

Minutes of NP Environmental and Recreation Subcommittee Meeting: 6-17-20 Virtual Meeting (7:00 – 9:00 PM)

Members Present

Ty Wattenberg
Barbara Vasquez
Paula Belcher - BLM
Tara Wertz - ANWR
Matt Reddy - DU
David Graf – CPW
Blair Rynearson – Colorado State Forest Service
John Twitchell – Colorado State Forest Service

Others Present

Kara Sobieski (Wilson Water Group)
Brenna Mefford (Wilson Water Group)

I. Introductions and Agenda Review

II. BIP Update

-Kara Sobieski, Wilson Water Group

Kara began by summarizing the status of the BIP Update and described the goals of today's Environmental and Recreation subcommittee meeting. Kara had previously provided participants with an electronic copy of a 7-page document that summarized the short-term schedule of the BIP Update, provided additional items that could be pursued using BIP Update funding, and the IPP projects from the 2015 BIP.

Barbara commented that she was on an IBCC virtual meeting, in which it was discussed that DWR, as part of the Governors Wildly Important Goals (WIG) initiative, planned to develop a list of 160 shovel ready projects, 20 from each basin. She asked how those projects would be ranked. Kara described the tiering mechanism that CWCB has developed for the IPP projects and said she believes the same tiering system will be used. Barbara asked that before the next meeting, Kara provide the group with more information on how the tiering works and all the fields that we need to fill out in the IPP list, which can be discussed at the next meeting.

Kara then walked through the following list of additional items that maybe pursued using BIP Update Funding, as budget and schedule allowed:

1. Expand the North Platte Decision Support System modeling to include the Laramie and Sand Creek Water Districts. These areas are currently not included in the consumptive use or surface water modeling datasets used in the BIP Update and would need to be included in the models to analyze gaps and future projects in those areas.
2. Develop a North Platte BRT Website
3. Develop additional educational/outreach items (i.e. short films, brochures)
4. Participate in cross-basin analyses with other Basin Roundtables; potential topics include weather modification, forest health studies, or agricultural economic studies.
5. Further investigate climate-adjusted conditions (e.g. allow for longer growing season, different crop types) to provide more information on how the climate-adjusted conditions may affect agricultural in North Park in the future.
6. Assist with identifying and developing a plan for ditches without measurement devices so that water users can be in compliance with Division of Water Resources measurement requirements.
7. Conduct a diversion infrastructure assessment to identify additional structures that would benefit from modification or rehabilitation.
8. Conduct environmental assessments to identify areas that would benefit from river corridor, habitat, or water quality improvements.
9. Develop a 'white paper' on how irrigation return flows are reused throughout the system, including how increases to agricultural efficiency would impact those return flows.
10. Assist with writing grants for planned projects in the basin
11. Create a 'BRT Coordinator' role that would provide administrative support to the BRT and potentially assist with advancing the projects identified during the BIP Update by working with project proponents and identifying funding opportunities.
12. Create materials to promote tourism (fishing/hunting) opportunities in the basin.

After going through the list of additional items, David suggested adding an item number 13 - *Develop scope/parameters for Stream Management Plan for areas within the North Platte Basin*. An item number 14 - *Evaluate additional nodes in the Flow Tool* was also added to the list. Each subcommittee member voted on three additional items to recommend to the BRT. Below is a summary of the votes:

- Item No. 13 (Develop scope/parameters for Stream Management Plan) – **Five Votes**
- Item No. 3 (Further investigate climate adjusted conditions) – **Three Votes**
- Item No. 7 and 8 Combined (Conduct a diversion infrastructure and environmental assessment) – **Three Votes**
- Item No. 11 (Create a BRT Coordinator role) – **One Vote**
- Item No. 8 (Conduct an environmental assessment) – **One Vote**

- Item No. 4 (Participate in a Cross-Basis Analysis) – **One Vote**
- Item No. 9 (Develop a “white paper” on irrigation return flows) – **One Vote**
- Item N. 10 (Assist with writing grants) – **One Vote**
- Item No. 5 and 14 Combined (Further investigate climate adjusted conditions and evaluate additional nodes in the Flow Tool) – **One Vote**

The Subcommittee then walked through the table of Non-Consumptive Projects from the original BIP. The subcommittee determined if the project was completed, valid and on-going, no longer pursued or if we needed more information. Below is the table with the original BIP projects and a table with the recently funded WSRF projects. Both tables have a “Status” column added with the results from the discussion with the subcommittee. David committed to providing update info on the 2015 BIP CPW projects and to provide any potential additional projects before the next meeting. Note that no USFS representatives were able to make the call, however Barbara had spoken with a USFS representative before this meeting who will work with colleagues to fill in the status of listed USFS projects and to offer any additional projects for the update. This info will be provided prior to the next meeting of the subcommittee.

Non - Consumptive Projects

Project Name	Non-Consumptive Project	Contact	Status
Bear Draw	Relocate trail out of wetland	USFS	
BLM Water quality/quantity: Various reaches in North Platte Basin	North Sand Creek monitor water quality/quantity	BLM	Valid and On-going
Boettcher Lake Rehabilitation	Rehabilitate/replace irrigation infrastructure	DU, Private Owner	Valid and On-going
Boreal Toad Studies - Twisty Park/County Wide	Boreal Toad Studies	CPW	Need more information
Brown Creek Fence	Improve water quality and riparian habitat from improved grazing management through fencing	USFS	
Brownlee SWA- North Platte River	Brownlee SWA river channel/riparian corridor habitat/water quality improvements	CPW	Need more information
Camp Creek	Remove fill & culverts from wetland	USFS	
Camp Creek	Replace double culverts	USFS	
Camp Creek Fence	Improve water quality and riparian habitat from improved grazing management through fencing	USFS	
Chandler Ranch (ANWR)	Rehabilitate/replace infrastructure to resume irrigation practice	ANWR	Valid and On-going

Crosby Creek Fence	Improve water quality and riparian habitat from improved grazing management through fencing	USFS	USFS
Dryer Ditch	Rehabilitate/replace irrigation infrastructure	DU, ANWR	Complete
Elk Creek Tributary	Harden crossing to reduce wetland damage	USFS	
Illinois River on ANWR	Willow enclosures and riparian corridor rehabilitation	ANWR	Valid and On-going
Jack Creek	Create low-water road-crossing after culvert failure	USFS	
Jack Creek	Decommission and rehabilitate user-created road in fen	USFS	
Jack Creek	Relocate road out of wetland	USFS	
Jack Creek Tributary	Decommission road-stream crossing	USFS	
Lake Creek	Wetland habitat improvement	CPW	Complete
Lake Creek SWA Improvement	Enhance existing wetland	CPW, DU	Complete
Lake John outlet relocation	Move outlet to create more circulation in lake	CPW	Need more information
Legal Tender Ditch - NF N. Platte	Legal Tender Ditch diversion modification	CPW	Valid and On-going
Lily Lake	Improve water quality and riparian habitat from improved grazing management through fencing	USFS	
McFarlane Dam Rehabilitation	Dam rehabilitation	ANWR, BLM	Complete
Manville SWA-Roaring Fork	Manville SWA river channel/riparian corridor habitat/water quality improvements	CPW	Need more information
McGee Fen	Improve water quality and riparian habitat from improved grazing management through fencing	USFS	
McKinnon Creek fence	Improve water quality and riparian habitat from improved grazing management through fencing	USFS	
NC Projects on private lands	Various	TBD	Remove from list
Newcomb Creek	Newcomb Creek grazing management project	USFS	
Newcomb Creek Fence	Improve water quality and riparian habitat from improved grazing management through fencing	USFS	
North Fork Michigan River	Stream channel and riparian habitat improvements	CPW	Need more information

North Fork North Platte (Richard Conservation Easement)	Stream habitat improvement on Richard Conservation Easement	CPW	Need more information
North Fork North Platte Fence	Improve water quality and riparian habitat from improved grazing management through fencing	USFS	
North Fork North Platte Tributary	Decommission road-stream crossing before dead-ends at private land	USFS	
Instream Diversion Structure Identification	Improvement fishery habitat/connectivity	CPW	No longer pursued
Richards Ranch Conservation Easement	Ulrich Ditch Rehabilitation	DU, CPW	Complete
Salt Creek	Decommission, re-contour to improve drainage	USFS	
Silver Creek	Silver Creek culvert project	USFS	
Soap Creek Restoration	Rehabilitate stream channel/riparian corridor vegetation	ANWR, BLM	Valid and On-going
South Fork Hog Park Creek	Relocate road out of wetland	USFS	
South Fork of Big Creek	South Fork of Big Creek measurements	USFS	
Sunday Creek Fence	Improve water quality and riparian habitat from improved grazing management through fencing	USFS	
Various ditch diversions/headgates on USFS	1) Survey ditch diversions & headgates for their potential to impact water quality & aquatic habitat; 2) create cooperative projects with ditch owners, NRCS, FS; 3) improve/replace diversions with fish passage/water quality issues	USFS	
Verner SWA, NPR Stream Restoration	Verner SWA river channel/riparian corridor habitat/water quality improvements	CPW	Valid and On-going
Willow Creek	Replace culvert	USFS	
Willow Creek Tributary	Remove culvert & fill, restore wetland	USFS	
Willow Creek Tributary	Replace culvert	USFS	
Wolfer Ditch on Roaring Fork	Wolfer Ditch diversion modification	CPW	Valid and On-going
Delaney Buttes Fish Screen	Rebuild fish/egg screen to prevent non-native suckers into the reservoir (\$200-300K)	CPW	Valid and Ongoing

MacFarlane Extension Ditch	Replace headgate at the MacFarlane Extension Ditch	ANWR, DU, Private Landowners	Valid and Ongoing
ASCC Project – Bachman Road on State Forest Service Land	National program that looks at various treatments in response to climate-adjusted conditions, goal to develop adaptive management	CSU, State Forest Service	Valid and Ongoing
Forest Thinning	Forest thinning for water quality/quantity	State Forest Service	Valid and Ongoing

Five new projects were added to the original IPP list. These projects are shown in the above table in red. John mentioned that the State Forest Service would like to stay more involved with the BRT in the future and collaborate on projects. Matt asked to have a separate call with Wilson Water Group to discuss DU projects that could be added to the Projects list. Wilson Water Group will follow up with Matt. The subcommittee decided to meet again virtually before the scheduled meeting of the full NPB Roundtable which is scheduled on July 7 (7-9pm) to finalize their recommendations to the BRT and walk through section by section of the Work Plan.

Next Virtual Meeting of NPBRT BIP update E&R Subcommittee: Monday June 29, 2-4PM