

## Work Group Meeting Report Out

**Work Group:** Agricultural Impacts Meeting #3 **Date:** March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

### **Meeting Topics:**

Agenda topics included: review of workgroup report outs for cross-cutting issues with focus on Monitoring and Verification, issue identification and prioritization; preparation for IBCC meeting.

The group spent the majority of the meeting refining priority issues and threshold questions concerning agricultural impacts associated with a potential demand management program, discussing cross-cutting issues with members of the monitoring and verification workgroup, and discussing the development of a “model” demand management program for further discussion purposes. A key theme of the discussion was that any demand management program should be offered as an insurance policy versus curtailment.

### **Key Take Aways:**

- The group discussed current state funding limitations concerning the development of demand management pilot programs, but agreed that other efforts including the Colorado River Basin Roundtables’ Kremmling project assessing agronomic impacts of alternative transfer methods on high elevation hay and pasture operations will be informative.
- The group discussed that east slope participation by both agriculture and municipal water users would be essential in terms of equity under a demand management program. However, the group discussed that east slope projects would potentially present several challenges that would need to be addressed including monitoring and verification and issues concerning Federal approval.
- The group began discussing various parameters or features of a demand management program that would help minimize agricultural impacts and maximize benefits for producers and rural communities. Some of these parameters include modeling a demand management program after the United States Department of Agriculture Conservation Reserve Program, which includes certain enrollment quotas per county and incentive payments to manage the enrolled land to maintain soil health and other environmental attributes. These parameters could be modified under a potential demand management program to set enrollment quotas by river basin, number of participants, or other factors such as a percentage of irrigated acreage for a given geographic region. Discussion also included how to best make participation in a demand management program available to producers who may view the program as an opportunity or benefit and who may otherwise be precluded from participation by potential imposed quotas or limitations. The group also discussed how best to determine pricing for participation including both free market and managed market approaches.
- The group discussed topics to include in an agricultural impacts and benefits literature review including socioeconomic regional effects of demand management and regional land conservation programs, the effects of temporary fallowing and deficit irrigation on high elevation agricultural operations, and alternative transfer method programs.

### **Other:**

The group agreed that a minimum of two more meetings would be useful. Given current public health concerns over COVID-19, these meetings may be held virtually with public access. As a result, there may be more opportunity for different workgroups to meet together. A key focus of the next agricultural impacts meeting will be to discuss each workgroup member’s “model” demand management program to minimize agricultural impacts/maximize benefits and/or a collective demand management “model” based on discussions had at the March 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> IBCC meetings.

