

**Interbasin Compact Committee
Gunnison Basin Roundtable Meeting
Virtual and In-Person Meeting
Roubideaux Room, 320 West 5th Street, Delta, CO
November 15, 2021**

Voting Members Present:

Steve Anderson	Agricultural
Bruce Bair	At-Large Member
Mike Berry	Tri-County WCD
Justin Blair	At-Large Member
Sonja Chavez	At-Large Member
Kathleen Curry	Saguache County
Allen Distel	Bostwick Park WCD
Joanne Fagan	Ouray Municipalities
Nancy Fishing	Montrose County
Steve Fletcher	At-Large Member
Jonathan Houck	Gunnison County
Austin Keiser	Grand Mesa WCD
Wendell Koontz	At-Large Member
John McClow	House and Senate Ag Committees
Michael Murphy	Hinsdale County
Scott Murphy	Montrose Municipalities
Julie Nania	Upper Gunnison River WCD
Bill Nesbitt	Gunnison Municipalities
Jim Plumhoff	Industrial
Mark Ritterbush	Mesa Municipalities
Mark Roeber	Delta County
Neal Schwieterman	Recreational
Adam Turner	Local Domestic Water Supplier
Richard Udd	Delta Municipalities
Martha Whitmore	Ouray County

Voting Members Excused/Absent:

Thomas Alvey	North Fork WCD
Mike Cleary	Crawford Water Conservancy District
Cary Denison	Environmental
John Justman	Mesa County
Chuck Mitisek	Ute WCD
Dan Murphy	Hinsdale Municipalities
Vacant	Colorado River Water Conservation District

Liaisons and Non-Voting Members Present:

Sam Stein (CWCB), Sharon Dunning (Assistant Recorder), Raquel Flinker (CRWCD), Bob Hurford (Division of Water Resources), Ryan Unterreiner (CPW).

Public:

VIA ZOOM: Russ Sands (CWCB), Brad Piehl (JW Associates), Dan Gibbs (DNR and IBCC Director), Ashley Hom (USFS), Cindy Dozier (Club 20/Immediate Past Pres.), Craig Ullman (Applegate Group), Curran Trick (CWCB Director), Beverly Richards (UGRWCD), Elizabeth Schoder (CWCB), Jeff Derry (CSAS/CODOS), Kelly Romero-Heaney (CO-DNR), Matt Lindburg (Brown & Caldwell), Randi Kim (City of Grand Junction), Matt McCombs (USDA Forest Service), Kirk Vincent (____), Gina Rone (____), Tanya Ishikawa (Uncompahgre Watershed Partnership), Taylor Winchell (Airborne Snow Observatory), Kyle Vanderberg (Redlands Water & Power), Patty Gabriel (Town of Olathe).

IN PERSON: Dixie Luke (Fire Mtn Canal), Suzie Bilberry (Delta Conservation District), Paul Kehmeier (CO Dept of Agriculture), Niles Riese and Andy Wick (Orchard City Irrigation District).

Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Vice-Chairperson Austin Keiser.

Roll Call/Introductions

After roll call a quorum was declared to be present.

Agenda Approval

Marti Whitmore moved to approve the agenda as presented. John McClow seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Austin Keiser stated at 4:00 the meeting would be paused for comments from the new IBCC Director, Dan Gibbs.

Election of Officers

Austin Keiser requested nominations for Chairperson. Marti Whitmore nominated Kathleen Curry to continue as Chairperson. Kathleen declined, saying she would like to step down. Kathleen Curry nominated Steve Anderson as Chairperson. John McClow moved nominations cease and to elect Steve Anderson by acclimation. Mark Roeber seconded and the motion carried. Steve Anderson took over the meeting

Steve Anderson requested nominations for Vice-Chairperson. John McClow nominated and moved to elect Austin Keiser as Vice-Chairperson. Mark Roeber seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Austin Keiser remains the Vice-Chairperson.

Nominations were requested for Recorder. Kathleen Curry nominated and moved to elect Mike Berry as Recorder. Steve Fletcher seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Mike Berry remains the Recorder.

Approval of Minutes from the September 20, 2021 Meeting

Wendell Koontz requested a correction to the minutes to show he was present at the meeting.

Steve Fletcher moved to approve the minutes of the September 20, 2021 meeting as amended. Wendell Koontz seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Gunnison Basin Forest Health Planning Update

Sonja Chavez gave an update on the Upper Gunnison Basin Watershed and Forest Health Zones of Concern Planning Study. Brad Piehl with JW Associates gave a presentation on Upper Gunnison Watershed Wildfire Assessment and discussed the work he is doing for the district in identifying fire zones of concern and other watershed health concerns. Matt McCombs with the USDA highlighted specific sections of the district's plan and discussed how the work done by the Upper Gunnison and Brad Piehl will incorporate into the plan. The comment period is extended to November 26.

Comments from New IBCC Director, Dan Gibbs

Dan Gibbs, Executive Director of Colorado Department of Natural Resources, introduced himself as well as Kelly Romero-Healy, the Assistant Director on Water. Dan was recently appointed by Governor Polis as the Chairperson for the IBCC. Dan is from Gunnison, and a former Summit County commissioner. He has ample experience with forest health issues in Colorado.

CWCB Update and WSRF Funding Proposal (Steve Anderson, Russ Sands)

Russ Sands discussed the changes proposed in the WSRF Funding Proposal. There is a concern the lack of severance tax will leave no funding for roundtables in the near and far-term, so this is a plan to stabilize the water supply reserve fund (WSRF) for roundtables. The plan will turn the statewide account into a savings account to fund basins for 3 years. The plan will provide \$300K per year and institute a basin cap of \$750K. It also adds almost four times more money for PEPO. If money becomes available the board could always re-evaluate. Water loan grants can help offset the loss of the statewide match.

Some Roundtable members mentioned frustration with prioritization of funding. The Roundtable discussed the memo from Tom Alvey regarding the funding proposal.

Marti Whitmore moved to submit Tom Alvey's memo as comments from the Gunnison Basin Roundtable. Joanne Fagan seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

IBCC Report (Joanne Fagan, Mark Roeber, Cary Denison)

Joanne Fagan reported on the IBCC meeting. Director Gibbs and the funding package were covered. Other topics included:

- An update on the BIP: It has focused on getting uniform quality of data. They are waiting for all public comment before being finalized.
- The Water Plan has a 90-day comment period (June 30-September 30).
- PEPO will be conducting a water awareness survey. The survey is available in English and Spanish. The purpose is to find out what people know about critical water issues.
- CWCB and the water education group are preparing a public awareness campaign on big river questions.
- There was a presentation on the first year's results from the Upper Colorado transfer project.
- There was a presentation on river hydrology. It is being predicted next year will be about 77% of average.
- They spent a lot of time talking about equity and demand management.

Next year the IBCC will be meeting in February, June, and October.

Education Committee Report (Raquel Flinker)

Raquel Flinker reported they are still looking for a chairperson for this committee. They have reached out to Cindy McKee to see if she has an interested updating the website, and potentially in being the chairperson of the Education Committee. She would charge for this service. Cindy is putting together a proposal. Raquel and Sonja Chavez are willing to direct Cindy if she has questions.

Airborne Snow Observatory Water Plan Grant Letter of Support Request (Taylor Winchell)

Taylor Winchell, representing the Colorado Airborne Snow Observatory work group (CASO), gave a presentation on their water plan grant request for Phase 1 of the Colorado Aerial Snowpack Measurement Study. The primary goal will be to expand airborne lidar flight coverage in Colorado. They are requesting a letter of support from the Gunnison Basin Roundtable.

Bruce Bair moved to support the Airborne snow Observatory with a letter of support for their water plan grant request. Justin Blair seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Grant Review Committee Report (Adam Turner)

Adam Turner introduced these items:

Town of Olathe, Water Meter Replacement Project

The project is to replace water meters that are mostly 30+ years old. The project includes updates to meter reading hardware and software and billing software. The Town will also provide in-kind services in the form of project inspection and project management as well as in-kind work in replacing meters.

Neal Schwieterman moved to approve the request from the Town of Olathe for \$25,000 from basin funds and \$175,000 from statewide funds and to provide a letter of support for the water plan portion to replace water meters. Bill Nesbit seconded. Joanne Fagan and Jim Plumoff recused. The motion passed.

Orchard City Irrigation District, Dam Outlet Improvement Project

The Dam Outlet Improvement Project will modernize an irrigation dam and reservoir that have been used continuously since 1937. It seeks to improve the outlet control system to provide for an increase in flow monitoring and accuracy via upgraded electric controls for new guard and regulating gates and installation of electrical components for Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition (SCADA) control to be installed later. The motor operated regulating valve will make it possible to decrease spills and over-deliveries to irrigators.

Austin Keiser moved to approve the request for \$50,000 from basin funds and \$100,000 from state funds for the Orchard City Irrigation District, Dam Outlet Improvement Project. Jim Plumoff seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Stewart Ditch Diversion Improvement

Building on studies and engineering from CWCB grants and North Fork Water Conservancy /Western Slope Conservation Center Stream Management Plan, this project would construct a new diversion and headgate for the Stewart Ditch diverting water from the North Fork of the Gunnison, near Paonia. This project is BIP listed. The new design would replace a push up dam in the river with a more permanent structure as well as reconstructing the existing headgate to provide better diversion control, screening, and overtopping prevention. The grantee, Trout Unlimited has procured or is pursuing grants from numerous sources, including an approved grant from the River District, Fish and Wildlife funding, CO Dept of Ag grant and others for a total match of \$465,000 and a total project cost of \$815,000. The ask from WSRF is for \$40,000 Basin funds and \$100,000 state funds. This project would serve as a model for other diversions from the North Fork, remove a recreational boating hazard and improve aging infrastructure to preserve agricultural water use.

Wendell Koontz moved to approve \$40,000 from basin funds and \$100,000 from state funds for the Stuart Ditch Improvement Project. Bruce Bair seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies, Support to Monitor Dust on Snow

This application from the Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies asks for \$15,000 from all 9 Roundtables and \$120,000 from the state (\$225,000) as part of a \$430,500 program to monitor dust on snow, including data collection, analysis and near real time access to data. It builds on previous studies which have highlighted the effects of dust on snow and provided useful information to water managers in this area for predicting runoff. The grant would provide three years of operation. The CSAS is a leader in snow monitoring data and is located in our backyard in Silverton. Data collection and snow monitoring are BIP listed.

Mike Berry moved to approve \$15,000 from basin funds and \$120,000 from statewide funds for the Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies to monitor dust on snow. Justin Blair seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Public Comment

None.

Other Business

Sonja Chavez mentioned there was a proposal to mitigate wetlands in the Upper Gunnison on the headwaters of the Tomichi River at the bottom of Monarch Pass which could cause damage to water users on that stream. This will cause agricultural users to be expelled and leases to be cancelled.

Future Meetings

The next regular Roundtable meeting is January 17, 2022.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Roundtable, the meeting adjourned at 6:06 p.m.



Mike Berry, Recorder

Action Items

Gunnison Basin Roundtable to submit Tom Alvey's letter regarding the WSRF funding proposal as comments from the Roundtable.

Neal Schwieterman and Sonja Chavez will prepare a letter of support for ASO for their water supply grant application.

Neal Schwieterman approved a letter of support for the Town of Olathe.

Approved Grants:

1. Town of Olathe for \$25,000 from basin funds and \$175,000 from state funds
2. Orchard City Irrigation District for \$50,000 from basin funds and \$100,000 from state funds
3. Stuart Ditch Diversion Improvement for \$40,000 from basin funds and \$100,000 from state funds
4. Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies for \$15,000 from basin funds and \$120,000 from state funds