

South Platte Basin Roundtable (SPBRT) Meeting
Tuesday, March 9, 2021
4:00-7:00 p.m. (MST)

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South Platte Basin Roundtable Business Meeting Minutes

1. GoToMeeting Orientation, Questions, and Comments (G. Varra – 10 min)

The meeting started at 4:03 p.m. Garrett Varra thanked everyone for attending the SPBRT's eleventh virtual meeting. He reminded attendees of virtual meeting etiquette (e.g., mute yourself when not speaking, enter questions or comments into the chat box, be concise and follow agenda).

2. Welcome/Introductions (G. Varra – 10 min)

In attendance: Gene Manuello*, Loretta Daniel*, Jim Yahn*, Garrett Varra*, Kirk Vincent*, Lisa Leben*, Kelsea Holloway*, Jim Ford*, Daylan Figgs*, John Kolanz*, Shane Miller*, Allyn Wind*, Jim Hall*, Dick Elsner*, Larry Rogstad*, Deb Daniel*, Bruce Gerk*, Sean Cronin*, Lynda James*, Lori Saine*, Sean Chambers*, Sam Stein, Casey Davenport, Christy Wiseman, Amy Mitchell, Brent Schantz, Chip Paulson, Corey DeAngelis, David Rausch, Donnie Dustin, Hattie Johnson, Hope Bartlett, Jojo La, Jordana Barrack, Josh Kuhn, Kat Weismiller, Ken Quandt, Matt Cook, Matt Lindburg, Melissa Mosier, Pete Conovitz, Kayla Ranney, Ray Douglas, Robert Sakata, and multiple members of the public. Kevin Lusk* was excused from the March meeting. 21 voting SPBRT members were present (* denotes a voting member).

3. Approval of February 2021 SPBRT Meeting Minutes (G. Varra – 5 min action required)

Daylan Figgs made a motion to approve to February 2021 meeting minutes and Jim Yahn seconded. The motion passed unanimously without discussion or contest.

4. March 2021 Agenda Additions or Changes (G. Varra – 5 min action required)

There were no proposed additions or changes to the March 2021 meeting agenda. Shane Miller made a motion to accept the March 2021 meeting agenda and Lynda James seconded. The motion passed unanimously without discussion or contest.

5. Membership Updates

- a. Jason Roudebush Resignation - WSRF Needs Committee Chair Appointment (G. Varra – 5 min **action required**)

Garrett Varra announced that Jason Roudebush has resigned from the St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District as well as his seat on the SPBRT. Sean Cronin will resume the voting seat representing the Conservancy District. However, Roudebush's resignation means that the SPBRT needs a new WSRF Needs Committee Chair. Varra suggested that he take over the WSRF Needs Committee Chair role in the interim, asking CWCB staff to update the Roundtable's website with his contact information. Sean Cronin announced that he will hire a replacement who will serve on the SPBRT, hopefully in time for the April meeting. The WSRF Needs Committee Chair position is a great leadership pathway for someone interested in eventually becoming SPBRT Chair. However, Cronin is not personally interested in serving as the WSRF Needs Committee Chair. Varra and Cronin further discussed the upcoming WSRF grant cycle and commented that perhaps non-voting SPBRT members can contribute by serving on the WSRF Needs Committee. The current SPBRT bylaws do not seem to prohibit non-voting members from serving on committees.

6. DWR Data Logger/Telemetry Installation Project WSRF Update (Brent Schantz – 15 min)

Brent Schantz of the Division of Water Resources presented an update on the Data-Logger/Telemetry Installation project, which was funded by a WSRF grant in 2020. Grant funds were used to purchase equipment and materials to install a stage sensor, recorder and/or cellular telemetry on 114 structures in Division 1. As of February 20, 2021 a total of \$252,616.34 has been spent on equipment and materials for installation. 50 sites have been installed with telemetry and are reporting on DWR's website; there are 44 more telemetry sites to install. Schantz hopes to complete all installations in 2021, with a final grant completion date in 2023. In his presentation, Schantz explained multiple benefits of the project. Overall, the project helps water users maximize beneficial use of their water and allows more efficient administration by giving Water Commissioners access to near real-time diversion data. After Schantz's presentation, SPBRT members asked questions about the types of batteries and solar panels used to provide electricity to the equipment. Jim Hall commented that having better data helps make water administration more efficient and thanked Schantz for his work.

7. Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) Update (G. Varra and Matt Cook – 60 min)

Matt Cook presented on the BIP update. As part of the presentation, Matt Lindberg provided an overview of a forest health study. The objective of the study is to create alignment with respect to water-focused forest health related activities that are happening in each basin and how they integrate into the BIP and Water Plan updates. Matt Cook reported that the updated Goals and

Strategies are substantially complete; BIP update subcommittees are working to develop new Measurable Outcomes in March. Cook also noted that the Joint Steering Committee and BIP update subcommittees are refreshing the Challenges, Opportunities, and Achievements sections of the BIP. Finally, Cook gave an update on the project schedule.

8. **SPBRT Committee Updates**

a. **South Platte Basin and Statewide Account Balances / Water Supply Reserve Fund (WSRF) (S. Stein – 10 min)**

Sam Stein reported \$626,865 for the South Platte Basin balance and \$5,749,900 for the statewide balance. There are \$121,000 worth of grants going before the CWCB Board later this month. If all grants are approved by the CWCB Board, then the South Platte Basin balance will become \$505,865.

Garrett Varra reminded everyone that the next round of WSRF grant applications are due by April 1. The WSRF Needs Committee will review the applications in April. WSRF applicants will present to the Roundtable at the May meeting.

b. **Public Education, Participation, and Outreach (PEPO) (C. Davenhill – 15 min)**

Casey Davenhill presented the PEPO report. A written report was included in the March 2021 meeting materials folder.

There was a meeting of all PEPO Liaisons on February 22. This is a helpful process that brings us along together to address the role of outreach and public participation with the Roundtable process. Increased duties of the Liaisons may include website updates, committee meeting management, and WSRF process support. This reflects an elevated role for PEPO and the Roundtable Liaisons. The Metro and South Platte basins already do most of the things that were referenced. In particular, our member handbook is an important tool as new people join the Roundtables. There will be an Education Workshop later this spring. Water for Colorado was mentioned. A meeting with members of the IBCC and PEPO Liaisons was hosted on February 23. Again the importance of the role of PEPO was reiterated and additional shared resources were mentioned. The need to get the word out about the Colorado Water Plan was emphasized. Scenario planning and planning documents were emphasized with a couple of excellent slides which were discussed at length. We hope to have those slides for reference soon. The goal to have our Education Action Plans align with the Basin Implementation Plans was discussed. Again, we are fortunate that the PEPO Liaisons and subcommittees have been active participants in the BIP update in the South Platte Basin.

We encourage all Roundtable members to register at engagewcb.org and take part in the Water Plan Survey on that site. A forest health workshop is also planned.

There was some discussion about use of terms like 'watershed'. Do people understand what a watershed is? Should we expect them to? All of us at the Colorado Watershed Assembly say yes. Other opinions vary.

As a reminder, the focus of the South Platte Video project is the hydrologic function of the South Platte River, the value of agriculture, and the unique character of the watershed. The intended audience for this video are Roundtable members, community groups, and educational media platforms. We have a written draft script which we are in the process of reviewing with various members of the Metro and South Platte Roundtables as we work to maintain a focus on the South Platte as a river built by use and a commitment to thriving economies, active and effective conservation, and stewardship. An emphasis on the importance on return flows is encouraged. Briefly, here is a list of the interviews conducted for this 7 minute video: 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; and Emily Hunt speaking to municipal water supply capacity and the City of Thornton Stewardship project.

Again, 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 South Platte Roundtable would like to be kept in the information loop regarding this project?

The PEPO Committee has completed reviewing a narrative provided by Evoque Communications as part of their agreement with the Live Like You Love It (LLYLI) 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. The PEPO Committee is 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 Colorado residents, educators, interested citizen groups, taxpayers, and voters. Roundtable members are encouraged to share any graphics or resources 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 trans-basin diversions equal 4 million acre feet of water supply diversions.

The PEPO Committee has been doing targeted outreach to various groups, including the Upper South Platte Basin Watershed Association (which includes districts from Douglas and Jefferson Counties on to SE Weld CD) and Colorado Association of Conservation Districts Water Committee. The goal is to engage their participation and engagement with the

Roundtables and the Colorado Water Plan. Outreach to Left Hand Watershed Center, Poudre Learning Center, and other watershed groups is planned for March.

The Education Action Plan is currently being updated for 2021. It's due in March. Per CWCB request, Education Action Plan updates should be aligned with Basin Implementation Plan updates. Current language proposed for the BIP's Goal and Strategies is:

11. Broaden South Platte Communications, Outreach, and Education Programs

The South Platte Basin will expand on existing communications and outreach programs to improve knowledge and understanding of water challenges and needs for all citizens of the South Platte Basin and how these needs are being addressed by the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan.

- A. Support and expand communication and outreach activities of the Public Education, Participation, and Outreach Workgroup of the Inter Basin Compact Committee and the Metro/South Platte Basin Roundtable Education Liaisons
- B. Support the South Platte Basin's participation with the Colorado Statewide Water Education Action Planning process to engage South Platte Basin residents to better understand the South Platte Basin Implementation Plan
- C. Encourage South Platte Basin residents to take an active role in their communities to make informed decisions about critical water issues

Measurable Outcomes will be identified with input from the PEPO Committee.

The application for 2021 PEPO budget supplement has been submitted along with letters of support from the Metro and South Platte Roundtables.

Please visit the South Platte Basin [website](#) and provide feedback via the email link on the site. The Metro Roundtable is looking to use the South Platte Basin Roundtable website to host WSRF applications and similar materials.

c. SPBRT By-Laws Update (G. Varra – 2 min)

Garrett Varra noted that he had not yet had time to convene with the SPBRT Bylaws Review Committee. The Committee will meet soon.

9. Legislative Update (G. Varra – 15 min)

Garrett Varra gave a high-level summary of a few water-related bills, including SB21-034. He will have more detailed information at the next meeting. Jim Yahn noted that he can contribute to the legislative updates going forward.

10. Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC) Update (J. Yahn and S. Cronin – 10 min)

Sean Cronin provided an IBCC update. The IBCC had a meeting on February 23. A 4-hour recording of the IBCC meeting is available on CWCB's [website](#). At the meeting, CWCB Director Rebecca Mitchell

presented a new code of conduct for the Roundtables. PEPO Liaisons presented a PEPO update. Russ Sands gave an update on the Water Plan update process. Alex Funk gave an update on ATMs. Matt Lindberg presented on the forest health study. There was also a panel presentation on recent tax initiatives and funding for water projects. Lastly, the IBCC discussed Demand Management. The next IBCC meeting is on June 23.

Jim Yahn added that the meeting was more focused on presentations than discussion. Yahn commented that the funding presentation was one of the more interesting presentations. Garrett Varra thanked Sean Cronin and Jim Yahn for volunteering their time to attend IBCC meetings.

11. Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Update (S. Stein and R. Sakata – 10 min)

Robert Sakata, the South Platte Basin's new CWCB Board representative, noted that he is always open for questions and comments. His first meeting as a CWCB Board member is this month.

Sam Stein reported that the CWCB Board meeting is later this month. Earlier in the month, the CWCB Board discussed the Phase 2 workplan for the Demand Management program; they are developing a strawman framework. A recording of the CWCB Board's Demand Management Workshop is available on [YouTube](#). Stein also talked about the Roundtable code of conduct. CWCB wants to ensure Roundtable meetings comply with open meetings law. He also noted that all Roundtables are working on their BIP updates. CWCB staff will utilize engagewcb.org to host BIP drafts and share materials with the public. Water Plan Grants can be used to fund special studies that were not incorporated into the BIP update process. There are numerous Water Plan update workshops scheduled in the coming weeks; a schedule is available on <https://engagewcb.org/>

After Sam Stein's updates, CWCB's Endangered Species Policy Specialist Jojo La presented about Focus Area Maps in the Water Plan. There will be a Water Plan workshop focused on environment and recreation on April 7. The workshop will go into more detail about the maps and other tools for prioritization and analysis of environmental resources. Various attendees had discussion after the presentation.

12. Public Comment (5 min)

Corey DeAngelis commented on DWR's Water Rights Abandonment process. July 1, 2021 is the deadline for water rights owners to send a statement of objection to DWR.