

Inter Basin Compact Committee Basin Roundtable

Rio Grande Basin Roundtable

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, October 11, 2022

Call To Order

Judy Lopez called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

Those in attendance were Emma Reesor (Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project/Vice President), Judy Jolly (Ag Member At-Large), Heather Dutton (CWCB/SLVWCD), Nikita Cooper (Rio Grande County Representation/Roundtable Secretary), Cassandra McCuen (RGWCD), Jim Ehrlich (Alamosa County), Travis Smith (Reservoirs), Michael Carson (City of Alamosa), Amber Pacheco (RGWCD), Cary Aloia (Environmental Representative), Judy Lopez (Trinchera), Anna Greenburg (NRCS/Bird Conservancy), Jenny Nehring (Wetland Dynamics), Payton Valentine (CWCD), Jeff Rodriguez (CWCB), Ryan Unterriener (CPW), Keith Holland (Ag Water User), Kevin Terry (Trout Unlimited/Recreation representative), Rio de La Vista, Virginia Christensen (Water Users at Large), Dwight Martin (Alamosa La Jara Water Conservancy District), Erin Minks, Chris Ivers (RGWCD), Sam Stein (CWCB), Don Thompson, Kathy Garcia, Cindy Medina (Alamosa River Keepers), Craig Cotton (DWR), Darin Schepp (DWR), Jared Romero, JP Welch, Ronda Lobato (Costilla County Representative), Tim Lovato (Saguache County Commissioner/Saguache County Representative), and Josh Arber (Acacia Association).

The agenda was approved as presented.

The minutes from the August 9, 2022, meeting were tabled as there was clarification needed for the process of the WSRF and Water Plan Grants.

Public Comment

Emma Reesor asked for a letter of support for a Watershed Restoration Grant that will partner with the Rio Grande National Forest for bank stabilization. Judy moved to approve a letter of support. Emma noted that they are finalizing the budget, but the project will be around \$150,000 total. Tim Lovato seconded the motion and the motion carried. The Basin Implementation Plan and the Upper Rio Grande Water Shed assessment has been used to shape the project.

Emma also announced that the Rio Grande Head Waters Project fundraiser, Rio Reels, will be held on October 28 at Ski Hi Park and encouraged all to attend.

Education/PEPO Update

Emma reported that the Education Committee hosted a Basin Tour for Water Education Colorado in September. Tours have been a large part of the education plan this summer along with articles. Education committee will start meeting again in November on the second Tuesday of each month at 11 a.m.

New Business

Peyton Valentine, Conejos Water Conservancy District provided a preview of their Snowmelt Forecasting Project. The project will develop the snowmelt forecasting process based on radar data. Heather Dutton noted that the SLV Water Conservancy District is also partnering and will be providing matching funds. This project will help estimate run off and help make compact delivery more accurate. CWCD has been working on this project over the last 10 years. The project will be reviewed in detail at the November meeting.

Emma Reesor, Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project, provided a preview for their project on the Anaconda Ditch. The project will improve water delivery efficiency and remove a boater hazard. The ditch, SLV Water Conservancy District and the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project is partnering on the project. The project will be reviewed in detail at the November meeting.

CWCB Update

Heather Dutton, CWCB Board Member, gave an update from the board. She noted the tours that the board took at Ute Mountain at the last CWCB meeting. The farm has 110 pivots and they are working on installing a small hydro-power facility. Conversations about the Colorado River and Colorado Water Plan were also topics at the last CWCB meeting. She noted that the public commit period is over for the Colorado Water Plan process, the board received over 700 comments. Heather also noted that the WSRF funding allotment is \$20 million. Basin accounts now have an account balance of \$1 million. There is also 11 Million available for Drought Resiliency projects and infrastructure. The State PEPO fund balance is also \$1 million. The budget for roundtable recorder's have been increased to \$6,500.

On January 24th, there will be a water Plan Celebration Held. Basin Hero awards will be given at that event as well. Jeff noted that Stimulus funds need to be used by May of 2023.

Amber Pacheco, RGWCD, gave an update on the Subdistricts. Subdistrict 1 is working on set of rules and regulations to accompany their new Plan of Water Management. Subdistrict 3 just filed an application with CWCB for funding to purchase irrigated land on the Conejos River, but no final offers have been made. Amber noted that RGWCD will be offering Colorado Master Irrigator again this year with two cohorts. Amber mentioned that Cleave and the management committee are working on Draft guidelines for the funding from Senate Bill 2208. These funds will need to be allocated by August 2023 and used by 2024. CWCB and State Engineer will be weighing in on projects to be funded.

Craig Cotton, DWR, updated the roundtable on curtailment numbers and noted that his office is looking at November 1st for end of irrigation season but has not finalized that date.

The meeting was adjourned.