



# Arkansas Basin Roundtable

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## ARKANSAS BASIN ROUNDTABLE MEETING SUMMARY MINUTES AND RECORD OF DECISIONS

August 10, 2022

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83339826655?pwd=YzY0eWhmb3Bsc1VFNDhjYWWhOT1JHZz09>

More information and presentations may be found at: [www.arkansasbasin.com](http://www.arkansasbasin.com)

### Voting Members In Attendance: 24

Jeris Danielson	Jeffrey DeHerrera	Greg Felt	Shiloh Freed
Jack Goble	Gracy Goodwin	Bob Hamel	Matt Heimerich
Steve Kastner	Rick Kidd	Scott King	Dwayne McFall
Amy Mitchell	Sarah Mudge	Abby Ortega	Kent Ricken
Terry Scanga	Tom Seaba	Amber Shanklin	Mark Shea
Greg Teter	Al Tucker	Tom Verquer	Sandy White

### Non-Voting Members:

### Approval of Agenda

The August agenda has been circulated for review. *Agenda was approved by consensus.*

### Approval of Prior Meeting Notes

The July meeting notes have been circulated for review. *Meeting notes were approved by consensus after correcting attendance record.*

### Public Comment – none

### REPORTS:

#### Executive Committee – Mark Shea

Elise Bergsten resigned her position as administrative assistant to the roundtable after 15 years. Mark and others recognized me with kind words, flowers, and a plaque. Thank you for allowing me to be of service to the roundtable all these years. Your recognition meant so much to me. Thank you for taking on the hard work of planning for and ensuring our water future.

During transition, Al Tucker will take notes for both meetings and Mark Shea will send out emails to the roundtable as needed.

Mark mentioned changes at CWCB in the grant process, funds available, and new tools available, such as the project database. The Executive Committee also discussed the Colorado River issue.

#### CWCB Report – Jeff Rodriguez, Russ Sands, Greg Felt – [engagecwcb.org](http://engagecwcb.org)

- The application period closed last night for the regional coordinator positions. The Arkansas Basin will have its own dedicated regional coordinator.
- The Colorado Water Plan is still available for public comment through September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- There are three more virtual listening sessions with distinct topics, each from 4:00 – 6:00 pm
  - Tonight            Resilient Planning
  - September 1    Vibrant Communities
  - September 28   Robust Agriculture



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- There is some recorder turnover across the basins, not just the Arkansas Basin. CWCB sees this as a good opportunity to get face time with the chairs and recorders to go over BRT protocols, so that there is consistency between them. Meeting Owls will be provided for each roundtable, which will improve the hybrid meeting space.
- The updated project database is live. Contact Sam Stein with any questions.
- The Grants and Loans portal is also live. The contact for that is Ben Wade.
- There is a new WSRF grant deadline of October 1<sup>st</sup> to CWCB (after roundtable approval process).
- The 1051 Municipal Water Use & Conservation Database is also live. The contact for that is Sam Stein. The deadline has been postponed until September 1.
- We have a new contact for roundtable invoices – Vivian Pinelli. Reminded everyone of 30-day notice for event planning.
- The CWCB approved a \$17 million infusion into the WSRF fund in July. Those funds will be used to bring each roundtable's basin account up to \$1 million and provide a revised statewide matching fund that is designed to support key issues like aging infrastructure and drought resilience. We are currently working on criteria and guidelines for those funds, slated to go in front of the board in September. Excited to bring back the statewide match.

Greg: Regarding the Colorado River situation, August 16 is the deadline for the basin states to propose measures to reduce consumption. Colorado, as leader of the upper basin states, has taken a firm stand, stating don't look at us. We're doing all we can.

Greg will go down to the Lower Arkansas valley next month and meet with two different groups. He'll attend Lower's board meeting with Nora Flynn, who will be talking about the Water Plan. Also will meet with Matt and some agricultural stakeholders.

Greg will be attending Water Congress. On Tuesday morning, there will be a whole session on forest health and wildfire mitigation.

The federal funding bill Inflation Reduction Act will bring federal funds to water projects, drought resiliency, etc.

Greg Felt contact info: Greg Felt [gfelt@chaffeecounty.org](mailto:gfelt@chaffeecounty.org) 719-530-1118

## **IBCC- Jeris Danielson**

The IBCC met June 30<sup>th</sup>. Scheduled to meet again in October.

## **Ag/Muni Committee – Matt Heimerich**

Matt reiterated what Greg reported, that he would be visiting LAVWCD and meeting with ag interests on August 17<sup>th</sup> at 12:30 pm. Their issue is the Fry-Ark transmountain diversion and how that might be affected by the developing Colorado River situation. Matt is working with Dan Tucker to try to put together a grant project.

## **Enviro/Rec Committee – Bob Hamel, Amber Shanklin, Rena Griggs**

The committee didn't meet in July. Bob gave an update on the Voluntary Flow Management Program (VFMP). Looks like we're going to make it on the 10,000 pretty much until the end. Will drop down into the 400s after releases have finished.

CPW has withdrawn the grant app for the Salida Lowhead Dam in order to secure matching funds from CPW. At the end of August, Rena will be submitting a new application to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, for fish passage dollars.



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## **ARWC – Jonathan Paklaian**

- Last week ARWC staff met in Lake County, touring project sites
- Had some great meetings with DRMS, Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety
- Our newest partner is Central Colorado Conservancy, and they are working with us on some projects.
- Will have a board meeting early next month and are looking forward to building capacity.
- Have applied for an America the Beautiful grant, through Fish and Wildlife Foundation.
- SWIFT crews have just begun work in Lake County.
- Hosted a slash site in the Wet Mountains, the second of three.

## **PEPOW – Jonathan Paklaian, Maria Brandt (meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday each month, at 1:30 pm)**

- We are still working on transition of the current PEPO contract. Maria is the outreach coordinator for COCO and is helping with PEPO tasks.
- Board meetings are scheduled to be bi-monthly.
- There is an Arkansas Basin mini-tour happening next month on August 26<sup>th</sup>, hosted by WECO, and will be in the Upper Arkansas Valley.
- Steep Slope Project – members talked about next steps.

## **Needs Assessment Committee – Abby Ortega**

WSRF grant applications next deadline to Abby is October 15, in order to be approved at the November roundtable meeting. Abby has access to the grant portal training.

## **BREAK**

## **NOMINATION – At-Large Seat – Mark Shea**

Mark originally became a roundtable member after a lengthy workgroup process that led to the formation of the Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative, and the creation of the Watershed Health seat. Mark was selected to fill that seat. Other roundtables decided to follow our lead, which brought the conversation to the CWCB level. Staff talked that through with the attorney general's office and determined that the roundtables did not have authority to create this seat. The roundtable can, however, designate one of the at-large water rights owner seats as the watershed health seat. We have an at-large seat currently open.

Abby Ortega nominated Mark Shea to the At-Large Water Rights Owner vacant seat. Matt Heimerich seconded the motion. Roundtable members were in consensus with this appointment.

## **PROGRAM**

### **John Martin Reservoir Water Storage Account – Jack Goble, Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District**

Back in July, a new storage account for John Martin Reservoir was approved by ARCA (Arkansas River Compact Administration).

John Martin Reservoir Multi-Purpose Account

- Pilot Project authorized by ARCA on July 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Resolution establishes a 20,000 AF storage account through March 31, 2028.
- Operating Plan will automatically renew annually unless suspended by either state.
- Four sources were approved for 2022:



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- Catlin Augmentation Association (via Catlin Canal)
- Super Ditch, Security & Fountain lease-fallow project (via Catlin Canal)
- Super Ditch & Colorado Springs lease fallow (via Catlin Canal)
- CS LAWMA shares (via Fort Lyon Canal transfer)

These sources are “clean”, very measurable.

- Opportunity to add additional participants and sources annually with both State Engineers’ approval.
- If the account is suspended or terminated, participants have 1 year to move water out of the account
- 12.5% water storage charge to Kansas. There isn’t a long-term cost to store water in this reservoir.
- Water in this MPA account will spill first, prior to all other water in JMR

How we got here:

- 2014 – CWPDA & others interested in pursuing a new JMR account.
- 2015 – CWCB asked the LAVWCD to lead an effort to pursue a new storage account in JMR for Colorado water users
- 2016 – CWCB approved a 50k grant for Phase I of the study
- 2017 – interested participants held several meetings
  - Participants provided desired sources and storage volumes
  - Initial proposal developed and presented to KS
- Participants – 11 Colorado water user groups identified an interest:
  - 4 Well Augmentation Groups
  - 3 Municipalities
  - 3 Water Conservancy Districts
  - 1 Energy Company
- 2018 – CWCB approved a 25k grant for Phase II of the study with matching funds from LAVWCD
  - Kansas expressed concern about river water quality and that they may consider allowing storage of sources that would facilitate improved water quality
  - Participants provided estimates on expected operations
    - Inflows/outflows per month for each source
    - How they will occur (direct or by exchange)
    - Uses of water (Rule 10, Rule 14, lease/fallow, M&I, etc)
  - CO & KS developed a model to determine how the new account would affect evaporation and frequency of spills.
- 2019-2020 – Kansas wanted to focus on the new Permanent Pool agreement, so discussions were delayed
- CWCB approved a \$38,500 grant to pay for half of Phase III, LAVWCD covered the other half.
- Phase III scope of work was developed with Kansas and focused on providing additional info that they requested.
- 21-22: Negotiations resumed with meetings every two weeks

Kansas’ Concerns & Colorado’s Response

- More Colorado storage in JMR = water lost for Kansas
  - Without this new account, many of the water sources would end up as native water diverted by CO water users and not KS
  - Off-river private storage vessels are being and will be developed.
- Water quality concerns
  - CSU’s and other’s research has shown certain irrigation improvements (sprinklers, pond/ditch linings, etc) and lease-fallowing improve water quality. Both need storage to be feasible on a large scale.



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- Additional storage would lessen need for recharge ponds to maintain return flows.
- Kansas storage charge water could be used for winter river releases
- Other long-standing issues (JMR spill issues, winter return flows, etc.)
  - Both states have committed to work to resolve these issues.

## Colorado & Kansas Water Quality Summit

- Showed Colorado water quality measures that have been made.
- Monitoring surface water and groundwater quality before and after

## Benefits to Kansas

- Reduced chance of un-replaced depletions and return flows
- Less evap from Kansas' and other CO users' water in JMR
- 12.5% storage charge water
- Anticipated water quality benefits generated from:
  - Increased implementation of irrigation BMPs
  - Increased efficiency of lease-fallow projects
  - Less need for recharge ponds
  - Reduced selenium load

## Benefits to Colorado

- Added storage for agriculture, municipal, and industrial water users without any new construction or construction costs
- More water for recreation and wildlife habitat
- More efficient use of water
- Reduced risk to water users interested in large projects needing storage (canal linings, pond linings, lease-fallowing)
- Reduced chance of un-replaced depletions and return flows
- Less evap for other Colorado water stored in JMR
- Anticipated water quality benefits

Jack answered questions. Kansas will store their 12.5% storage charge in JMR.

No trans-mountain water in this account. We can't knowingly let any trans-mountain water end up in Kansas.

There is a long-standing dispute about what happens to water that spills. This is one of the unresolved issues that we will continue to work on.

There is less friction between the two states now than in the past.

Abby thanked Jack and Bill Tyner.

The operating plan is an annual thing, so nothing is set in stone.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 pm.

## MEETINGS/LINKS:

- **Admin Email: ARKBASINRT@GMAIL.COM**
- Arkansas Basin Roundtable, September 14, 12:30 pm [www.arkansasbasin.com](http://www.arkansasbasin.com)
- Needs Assessment:
- PEPOW: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday monthly, 1:30 pm [www.pepoarkbasin.com](http://www.pepoarkbasin.com)
- Enviro/Rec: August 29, 10:00 am, virtual
- Ag/Muni: November 2022
- CWCB: September 20-21, Durango <http://cwcb.state.co.us/Pages/CWCBHome.aspx>



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- PEPO Statewide: TBD
- IBCC: October TBD
- Arkansas River Basin Water Forum: April 2023, Colorado Springs <http://www.arbwf.org/>
- Colorado Water Plan: <http://coloradowaterplan.com/>
- Colorado Flood Threat Bulletin: [www.coloradofloodthreat.com](http://www.coloradofloodthreat.com)
- Stream Management Plan Resource Library: <https://coloradosmp.org/>
- In-Stream Flow Rule Revisions: <https://cwcbl.colorado.gov/instream-flow-rules-revisions-hb-20-1157>
- DARCA - <https://www.darca.org/>