the PEPO update because Casey Davenport was not in attendance. The PEPO workgroup met in August at Denver Water. They agreed to review the 2019 Education Action Plan and provide comments. In response to comments, they incorporated the addition of "The economic activity within the South Platte Basin contributes significantly to Colorado's GDP..." in the first paragraph of the plan. The Colorado Watershed Assembly submitted a budget to CWCB on behalf of the Roundtables so that CWCB could issue a new Purchase Order. The PEPO workgroup continues to update the South Platte Basin Roundtable's website as new information is available.

Kelsea Holloway then reported on her experience attending the Sedgwick County Children's Water Festival. The Rural Water Association, through their association with the Source Water Protection Program at CDPHE, is planning to submit a proposal for a series of children's water festivals to take place in rural communities throughout Colorado. Holloway noted that Casey Davenport attended the C-9 Summit in September and participated in the SWEAP (Statewide Education Action Plan) meeting. Davenport was not given any new direction at the C-9 Summit and was encouraged to continue with South Platte-specific efforts. The PEPO workgroup met with members of the Live Like You Love It campaign (through Colorado WaterWise) in early September and will bring their suggestions to the Education Committee meeting in November. Davenport will make recommendations for specific activities at the November SPBRT and Metro RT meetings.

Members then discussed using PEPO funds to help fund SPBRT members' registration for water-related conferences. Bruce Gerk commented on the effectiveness of local water festivals as a tool for outreach and how the residents of Sedgwick County seemed pleased with the representation of various organizations at the Sedgwick County Children's Water Festival. Finally, Garrett Varra noted that the next PEPO workgroup meeting will occur before the November 12 SPBRT meeting at 2 p.m. in the same conference room.

c. Water Supply Reserve Fund (WSRF) (J. Roudebush – 10 min)

Jason Roudebush was not present at the meeting. Members were reminded of the November deadline for this WSRF funding round. Projects applying for WSRF grants will present at the January SPBRT meeting.

d. Groundwater Update (J. Hall – 10 min)

Jim Hall took the floor to provide a groundwater update. The groundwater technical committee met on September 27. While still high, the water levels are lower this time of year in the Gilcrest area; the situation is comparatively not as problematic as it was a couple years ago. Multiple members discussed modeling inputs (e.g., precipitation, pumping, ditch seepage, phreatophyte consumption) and how they affect the water table at different points. Sean Conway asked if the 2013 flood's return flows have been taken into consideration. Jim Hall replied and stated that the flood should be incorporated into the modeling. The next groundwater technical committee meeting has not been set yet but is expected to occur in the next couple months.

6. C9 Summit Recap (G. Varra – 30 min)

Garrett Varra took the floor to provide a summary of the C9 Statewide Basin Roundtable Summit in September. He praised the Headwaters Center as a first-class event center and educational facility. Varra noted that he attended a presentation on the Technical Update and participated in a group exercise to get thinking about the BIP update process. Varra also reported that the Director of the Department of Natural Resources, Dan Gibbs, spoke at the conference. Overall, Varra said the conference was well organized and worth attending. He recommended all SPBRT members attend the conference next year if they can.

Jim Yahn echoed Varra's summary and thanked Varra for nominating longtime SPBRT member Mike Shimmin for a Water Hero award. Mike Shimmin was one of the first IBCC representatives; he also helped write the bylaws for the SPBRT. Shimmin was able to accept the award in person at the conference. Varra noted that he will present Mike Shimmin with a plaque at the November SPBRT meeting. Joe Frank, Bruce Gerk, and Ken Huson also summarized their positive experiences with the conference. Varra noted that he called the Headwaters Center to thank them for hosting the conference. Bruce Gerk then suggested that the SPBRT write a letter to the CWCB to thank CWCB staff for all their efforts. SPBRT members supported the idea of a letter.

Members then discussed the last BIP update and the potential to partner with the Metro Roundtable again. Members who were present for the last BIP update explained that there wasn't a formal vote to agree to work with the Metro RT and that it seemed to work well in bringing the Roundtables together. Garrett Varra noted that he plans to attend the Metro Roundtable meeting on October 10 to discuss the joint BIP update effort. Craig Godbout agreed that a joint update would help lessen the burden on Roundtable members from both the South Platte and the Metro. Godbout also clarified the funding structure for the BIP update and the use of severance tax funds.

7. SPROWG Update (J. Frank – 10 min)

Joe Frank took the floor to provide a SPROWG update. The last advisory committee meeting was on September 18. A subset of the advisory committee met the first week of October to look at more modeling scenarios. The next task force meeting is on October 10 before the Metro RT meeting. He also noted that project consultants, himself, and Lisa Darling (Vice Chair of the Metro RT) will give a presentation about SPROWG to the state legislature on October 24. Frank noted the possibility of presenting the full study to the state legislature in early 2020. Next steps aren't quite laid out, but SPROWG has the potential to integrate into the BIP update process. Finally, he mentioned that the SPROWG task force is open to anyone who is interested. So far there are 80 members; there is a lot of interest.

8. IBCC Update (J. Yahn/S. Cronin – 5 min)

Sean Cronin was not present at the meeting. Jim Yahn noted that there will be an IBCC meeting on the morning of October 23 at History Colorado in Denver. During the afternoon of October 23, there will be an interim water resources committee meeting.

9. CWCB Update (J. Yahn – 5 min)

Jim Yahn took the floor to provide a CWCB Board update. The CWCB Board had a meeting from September 17 to September 19 at Adams State University in Alamosa. Every year, the finance committee gives an update on severance tax funds and other financial matters. The finance meeting occurred on September 17. Severance tax funds are strong this year but are expected to decrease in the future due to changes in the oil and gas industry. After the finance committee meeting, CWCB Board members toured a potato farm. The San Luis Valley is a major area of potato production in Colorado. Yahn found the farm tour to be educational and noted that it provided a good reminder of how expensive agricultural equipment can be.

On September 18, CWCB Board members met at the Rio Grande Water Conservancy District. There was an update on the workgroups for demand management on the Colorado River. Yahn reported on grant and loan requests that were presented at the meeting, including two WSRF grants that the SPBRT approved (Fourmile Watershed Coalition: Boulder Creek Watershed Water Quality Sampling and CO Master Irrigator). Yahn mentioned that projects from the Arkansas Basin were successful in leveraging Basin funds to get large statewide funding requests. This led SPBRT members to discuss the SPBRT policy of not approving deferred maintenance projects. The topic of deferred maintenance is something that could be addressed through the BIP update process.

Yahn also reported that a couple of instream flows were approved, with one contested in the Yampa Basin. The CWCB Board approved an update to the rainwater harvesting project led by DWR. The pilot program is for new developments only; so far only Stirling Ranch in Denver has utilized the program. CWCB Board members also attended the dedication of a new radar system in Alamosa for the San Luis Valley (partially funded by CWCB). The radar system captures snow equivalent amounts throughout the Basin.

Multiple members then discussed past proposals by American Water Development (AWDI). Kevin Lusk asked whether equity in demand management is being discussed at IBCC meetings. Garrett Varra reminded members of the interim water resources committee on October 23. Varra will speak on behalf of the SPBRT and plans to emphasize the need for projects and the need for urgent action given the Technical Update data. Multiple members then provided commentary on what Varra should emphasize at the interim water resources committee. Bruce Gerk asked if the SPBRT could

be presented with a legislative update in the coming months. Joe Frank noted that the interim water resources committee is currently reviewing six bills. Garrett Varra stated that he will add a legislative update back into the monthly SPBRT meeting agenda going forward.

10. Public Comment (15 min)

There was no public comment. There was no dinner presentation. The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.