

Metro Roundtable Meeting Summary

Thursday, January 14, 2021

Time: 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Virtual - GoToMeeting

Members in Attendance:

Alex Davis, Anita Seitz, Anne Beierle, Barbara Biggs, Blair Corning, Bob Peters, Casey Davenport, Chris Douglas, Dave Nickum, Dawn Jewell, Devon Buckels, Emily Hunt, Jim Hall, Ken Lykens, Kim Gortz, Lauren Pulver, Lesley Sebol, Lisa Darling, Loretta Daniel, Morgan Lynch, Patricia Wells, Rick Marsicek, Rick McCloud, Rob Sakata, Sarah Borgers, Shaden Musleh, Steve O'Doriso, Susan Nedell, Tom Arnold

Guests:

Andy Nye, Eric Jorgensen, Kayla Ranney, Mary Presecan, Matt Cook, Melissa Mosier, Jessica Brody, Karlyn Armstrong, Scott Griebing, Matt Lingburg, Matt Stearns, Chip Paulson, Katie Keefe, Roger Kilgore, Phyllis Thomas

CWCB:

Russ Sands, Megan Holcomb, Sam Stein, Katherine Weismiller, Diane Kiely

Metro Roundtable Business Meeting

1. Welcome/Introductions

2. Approval of December 10, 2020 MRT Meeting Summary

It was moved and seconded to approve the December 10, 2020 meeting summary; motion carried unanimously.

3. Agenda: additions or changes

None

4. Public Comment

None

5. WSRF (Hunt)

1. Funds Status Per Category Update (5 min.)
 1. WSRF balance summary reviewed.

6. Municipal Drought Task Force Update (Megan Holcomb)

Primary responsibilities of the task force were reviewed. There are climate triggers that activate task force level put in place (levels 1, 2, 3). The Drought Task Force informs the Governor. A PowerPoint presentation was provided and is available by request. The next task force meeting will be held on February 3rd. Contact Megan Holcomb if you would like more information or would like to have a role.

How does MRT see themselves engaging in this process? Could there be a small committee to report back task force activities to the RT? Rob Sakata volunteered to participate in the Muni Drought Task Force as a liaison to the Ag Impacts Task Force where he participates. The connection to some irrigated ag and municipalities is strong. It might be beneficial to see if coordinated efforts might help both. Lisa Darling is involved in the Muni Task Force and will report back during the February meeting. MRT members can decide if they want to form a committee in February.

Jason Finehout is working with others to form a group specific to Metro area water providers

to coordinate on drought messaging and potential actions concerning drought. If you want to get on this list his contact is Jason.Finehout@denverwater.org. The CWCB drought webpage link where you can find updates and engagement opportunities is, <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/drought>.

7. BIP Update (Matt Cook)

Last week was the virtual Project Tiering Workshop to come to consensus on the assumptions and how to apply project tiering across the entire list. They will use this information, including concerns feedback, to apply to next steps tiering. Draft tiering is to be completed by February 3rd. They will develop a survey to go out to the RTs for feedback. A special study task order was approved to research and document examples of beneficial environmental and recreation interactions between three Ag water uses within the lower SPB. If you have potential case studies that highlight how irrigated Ag may benefit E&R, please contact the study group. Presentation available by request.

8. IBCC Update (Lisa Darling)

The next meeting is February 23rd. The agenda is in draft form. They will focus on the survey results.

9. CWCB Update (Sam Stein)

CWCB will be hosting a Riverside Chat on January 27th and will have the Instream Flow Workshop the same day. They will be reviewing instream flow revisions. They are welcoming ideas for potential demonstration projects. The next PEPO meeting will be February 22nd. Becky Mitchell will be joining MRT in February during her BRT tour.

10. Committee Updates

1. PEPO Committee (C. Davenhill)

Video - Christi Bode, videographer

Focus on the hydrologic function of the South Platte River, the value of agriculture and the unique character of our watershed. The audiences for this video are Roundtable members, community groups and educational media platforms.

Since last month, Christi has completed all interviews including:

Mark Beardsley and Brad Johnson speaking to headwaters condition and protection history,

Former Mayor Wellington Webb speaking to the urban renaissance of the South Platte River in Denver and the importance of preserving South Platte River values for future generations,

Marc and Brett Arnusch speaking to the value, history and future prospects of agriculture in the South Platte River Basin,

Emily Hunt speaking to municipal water supply capacity and the City of Thornton's Northern Properties Stewardship Plan.

Next step will be to edit all audio to tell the story. Visuals will be added after the audio is completed.

The schedule has been thrown off by the effects of the pandemic in 2020. We are in line with budget projections and have included an item for video promotion in our 2021 WSRF and PEPO funding requests.

Please note that Christi Bode, Moxiecran Media, has been asked by the Colorado Film Commission to create a video on the topic of agricultural 'buy and dry' with support from the Rio Grande Water Conservation District. The PEPO committee has discussed adding support to this effort. Would the Roundtable like more information in order to consider supporting this project?

LLYLI – we have completed reviewing a narrative provided by Evoque Communications as part of our agreement with the Live Like You Love It campaign. Thanks to the PEPO Committee members for their thoughtful review of a message which seeks to **clarify the statistic that 86% of South Platte water is used in agriculture** and positively showcase **agriculture's role in the community and watershed**. We are asking for an updated 'life cycle of water' graphic that illustrates agricultural water use, return flows and the value of agriculture. The audiences for this effort are north eastern Colorado residents, educators, interested citizen groups, taxpayers and voters.

- Could Roundtable members please share any graphics or resources they have that depict the concept of 'return flows' and explain the math for how 1.4 million acre feet of native supply and 0.5 million acre feet of transbasin diversions = 4 million acre feet of water supply diversions.

Targeted Outreach – Upper South Platte Basin Watershed Association includes Districts from Douglas and Jefferson Counties on to SE Weld CD AND Colorado Association of Conservation Districts Water Committee to engage their participation and engagement with the Roundtables and the Colorado Water Plan.

Education Action Plan – currently being updated for 2021 due in March, 2021

We will invite the team from CSU who are working on a project proceeding with WSRF funding:

Sustaining plains aquatic ecosystems using an integrated ecological and social approach

- 1) Ecological: Evaluate impacts of non-native mosquitofish on native fish under different flow & salinity conditions in the lab.
- 2) Social: Assess stakeholders' values and actions regarding aquatic ecosystems, and evaluate the stakeholder decision-making network [i.e., what are the diverse views & which voice is heard or not heard?]
- 3) Outreach: Develop a video that documents aquatic species, habitat, and people working towards aquatic sustainability.

PEPO and WSRF funding – application for 2021 PEPO budget supplement has been submitted along with letters of support from the Metro and South Platte Roundtables. Thank you.

- **Southplattebasin.com website** – please, please, please visit the website; give us your feedback via email link; what does the Roundtable want from the website.

2. Environmental/Recreation Committee (D. Nickum)

The Environment & Recreation committee has not met since the last Basin Roundtable meeting, but for the new year has set a standing monthly meeting time for 2 pm on the 4th Wednesday of each month. We will have more to share at the February roundtable meeting.

To date, we have been primarily focused on working with the Local Expert team in refining the goals/strategies documents. Additionally, we have recommended – and appreciate the roundtable's support for proceeding on – a study documenting the environmental and recreational benefits associated with irrigated agriculture in the lower South Platte basin. Better understanding and documenting key resources – such as sloughs and wetlands being supported through return flows – is an important part of better addressing E&R values in the South Platte and encouraging continued and new partnerships across water use sectors. A copy of that study scope of work prepared by the LE team is included with this update.

3. M&I Committee (B. Peters)

Information was provided on possible drought emergence and meetings being convened by the CWCB. Donnie Dustin pointed out that drought response is different for all municipalities due to the varying configuration of water supply systems and vulnerabilities.

Most of the meeting focused on following related to the BIP update.

1) The group provided opinions on how to incorporate the concept of maintaining benefits of urban landscapes into the Themes, Goals, and Strategies portion of the BIP. Further progress on water use efficiency will be important in solving the future supply gap, but should be balanced with minimizing loss of the most important benefits of landscapes such as aesthetic value, shading/cooling from tree canopy, public access to greenspaces, and urban wildlife habitat. Based on the ideas presented, language was added to the document and submitted to the Local Expert team.

2) The group brainstormed a list of challenges, opportunities, and achievements. A document was compiled and provided to the Local Expert team. We will follow up with discussing ideas for case studies to include that highlight the above.

- Next M&I meeting January 19, 2021.

11. Round Table Member Comments

MRT 2021 Presentation Topics

Demand Management Economic Study (Doug Jeavons)

Poudre River Aug Plan (later in the Spring)

Climate Change (Laurna Katz)

Front Range Roundtable and Forest Health

Salinity Study Update (summer)

Env & Rec CPW Initiative (Nickum)

In February Becky Mitchell will be attending MRT. We will also review the presentation topics to determine who to reach out to in March.

12. Meeting Schedule

1. South Platte Basin Roundtable Meeting – Tuesday, January 12th, 2021, 4:00 pm, [GoToMeeting Online](#)
2. Metro Roundtable Meeting – Thursday, January 14th, 2021, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm, [GoToMeeting Online](#)
3. South Platte Basin Roundtable Meeting – Tuesday, February 9th, 2021, 4:00 pm, [GoToMeeting Online](#)
4. Metro Roundtable Meeting – Thursday, February 11th, 2021, 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm, [GoToMeeting Online](#)