



Arkansas Basin Roundtable

PLANNING OUR
WATER FUTURE

ROUNDTABLE MEETING NOTES

August 12, 2020

GoToMeeting Link: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/631824957>

More information and presentations may be found at: www.arkansasbasin.com

Roundtable Business

Mark Shea called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm. Members and visitors introduced themselves. Twenty five (25) members were present.

Approval of minutes of prior meeting

The meeting notes of the July 2020 meeting were approved by consensus.

Public Comment - none

REPORTS:

Executive Committee – Mark Shea

The Executive Committee met this morning. Mark announced that Amber Weber has decided to step down as PEPO Coordinator. Mark thanked Amber for her work.

CWCB Report – Greg Felt, Sam Stein, Russell Sands New website: cwcb.colorado.gov

The CWCB meets next on September 16 and 17. Public comment is being taken through the 28th regarding the demand management update. Go to: engagewcwb.org to give feedback. There will be a virtual meeting on demand management on August 26th. There will be a CWCB board workshop on September 2nd.

Sam thanked roundtable members for their participation. CWCB is preparing to set up an all-chair meeting, which will discuss the tier matrix and CWCB criteria and guidelines.

Executive order Safer At Home has been extended. No meetings of more than 10 people. CWCB staff are working from home. Thankful for all.

Greg Felt had hoped to make some field trips by this point. He'd welcome phone calls and conversation regarding roundtable issues. His number is 719-530-1118, and email address is gfelt@chaffeeconomy.org.

Phase 2 of the Drought Task Force has been activated by the governor. Ag Impacts Task Force is activated in this phase. The task force really wants to hear from producers that have been affected by the drought. Please go to the website to contact.

IBCC Report – Jeris Danielson, Russell Sands

The last two IBCC meetings focused almost exclusively on demand management and what equity is. September 21st will be the next meeting. Jeris expressed frustration and looks forward to discussing where the IBCC is headed at the next meeting. IBCC's role is in some ways a representative role, carrying the spirit of representation, bringing roundtable feedback back to the state.

Jeris asked Russ about what the other upper basin states are thinking about the demand management idea. If any of the other upper basin states say no, demand management won't be a solution that works. Russ reported that the other upper basin states are having similar conversations.



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PEPO – Amber Weber

- The only funding PEPO has left is the \$6,500 per year for education and outreach. The other two grants will be closed out by the end of the month. Funds remaining are for
- Amber demonstrated on the shared screen changes to the Basin Implementation Plan tab, showing how to update IPPs.
- The story map has been restructured. Go to the Ark Basin Details tab. Scroll down on the screen to reach the story map. This map is viewable by main type of project: Ag, Muni, Enviro-Rec, etc. Another map may be found under the More tab. Choose Basin Implementation Plan and scroll down to see a second story map that sorts projects by their status of: Completed, Concept, Planned or Ongoing.
- Amber welcomes project-specific photos.

Needs Assessment – Abby Ortega

Three grants moved forward at the latest CWCB meeting. Our basin spent \$79,000 in basin funds and around 500,000 in statewide funds. Will know due dates for the next round of funding by the September meeting.

Environment/Recreation Committee – Bob Hamel, Rena Griggs, Amber Shanklin

The Enviro/Rec Committee met on June 29th.

The committee is trying to arrange a meeting with Abby Burke. She's from a west slope roundtable and is reaching out to other enviro-rec committees around the state to discuss what other enviro/rec groups are doing. Still moving ahead with understanding what enviro/rec projects will look like in the new BIP. A lot of our projects are also ARWC projects.

Browns Canyon record of decision has been released and is available through the BLM office. VFMP has allowed for an incredibly successful season this year. Will be back to native flows after this weekend. Flows will likely be in the low 300 cfs range. Bob thanked program participants.

Rena is meeting tomorrow with Parks and Wildlife to go over the projects on their list.

Bob – After the Enviro/Rec meeting minutes went out last month Jay Winner complained that enviro-rec is only focusing on the west side of I-25. Bob wants to say that is not true and he was disappointed about this feedback. Please contact Bob, Enviro/Rec needs to hear from those that are east of I-25.

Julie Knudson described that a big part of their stream management planning is east of I25.

Mike Weber – thinks that Bob needs to come down and reach out. There is work down here. Mike mentioned the Amity project as an example.

Rena reported on the Amity project, which she found interesting, because when they were approached from the enviro side, they were hesitant to do that. But they later did make a CWCB loan app to make repairs. At that point, they left Rena out of the loop. Also, Chelsey and Amber did go down there and met with Amity. ARWC services were offered, but they never heard anything back. They got the sense that the Amity folks knew what they wanted to do and were comfortable moving forward without support. Mike thanked all for the follow-up regarding Amity.

Mark encouraged roundtable members and stakeholders to attend meetings and to ask questions and give feedback during meetings. If there are concerns, please bring them forward in a professional and courteous manner. We are trying to do the best we can.

Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative – Chelsey Nutter



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Chelsey thanked Amber for the Story Map update. She expressed her appreciation for that work. It was started by COCO, but Chelsey didn't have the capacity to move it forward. Thank you for the great relationship between ARWC and PEPO.

Project Updates:

- We do have a grant out there that we refer to as the Science Plan. The intent is to bring together all of the water quality data out there and put it together in a way that would be searchable. We do now have a platform available to work with.
- Monarch Pass Steep Slope Mitigation Project – moving forward. Equipment is mobilizing as we speak. Working with Miller Timber and the Forest Service. Sam Ebersole will be doing some footage of the project. 2-year project.
- Hayden Pass Fire – wrapping up that project. Did a lot of work on the ground last year. Looking at longer-term recovery projects, like habitat restoration. Putting together a case study that can be used by others for post-fire recovery, possibly nationwide.
- Decker Fire – continuing to work with Chaffee County. 2 of 7 EWP projects have been completed. There are also additional projects that will be funded by CDPHE.
- Spring Fire – wrapping up modeling and engineering work. Meeting on Friday with CWCB, Huerfano County WCD and subcontractors. Try to identify projects for the next scope of work. A lot of flooding has been occurring due to this fire. Nothing that has reached town, thankfully. Have to rethink some of the projects as a result. Some areas can no longer be accessed because roads have been washed out.
- Mitigation work – Lake County will be the primary focus. Plan out mitigation projects. Projects that will work to protect critical water resources up there.
- BIP Process – Chelsey has been focusing on the BIP work, working with the committee. Started the outreach process. Looking for projects. Trying to explain to folks how to update projects and get new projects on the list.

The Executive Committee in their role as ARWC Board Members continue to discuss how to move ARWC forward and set it up for best success. Both Amber and Chelsey will stay involved in the BIP update process.

CWCB Instream Flow Rules and Revisions HB1157 – Linda Bassi

Linda presented the process that CWCB is undertaking to implement HB20-1157 and discussed the rule-making process.

- CWCB Instream Flow Program was established in 1973 by state legislature.
- CWCB is the only entity in the state that can hold In-Stream Flow (ISF) water rights to preserve or improve the natural environment to a reasonable degree.
- Can appropriate and adjudicate new ISF water rights or acquire water for ISF purposes through purchase, lease or donation.
- HB20-1157 amended the statute governing temporary loans of water for instream flow use.
- CWCB will revise ISF rules to implement HB20-1157 and to make two non-substantive changes.
- Prior to HB20-1157, temporary loans were limited to ISF use for a period of 120 days, and 3 years of use over a 10-year period.
- The new bill established two types of temporary loan: expedited and renewable.
- Expedited loans may be exercised for up to one year – applicant may not apply for an additional expedited loan.



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- Renewable loans may be exercised for 5 years over a 10-year period and for no more than 3 consecutive years.
- Applicants may reapply for a renewable loan for up to two additional 10-year periods.
- CWCB may use water under a renewable loan to improve the natural environment.
- CWCB is required to promulgate rules to implement the bill.
- The rule-making process is underway, and includes:
 - Informal stakeholder meetings and input
 - Public invited to submit written comments to CWCB staff
 - Staff request for CWCB board authorization to proceed to formal rulemaking
 - Rulemaking Hearing (potentially January 2021)
- Linda discussed draft proposed revisions.

BIP Update – Brett Gracely, Will Koger

Brett described the Work Plan, which will be distributed to the roundtable and is not captured in its entirety here:

- Sub-committees are assisting with BIP info gathering.
- Process for collecting project data.
- Updating existing projects.
- Assimilation of new information for existing projects and 18 new projects thus far.
- Special Studies work plan allocates \$10,000 to the assessment and development of projects meeting rural community needs and \$10,000 for scoping assessments that would define future work and co-funding opportunities. Topics that might be included: updated Ag economics, enviro/rec and forest health evaluations.
- There will be a state-wide tier system that will be implemented.
- Focus now is on updating existing projects.

The Arkansas Basin has been divided into Six Sub-Regions:

1. Upper – Headwaters downstream to Chaffee-Fremont County line includes Chaffee, Custer and Lake counties.
2. Central – Fremont and Pueblo counties along the Arkansas River
3. Lower – Mainstem of Arkansas from Pueblo – Otero/Crowley county line to state line includes Bent, Crowley, Otero, and Prowers counties.
4. Northeast – Tributary watersheds north of the mainstem includes Cheyenne, Kiowa, Lincoln counties.
5. Southeast – Tributary watersheds south of the mainstem comprised of the Purgatoire and Huerfano-Cucharas basins includes Huerfano, Las Animas, and Baca counties.
6. Fountain Creek – Northern tributary watershed includes El Paso and Elbert counties.

Brett Gracely: brett.gracely@lrewater.com

Will Koger: wkoger@forsgren.com

Mark – the Coordinating Committee has been meeting regularly with Brett and Will. Will get a draft Work Plan out to the Roundtable for approval in September. Mike and Amber have been reaching out to folks in the Lower Basin and having conversations there. Chelsey has been doing the same in the Upper Basin. These conversations will lead into the regional workshops, which will be followed up with individual conversations as needed.



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Mike and Amber have started with meeting with county commissioners. They describe the BIP as it stands, the history, the updating process, how to submit projects, the tier matrix. Ask about new projects, potential projects. Mention the regional workshops. Will be meeting with local cities next. As the canal companies have annual meetings, will attend those. Will include these counties: Otero, Prowers, Bent, Kiowa, Cheyenne, perhaps Lincoln, Pueblo, Baca. Feel free to call.

Chelsey has a similar approach. She started by identifying project proponents from the 2015 BIP and reached out to them. Sent them to the website and to the form and asked for updates. Now reaching out to county representatives, including Lake, Fremont, Custer, Chaffee, Huerfano Counties. Also reaching out to non-profits that have had projects in the past or might want to in the future. Will approach municipal entities next. Hoping that folks start their own lists that they bring to a regional workshop in order to complete.

Mark appealed to roundtable members to also be speaking with constituents and possible project proponents. Brett and Will will fill in basin areas that are not being covered by Amber, Mike or Chelsey.

Tiering Matrix: The matrix is under development. The goal is to determine which projects are ready to go, which is a statewide WIG goal.

Amber: DARCA is hosting webinars that may be of interest to RT members: <https://www.darca.org/webinars>

The meeting was adjourned at 3:06 pm.

Admin Email: ARKBASINRT@GMAIL.COM

MEETINGS/LINKS: (all meetings in 2020 will be virtual)

- Arkansas Basin Roundtable: September 9th, 12:30 pm www.arkansasbasin.com
- Enviro/Rec Committee – August 31 at 10:00 am
- CWCB Meeting: September 16 & 17
- IBCC Meeting: September 21
- PEPO: www.pepoarkbasin.com
- Arkansas River Basin Water Forum: <http://www.arbwf.org/>
- CWCB: <http://cwcb.state.co.us/Pages/CWCBHome.aspx>
- Colorado Water Plan: <http://coloradowaterplan.com/>
- Colorado Flood Threat Bulletin: www.coloradofloodthreat.com
- Stream Management Plan Resource Library: <https://coloradosmp.org/>
- In-Stream Flow Rule Revisions: <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/instream-flow-rules-revisions-hb-20-1157>