

# Draft Minutes: North Platte Basin Roundtable Meeting 4/19/22

## In Person

\*Mike Allnutt  
\*Jimmer Baller  
\*Coby Corkle  
\*Kari Boroff  
\*Bryce Russell  
\*Barbara Vasquez  
\*Ty Wattenberg  
Aleigh Aurin (Extension Agent)  
Kelly Lopez (Manager- Arapaho National Wildlife Refuge)  
Chris Olds (USFS)  
Kelly Romero-Heany (visitor-CWCB)  
Coy Meyring

\*voting members

## Virtual

Greg Peterson  
Matt Sinclair  
Michael Hein  
Sam Stein (water conservation & drought)  
Megan O'Grady (CWCB-drought)  
Willy Somerson (Div Water Resources)

### **1) Call to order, Introductions & Agenda Review**

The agenda was approved as distributed.

### **2) Minutes of Jan 18, 2022 meeting**

The minutes were approved as submitted.

### **3) Election of Officers**

#### **Chair**

Ty indicated he was willing to step down if there was a member interested in taking the position. Barbara nominated Ty Wattenberg as Chair. The vote was unanimous.

#### **Vice Chair**

Ty indicated that Rick Wyatt was no longer interested in continuing as Vice Chair. Barbara nominated Kari Boroff. The vote was unanimous.

#### **Recorder**

Barbara nominated Aleigh Aurin to become Recorder.  
RT members asked Barbara if she was willing to continue serving as Recorder.  
She replied she was willing but perhaps it was time for someone else to take on the role since she had been Recorder for over a decade. Both candidates were invited to leave the room for the vote. Aleigh Aurin was voted in as Recorder.

### **4) DNR Update**

Kelly Romero-Heaney, Assistant Director for Water Policy

Kelly started her update to explain that since Dan Gibbs was appointed by Governor Polis to fill IBCC chair role, he has been visiting each Roundtable. He sends his regrets that he couldn't make it tonight and looks forward to the next opportunity. Kelly lives in Steamboat and joined the Yampa-White-Green RT in 2014. The DNR position as Assistant Director for Water Policy is a new statewide role for her. There are many common issues between RTs. They operate the 'Colorado way', seeking consensus and working collaboratively. The RT process has been successful in providing ground-up input on water issues and solutions. The draft Colorado Water Plan is now with CWCB. It is scheduled to be released to the public in June, starting a 90 day

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comment period. The goal is to have it to Governor Polis's desk by Dec 2022. Completion of the Colorado Water Plan update by end of year is a WIG (Wildly Important Goal) for DNR & CWCB. Over last 20 years Colorado has experienced increasingly severe drought and wildfire. Meanwhile our state has a leader in water planning, working on resilience and the challenges of the dwindling Colorado flows, collaborating as good neighbors with our Compact partners. We anticipate a lot more funding to address water issues in the state. There will be \$8M for water plan grants in 2022. Legislation is in process to provide more than \$30M for post-fire restoration. DNR is advocating for use of American Rescue Plan funds. A bill was introduced yesterday to allocate \$20M for watershed restoration including \$5M to build up local capacity.

IIJA is bringing \$800M-\$1.2B to Colorado for water projects. The \$800M will be primarily directed into CDPHE Water & Power Development Authority. (Barbara commented that J. Dustin should talk to DOLA if Walden is interested in upgrading the water treatment plant.) The extra \$400M will target 'shovel ready' watershed protection projects. The funding will be allocated over 5 yrs. So entities with projects need to be ready to apply for grants and execute the work.

DNR's budget includes six new FTEs for CWCB to support water related grant development, with four serving as regional water grant managers and only two in Denver. There will be three new water rights accountants (for S Platte, Rio Grande, Arkansas Basins) and one water resources manager for State Land Board. There is an American Rescue Act proposal for \$60M for ground water sustainability and conservation, which is linked to the Republican River and the San Luis Valley-Rio Grande cessation of ground water pumping. Sam is moving on to a new role but will continue to support NPBRT for the next month or two.

Statewide WSRA fund to create a savings account for RTs to guarantee \$300,000 funding every year for 3 years. Revenue from sports betting will be directed to the water fund grant program. NPBRT current balance is \$568K. We can anticipate the next deposit ~2mo after start of fiscal year.

Coby commented that he had attended an oil and gas conference in Rifle where Dan Gibbs spoke about forest restoration. He mentioned \$17M for wildfire mitigation grants (CoSWAP). The program will include collaboration with Dept of Corrections to train logging skills and partnership with Youth Corps. He also mentioned the possibility of getting an additional \$10M for watershed/forest health. CWCB got \$0.5M for wildfire susceptibility mapping and framework

Chris Olds tried to explain the timing for any of that money resulting in projects on the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest is 2023/2024 at the earliest.

Ty pointed to the persistence of the urban-rural divide, feeling elected officials don't understand or work to address rural issues.

### 5) Mexican Reservoir WSRF Grant Application

Greg Peterson, Colorado Ag Water Alliance | Executive Director

Attached: Application, Exhibit B, and Budget-Mexican Reservoir Enlargement Phase 1)

The grant application is for \$66,864k to fund Phase 1 of the Mexican Reservoir enlargement which will include engineering, design and permits. The match from Coy Meyring is \$22,288 (25%) with \$10k of the match already been spent. The capacity of the Reservoir is listed as 153AF but the actual capacity based on the recent survey conducted by Meyring is 100AF. DWR records for storage for several years show a measurement of 200AF. Meyring explained that he has a junior decree for additional 146AF but DWR moved to abandon it in part. The judge on the case has allowed retention of the original decree of 153AF and allowed time to achieve the 200AF capacity. However, in order to retain the decrees, enlargement of the reservoir to 200AF must be achieved by the deadline (10/31/24).

Achieving the increased storage will require a 2 ft increase in dam height. The State is requiring both Hazard Classification and Hydrological Hazard Analysis of the modified dam. Geological and

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Geotechnical analysis will be done by Wheeler. Wheeler's report estimated total cost at ~\$230k in 2021 dollars. The scope of work includes replacement of the outlet. Phase 1 is anticipated to be done by Fall 2023. The timeline for Phase 1 and the anticipated additional Phase 2 (construction) will be tight with a Fall 2024 deadline for completion.

The RT voting members approved the request and Ty will send a letter of support to CWCB for consideration of funding for this grant application. Considering the schedule for CWCB action, with a June 1 submittal, the application will be heard at the September CWCB meeting. Ty asked Sam to whom the letter of support should be sent, given his job transition within CWCB. Sam asked that it be sent to Ben Wade with a copy to Sam

### 6) Old Business:

The current membership and function, following the elections at this meeting, are shown in the NPBRT membership spreadsheet attached with these minutes.

The voting members are shown below. We still are missing an Education and Outreach coordinator.

Voting Members	Position/function	email address
Mike Allnutt	Agricultural Rep	<a href="mailto:gwenallnutt@gmail.com">gwenallnutt@gmail.com</a>
Wade Allnutt	Water rights holder	<a href="mailto:wadeallnutt@gmail.com">wadeallnutt@gmail.com</a>
Jim Baller	Michigan River Water Conservancy District	<a href="mailto:ballerranch@yahoo.com">ballerranch@yahoo.com</a>
Kari Boroff	Vice Chair & Water Rights Holder	<a href="mailto:klboroff@gmail.com">klboroff@gmail.com</a>
Coby Corkle	Jackson County Rep	<a href="mailto:coby.corkle@gmail.com">coby.corkle@gmail.com</a>
Jim Dustin	Town of Walden Rep	<a href="mailto:jdust1948@yahoo.com">jdust1948@yahoo.com</a>
Mark Hackleman	Approved agent for Walden Reservoir Company	<a href="mailto:mjhackleman@hotmail.com">mjhackleman@hotmail.com</a>
Randy Miller	Recreation Rep	<a href="mailto:randy@npeng.com">randy@npeng.com</a>
Bryce Russell	Legislative Rep	<a href="mailto:brycerussell40@gmail.com">brycerussell40@gmail.com</a>
Carl Trick II	Jackson County Water Conservancy District	<a href="mailto:CTrick33@aol.com">CTrick33@aol.com</a>
Pat VanValkenberg	Water rights holder	<a href="mailto:pvan661@yahoo.com">pvan661@yahoo.com</a>
Barbara Vasquez	IBCC Rep, Environmental Rep	<a href="mailto:bv_99_munich@yahoo.com">bv_99_munich@yahoo.com</a>
Ty Wattenberg	Chair and Water Rights Holder	<a href="mailto:tnwattenberg@gmail.com">tnwattenberg@gmail.com</a>
Rick Wyatt	Industrial Rep	<a href="mailto:RickW96125@aol.com">RickW96125@aol.com</a>
	Education and Outreach Coordinator	

The nonvoting liaison positions are shown below. We have been missing a CPW liaison since David Graf left the organization.

Non-Voting Liaisons	Position/function	email address
Aleigh Aurin	CSU Extension & Recorder	<a href="mailto:aleigh.aurin@colostate.edu">aleigh.aurin@colostate.edu</a>
Paula Belcher	BLM	<a href="mailto:pbelcher@blm.gov">pbelcher@blm.gov</a>
Deb Heeney	NRCS	<a href="mailto:debby.heeney@co.usda.gov">debby.heeney@co.usda.gov</a>
Keely Lopez	USFWS Arapaho National Wildlife Refuge	<a href="mailto:keely.lopez@fws.gov">keely.lopez@fws.gov</a>
Christopher Olds	USFS	<a href="mailto:Christopher.olds@usda.gov">Christopher.olds@usda.gov</a>
Blair Rynearson (acting)	Colorado State Forest	<a href="mailto:Blair.Rynearson@colostate.edu">Blair.Rynearson@colostate.edu</a>
Sam Stein	Basin contact for CWCB	<a href="mailto:sam.stein@state.co.us">sam.stein@state.co.us</a>
Ramon Torres	Lead Water Commissioner, Water District 47	<a href="mailto:ramon.torres@state.co.us">ramon.torres@state.co.us</a>
Curran Trick	CWCB member from NPBRT	<a href="mailto:currantrick@gmail.com">currantrick@gmail.com</a>
	CPW	

If anyone on these two lists believes there is an error, please contact Barbara at [bv\\_99\\_munich@yahoo.com](mailto:bv_99_munich@yahoo.com).

### 7) New Business

Bryce: Would WSRA grants be possible for stock water projects (pipeline/stocktank)? Ty replied

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that the definition of allowed projects is 'wide open'. Suggested coupling such a project with NRCS if he wanted to pursue it.

Coby mentioned a bill under consideration in the Senate: SB22-114 dealing with fire suppression ponds. It stipulates that local fire departments have to approve any such ponds.

### **8) Next Meeting:**

Next meeting tentatively planned for July 19 from 7-9pm.

### **9) Adjourn**