

Inter Basin Compact Committee Basin Roundtables  
Rio Grande Basin Roundtable  
MEETING MINUTES  
Tuesday, February 14, 2023, at 2:00pm  
Rio Grande Water Conservation District  
Alamosa, Colorado

**Call To Order**

Nathan Coombs called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

The membership attendance is included in the membership spreadsheet. A quorum was determined.

The minutes of the January meeting were discussed. It was clarified how much detail should be included in the minutes, it was agreed that only main points, action items and decisions of the board. The minutes of the January meeting were approved as presented.

**Public Comment**

Jenny Nehring announced that the Monte Vista Crane Festival is coming up and the sponsorship timeframe is expiring soon. She also noted that there are only a handful of booths left for vendors. Entities that would like to provide literature to be placed in grab bags needs to be given to Jenny by the following Wednesday.

Nathan explained that the Watershed Health position that was held by Emma Reesor will be open and appointed by the Roundtable board. Daniel will be sending in a letter of interest for that position.

The PEPO position is also open, this will be appointed by the Roundtable board at the March meeting.

**New Business**

Jeff Rodriguez, CWCB, gave an update. He reviewed some the programs that are being implemented across the state. He reminded the group that the Turf replacement program is open for the spring and one will be open for the fall. Applications for the TLC Challenge are due March 1, and Turf Program are due March 31. The staff is working to plan a Drought Summit for 2023. Jeff also reminded the group that the All Chair meeting will be held in late March or early April. Board chairmen and recorders are invited to attend this meeting. The Wildfire Ready Watershed program has also been launched. Urban Landscape Conservation Taskforce has been launched. Jeff also thanked Heather Dutton for her term on the CWCB board. Laura Spann, the new regional Water Plan Grant Manager based in Durango introduced herself. There has been a budget proposed of \$26 million for Water Plan grants. Water Supply Reserve Fund Grant previews need to be completed by April 1 to be funded this fiscal year.

Alex Funk gave a federal funding update to the group. Currently there are three different federal funding pools that he is following. It appears that the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) includes \$8.45 billion for EQIP, \$4.95 billion RCPP, \$3.25 CSP, and \$1.4 billion in ACEP. The Climate Smart Ag and Forestry Mitigation Activities List is being used for eligibility at this time for funding.

United State Forest Service (USFS) has funding for internal projects but will be collaborating with partners. The Bureau Land Management has approximately \$40-50 million in drought resilience

activities and riverscape restoration, which are open funding opportunities that are due in April. Feel free to reach out to Alex at [afunk@trcp.org](mailto:afunk@trcp.org)

Erin Minks noted that Senator Bennet is introducing a bill that should help western regions be more competitive for federal funding, specifically, PL566 funding.

Emma Reesor and Judy Lopez gave a PEPO Update. Emma noted that the Rio Grande Basin Water Leaders course will be held March 27-31. More information can be found on the Roundtable website or by contacting Connor Born at the Rio Grande Restoration Project. Upcoming tour March 29<sup>th</sup> or March 31 to visit the Snowtil site on Wolf Creek, that tour will also include a visit with the Wolf Creek Ski area. There are currently too Two folks interested in the PEPO position. Judy Jolly and Patrick O'Neil gave an overview of their interest for the position. Interested persons should submit a letter of interest to one of the executive board members. PEPO position works with CWCB, other PEPO person from state, and work with the education committee for plan for funding and education.

Heather Dutton & Emma Reesor presented on Resilient Planning in honor of the Colorado Water Plan. The Plan is four parts including Vibrant Communities, Robust Ag, Thriving Watersheds, Resilient Planning. They highlighted the data within the Water plan and the ties to the Basin Implementation Plans. The recommended checking out the "Action" chapter which includes 50 partners actions and 50 agency actions. Emma shared the "BIP at a Glance" to highlight the plans and projects that are already underway. 75 projects were submitted to the plan with over \$165 million in project needs.

Rhonda Lobato gave an update on the Culebra Watershed Partnership Project that was approved at the last meeting. It was noted that Cielo Vista Ranch provided more matching funds for the project than initially thought. The Funding request was approved as amended with the additional matching funds.

Nathan shared a spreadsheet outlining the Basin fund balance and proposed projects. He clarified that the basin fund will be replenished in September and October to the threshold. It was also clarified that the matching requirement for the Basin funds is for 25%. If projects meet goals.

Trinchera Irrigation Company, Wayne Schwab presented is project preview for a Levy Diversion. He noted the diversion is approximately 80 years old. The project includes three headgate that will be worked on. This initial funding request is only for the study which will cost about \$22,000 including matching funds of \$2750 from Trinchera Irrigation and \$2750 from Trinchera Conservancy. This project request is for basin funds only. Mackey Construction has been contracted to complete the study.

Kevin Terry and Tanner Dutton presented their project preview for the RGNF Toilet Replacement within the Divide District. Estimated Cost would be \$353,715, with WSRF funds requested of \$245,000. This is a Basin funding request only. Kevin noted that the old toilets cause a water quality concern due to leaking systems. This project also serves our recreation economy. The toilets will be ADA accessible facilities

Ryan Unterreiner and Tony Aloia presented their project preview for the Beaver Reservoir Seepage, Geotechnical study. The project includes analyzing the fractures within the volcanic rock to help plan stabilization efforts on the dam. SLV Conservancy District is also willing to sponsor this project. This would request \$180,000 from the basin fund. It was recommended that matching funding be outlined by the next meeting when funding is requested.

David Marquez with the Guadalupe Sanchez Ditch presented a preview of their project. The estimated project cost is \$305,000 total with \$200,000 NRCS Funding, \$105,000 WSRF. It was recommended that the contingency portion of the project be increased in order to cover the costs has materials raise over the summer. It was also noted that the NRCS contract expires for 2025 but the NRCS office does have the ability to extend if needed.

The meeting was adjourned.