

Administration and Accounting Work Group Meeting Summary

Work Group: Administration and Accounting Work Group Meeting #1 **Date:** November 18, 2019

Meeting Topics:

Agenda topics included: a presentation from Cleave Simpson from the Rio Grand Water Conservation District regarding compact compliance and demand management activities currently occurring in the San Luis Valley; a group discussion of issues and challenges RGWCD faces with those efforts; a discussion of lessons learned and some key takeaways from the SCPP; issue identification related to the administration and accounting of conserved water created as a result of a potential demand management program in Colorado; and a discussion of whether or not there are administration and accounting parallels between the statutes and processes governing ATMs in Colorado and a potential demand management program.

Key Take Aways:

That there have been challenges with sufficient levels of participation in the Rio Grande Water Conservation District's conservation/fallowing program. Also, a program that is voluntary and compensated has not resulted in sufficient levels of water user engagement. Demand Management as provided for in the DCP may not be the same as the approach taken in the compact compliance approach. Is demand management administered and accounted for by reducing consumption or increasing flows?

That the process applied when considering how to account for and administer water rights that are participating in a potential demand management program will need to be examined. Water users are accustomed to a water court model that authorizes administration of the water right. Would this be utilized? If not, what processes would be implemented to facilitate the accounting and administration of the water rights? Would that process need to be the same or similar to those processes applied in the other Upper Basin States, by the UCRC, by the Lower Basin?

Compact compliance is a state obligation. What type of beneficial use would the participating water rights be administered for? What process would be applied for the measurement of the conserved consumptive use? What would the timeframe be? A representative period? Some time frame similar to that used in the Lower Basin for their ICS? Limited to the year in which the conservation occurs? Other? Would this need to be the same timeframe for all the Upper Basin States?

The Group discussed the ATM program and whether there would be parallels or lessons that could be learned and/applied from a deeper examination of the ATM program, the related statutes, polices, regulations and implementation issues.

Additional technical, informational other needs:

For the next meeting, the group may further consider parallels with the ATM program and further identify issues related to the need for statutory fixes as to potential new beneficial uses and consideration of processes related to administration and accounting of water rights in relation to the Aspinall Unit.

Other: No public comments were heard during the first meeting.