



Inter Basin Compact Committee Basin Roundtables
Rio Grande Basin Roundtable

Tuesday, September 14, 2021 at 2:00 pm

In Person

623 Fourth Street
Alamosa, CO 81101
Zoom Virtual Option

Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

Chairman Nathan Coombs called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

Attendance

Those in attendance in person and online included Emma Reesor (Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project), Nathan Coombs (Conejos Water CD), Connor Born (RGHRP), Amber Pacheco (RGWCD), Charlie Spielman (M&I representative), Wayne Schwab (Trinchera Irrigation District), Kevin Terry (Trout Unlimited), Judy Lopez (Trichera Ranch and PEPO liaison), Peter Clark, Sally Wier (RiGHT), Erin Minks (Senator Bennett's office), Keith Holland (agriculture representative), Chuck Finnegan, Dale Pizel (CPW), Jim Ehrlich (Colorado Potato Administrative Committee), Bethany Howell (CDA), Daryl Kohut, Cary Aloia, Sam Stein (CWCB), Eugene Farish, Jenny Nehring, Jeff Derry (Center for Snow), Steven Romero, Wavrely Klaw (Sonoran Institute), Erin McWilliams(RGHRP), Daniel Boyes(RGHRP), Darin Schepp (DWR), Cindy Medina (ARK), Kurt Zeiler (GSI Environmental), Sharon Vaughn (USFWS), Cathy Garcia (Congresswoman Boebert), Peyton Valentine (CWCD)

Nikita Christensen, Rio de la Vista, and Virginia Christensen were excused

Agenda

Motion to change the order of the agenda to ensure Jeff Derry will be able to present in person, Dwight Martin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Chairman asked for approval of the agenda with a motion. ____motioned, and ____ seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.

Minutes

Virginia's affiliation will be changed from Trinchera to Terrace. The Chairman asked for approval of the July minutes with this correction. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Charlie Spielman – Charlie recommended the book *Dark Winter* to members of the roundtable. This book describes an alternative scenario to traditional views of climate change. One in which global cooling is the predominant outcome.

BIP Update

Daniel Gave an update on the BIP Process, highlighting the work completed by the subcommittees during the Roundtable BIP review process. The BIP Update drafts are now available for public comment through November 15, and are accessible on engagewcb.org.

PEPO Update

Judy clarified the new structure of Roundtable public outreach, which includes collaboration with roundtable members on topics of interest. Judy will be contacting roundtable members for assistance. Be on the lookout for new media, including Fun Fact Friday videos and 101 Fact Sheets, and let Judy know if you have any ideas for future topics.

Rio Reels

Emma reminded members about the Restoration Project's annual fundraiser, the Rio Reels Film Festival. The event will be virtual and include great river related short films and a silent auction. Get tickets at riograndeheadwaters.org/rio-reels

Master Irrigators

Every Monday in January. This program began in Texas **and includes...** there is a \$100 registration fee, but once you complete the course you are paid a stipend of \$2000 over a period of time in return for reporting. For information visit **the ___ website**. Other incentives are also available. The course is limited to 25 people.

Project Previews

Nathan explained the status of this round of WSRF funding. All of the projects presented today are project previews and may or may not be formally submitted for funding. Final presentations will take place during the November Roundtable meeting.

- Conejos River Partnership Project - Emma
 - o This project involves irrigation infrastructure improvements along the lower Conejos River. Sites have been identified with the Conejos Stream Management Plan, and initial phases are underway, thanks in part to initial funding from the roundtable last year. There was discussion about scope, timeline, and automation goals.
- Trout Lake Reservoir – Kevin
 - o A budget on this project will be available in November. This project began with a need to repair a breach in an enlargement of the reservoir. There is a complicated history with the enlargement, and the project will now be stabilizing the enlargement breach and repairing the outlet. The water right is owned by La Garita Ranch and is managed by CPW for cutthroat trout. This project would also involve a tools analysis with the USFS to minimize impact to the surrounding environment.
- Goose Lake – Kevin
 - o Managed for wildlife and ag. This reservoir has an outlet problem, and the project would explore the feasibility of lining the outlet without disrupting the population of Boreal Toads and Cutthroat Trout.
- Alamosa River Instream Flow Restoration – Kevin

- This project would work towards securing water and exploring management opportunities to establish an instream flow program on the Alamosa River. This would benefit the environment and recreational fisheries, as well as provide groundwater recharge. Dwight and Cindy will both be working with Kevin to coordinate releases.
- Center for Snow WSRF Funding Request - Jeff Derry
 - Jeff gave an overview of the Dust-on-Snow Project, which samples snowpack to forecast snowmelt rates and magnitude. Dust can have a profound impact on the rate and timing of spring snowmelt. There are resources on their website. Jeff highlighted work with the USGS and other organizations that dovetail well with Dust-on-Snow data. The request is \$15,000 from each basin roundtable in Colorado, totaling \$135,000 in support. Jeff gave an overview of the other funding sources for this project. There was a discussion about how this contribution would benefit the Basin. The roundtable expressed support for the continuation of the project, but also discussed the unfortunate circumstances of year-to-year funding. With this discussion the potential for additional funding sources will be explored.
- Conejos Cooperative Project – Peyton Valentine
 - This project would repurpose gravel pits outside Antonito into reservoirs, providing environmental, Agricultural, water management, and community benefits. This would also help better serve water users on the Rio San Antonio. The funding would go towards research and development. Capacity is estimated at 1600AF, but the management.
- Shaw Reservoir Rehabilitation Project – Heather Dutton
 - This pre-compact reservoir would allow the release of water further up in the basin and better replace injuries. Repairing and modernizing the reservoir, which was damaged during the West Fork Complex Fire, would help fully realize the multi-purpose potential of the reservoir. This project is a partnership with SLVWCD, BLM, Mineral County, and Trout Unlimited.

Subdistrict Update – Amber Pacheco

Subdistricts are continuing to find water sources, including ATMs, cooperative agreements. Any Ideas are more than... Subdistrict 1 is continuing to meet to reach their goal of sustainability. Subdistrict 4 is working on a groundwater easement project. Sub 5 will be exploring well options to better make replacements closer to Saguache Creek. Amber also plugged the Master Irrigator Program (see public comment).

DWR Update

Darin Shepp gave an update on drought conditions, as well as weather outlooks for the fall and winter. He also gave an update on the Rio Grande and Conejos obligations for the Compact. Compact litigation began on Oct. 4 with Colorado as a bystander.

CWCB Update – Sam Stein

Sam touched on the status of the BIP updates. The public comment period will begin Oct. 13 in the form of an online interactive pdf. Visit engage.cwcb.org to make comments. They are also previewing their projects database, a living document that includes all BIP update projects and will be updated in the future to remain current. A 100% draft of the Water Plan Technical Update is scheduled to be complete by June 2022. The next board meeting will be Nov 17-18, IBCC will meet Oct 21, and PEPO meeting on Oct 20. \$451,347 in WSRF basin funds are available, \$200,000 of which must be allocated by May. Statewide there is \$8,388,138 available in WSRF Funds.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:50 pm.

Next meeting will take place Tuesday, November 9th at 2:00 pm.