



Arkansas Basin Roundtable

PLANNING OUR
WATER FUTURE

ROUNDTABLE MEETING NOTES

December 9, 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 12:35 pm. Mark read off attendees. Asked for changes to the agenda? None. Twenty-two (22) members were present.

Approval of Prior Meeting Notes

October and November meeting notes have been circulated for review. *Meeting notes were approved by consensus.*

Public Comment - none

REPORTS:

Executive Committee – Mark Shea

The executive committee briefly met this morning. We discussed asking applicants to include specific language regarding the protection of water rights and being more formal about that. Terry Scanga will draft a policy that we can discuss and possibly adopt.

Also discussed re-booting the PEPO program and hiring a coordinator. Mark has asked to convene a PEPO workgroup. If you would like to participate in that conversation, let Mark know. PEPO will continue to work closely with ARWC and the Water Forum. Mark Shea, Bob Hamel, Matt Heimerich, Paul Fanning, Terry Scanga, and Greg Felt will meet this afternoon to begin that discussion.

CWCB Report – Sam Stein, Russ Sands & Greg Felt

CWCB is preparing a fireside chat for January 27th, time tbd. Goal to provide an update to water plan efforts. Will put things online at that time for public review.

The Governor's proposed budget contains \$6 million this year for state forest fire grants plus an additional \$4 million for CWCB's watershed restoration program. This funding is in response to the horrific drought and fire season that we've just been through.

Excited to announce that Becky Mitchell is doing a virtual tour of all the roundtables, beginning in January. We've just passed the 5-year anniversary of the Colorado Water Plan.

Board approved DM Step 2 (drought management). The next CWCB board meeting will be held January 25 and 26. Three IBCC meetings have been scheduled for next year, with February 23rd as the first meeting date. PEPO Statewide will meet the day before each of the IBCC meetings. Lisa Darling and Robert Sakata will attend. Sam thanked everyone here for their hard work put into the roundtable. It's been a tumultuous 2020. CWCB will continue to meet remotely until circumstances change.

Greg Felt – Greg is our CWCB board member, but of course does not have an encyclopedic knowledge of the Arkansas River and all of its tributaries, nor is it easy to figure out what impacts may be to those tributaries, drainages, including water rights impacts. Because of the COVID-19 shut-down, he hasn't been able to travel throughout the basin as he intended. Greg asks for individual input from roundtable members so that he may better represent the Arkansas Basin at the state level. Please reach out to him. gfelt@chaffeeconomy.org.



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IBCC Report – Jeris Danielson & Terry Scanga

The IBCC met October 21st, and it was probably one of the most productive IBCC meetings in a long time. Members had a very productive conversation about the role of the IBCC and felt that they were heard. How do we get feedback from the roundtable members? A survey was sent out to members, and from the Arkansas RT, only two people responded to the survey. IBCC members are really interested in getting roundtable input.

Water supply reserve fund funding (WSRF) is different than Colorado Water Plan funding. The WSRF bucket is filled by several different sources, including the Severance Tax Fund, and is struggling with budgetary shortfalls this year and likely for a couple of years following. All sources have been impacted by COVID-19. The sports gambling measure will result in some funds to the Colorado Water Plan, but likely not for another year or so.

Needs Assessment Committee – Abby Ortega

The NAC will use the BIP update list to work on a way to prioritize projects and develop a spending priority plan.

Enviro/Rec – Bob Hamel, Amber Shanklin & Rena Griggs

We learned about a new project developing in Canon City called the Ash Street Hill. Along the Arkansas River, the riverbank is degrading, affecting the Fremont County Sanitation area by Reynolds Street bridge.

We got a report from Cindy Williams with Envision, regarding the Chaffee County Recreation and Resource Protection Plan. We're seeing an issue around dispersed camping on public lands.

Will be meeting with our BIP local experts next week to discuss the update and get specific about our priorities within the plan.

The signatories of the Voluntary Flow Management Plan will be meeting on January 6th to go over the next 5-year plan.

Rena told the story of John Martin Reservoir in 2020, which was a very dry year. The JM permanent pool got special approval in 2017 from the Arkansas River Compact Administration to store a certain amount of water in JM to preserve water for fish, wildlife and recreation. What we've learned about that permanent pool now and the specifics of how it works, is that we're utilizing the Highland Canal water right for this, which is under the control of LAMA, so when water comes down the Purgatoire River and the conditions are met, we can use that to fill the permanent pool, along with some other water sources we have. It was so dry this year, there was just never a condition where we were able to fill, and so ultimately for the whole season we were only able to add 153 acre-feet, which is just a drop. Unfortunately, we suffered over 2000 acre-feet of evaporative loss as a result. JM is at 5,000 acre-feet right now, and the goal is to keep 10,000 acre-feet. My reason for telling this story to the roundtable is that we've learned that we need to take advantage of wet years to find additional water to add to that pool from other sources. That water needs to be trans-mountain or unconsumable water. Parks and Wildlife would like to partner with Ag entities and municipalities to get water in wet years to boost the permanent pool.

ARWC – Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative – Carol Ekarius

Carol was not able to attend today. The Monarch Pass Steep Slope mitigation project was successful and they've finished for this year. We are collaborating with the Monarch Ski Area to show the related Sam Ebersole webisode at the ski lodge and facilities.

Membership

Rick Kienitz would like to replace Tom Simpson, with Aurora Water, as a non-voting out-of-basin roundtable member. Tom has retired. Aurora Water has interests and partnerships throughout the Arkansas Basin. They want to remain a good partner and stay informed and involved. Aurora Water has an office in Rocky Ford. He



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appreciates the partnerships they have, and the opportunity to be involved in the Arkansas Basin and see where things can marry up.

Paul Fanning endorsed Rick. He's been a really valuable member of the planning committee of the Arkansas River Basin Water Forum. Al Tucker and Bob Hamel also extended their endorsements.

Rick Kienitz was appointed by consensus of the roundtable. This is a non-voting membership available to an out-of-basin entity with water interests in the Arkansas Basin.

BREAK

BIP Update Status Report and Discussion – Brett Gracely & Will Koger

Technical Update Follow Up Discussions

- Ag Water Supply Gap Discussion: December 11, 3:00 pm
- TMD Water Supply Discussion: December 14, 10:00 am
- Enviro/Rec Needs Discussion: December 16, 2:00 pm
- Follow Up to M&I Demands: TBD

Work Plan Update

- Stakeholder Engagement and Outreach
- Project Revision and New Project Input
- Project Detail Completeness Assessment of Tier Criteria

Next Steps Forward

- Project Follow Up Workshops and “Last Call” Correspondence
- Initial Outline and Drafting of Volume 2

We have received quite a lot of input in the last few weeks. We've also engaged in a circling back with folks that added preliminary information, to ensure that those projects can be brought into the Tier Sequence, so that they're in the right bucket.

This is a kind of last-call. We'll need to move on to analysis and cost-estimating soon. If you're a project proponent of a project, it's not too late to update or revise those, please do that as soon as possible.

Contact info is on the website, call us or email us, we're happy to help.

Begun to schedule a completeness assessment in January as a matter of reference for new projects added in 2020. We may hit 80 or 90 new projects. There are over 600 entries in the database. About half of those are active, half are complete or no longer being pursued.

Q&A: The technical update follow-up discussions will hopefully feed back to the GC that is preparing Volume 1 that identified Objectives and Goals and Strategies to meet those goals. Alignment between projects and how they are prioritized in order to meet the goals. We are an over-appropriated basin and have been for quite a while.

Mark echoed that this is the month to finish getting new projects and project updates submitted to Brett and Will in order that the entire basin is included regarding projects and needs.



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The meeting was adjourned at 1:55 pm.

Admin Email: ARKBASINRT@GMAIL.COM

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

- Arkansas Basin Roundtable Meeting: January 13, 12:30 pm www.arkansasbasin.com
- PEPO: www.pepoarkbasin.com
- Enviro/Rec: Jan 25
- Arkansas River Basin Water Forum: <http://www.arbwf.org/>
- CWCB: Jan 25, 26 <http://cwcb.state.co.us/Pages/CWCBHome.aspx>
- IBCC: Feb 23
- PEPO Statewide Mtg: Feb 22
- 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>
- DARCA - <https://www.darca.org/>