

Inter Basin Compact Committee Basin Roundtables
Rio Grande Basin Roundtable
MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, May 9, 2023, at 2:00pm
Rio Grande Water Conservation District
Alamosa, Colorado

Call to Order

Heather Dutton called the meeting to order at 2:00p.m.

A quorum was determined to be present. The agenda was approved as presented.

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The minutes of the April 11, 2023, meeting were approved as presented.

Public Comment:

Hannah Thill, RGWECI, announced that Conservation Youth Camp is only one month away. She also noted that she has a camp counselor position available.

Kevin Terry announced that the Valley Chapter of Trout Club will be hosting their annual fundraiser at the Colorado Farm Brewery, June 3rd from 4-8 p.m.

Heather Dutton thanked the CWCB staff for their work on the Colorado Water Plan. Jeff Rodriguez, CWCB staff, gave a CWCB update. He noted a few important dates including: the Drought Summit will be May 31 and June 1, the 2023 legislative session is wrapping up, CWCB Project Bill passed with \$25M for water projects, the Governor's budget passed, the Stream Restoration Bill passed, and the Colorado River Drought Task Bill passed.

Laura Spann, Regional Water Plan Grant Manager, serving the Rio Grande and Southwest Basins gave an update on grant funding through CWCB. \$25 million will be allocated for 2024. CWCB Funding is through sports betting, federal mineral leases and severance taxes. The loan program has \$50 million available for project needs. WSRF funds are intended to meet critical local needs. The Water Plan Grant Program is intended to meet multiple benefits. Other funding sources include the APPR Funded programs including the Local Capacity Grants which give funding so entities can meet requirements for Federal Funding Applications. ARRP funds also feed into the is the CWCB Technical Assistance grants which gives contract support for development of federal funding applications and the Watershed Restoration Grants (\$10M). The ARRP funds must be spent by December of 2026.

Sinjin Eberle, American Rivers gave an overview of the Colorado River, American Rivers #1 Most Endangered River. He outlined the river's nature with photo points and touched on some of the river's challenges. The Colorado River goes through 7 states and 5 million acres of irrigated Ag land is serviced by the Colorado River.

Alex Fund touched on the federal funding barriers and opportunities that exist for entities within the San Luis Valley. They are working on Developing a Community "Project Pipeline" to address capacity issues and will assist matching them with grant life cycles and agency. Federal Capacity Building Programing

will include a Rural Partners Network and Coop Watershed Management Program, and an Equity Tech Program. Their hope is that the Rural Partnerships program may become permanent.

Josh Sturtevant, Linker, Colorado Airborne Snow Management Program gave an update on the SUMMA Model and the Rio Grande Basin.

Daniel gave an updated on PEPO and the Education Committee. Alamosa Native Species Hatchery Tour was held April 19th. Roundtable will also be taking a trip to Ute Mountain Farm on May 11th and 12th. The education committee would like the Rio Grande Restoration Project to be the PEPO Grant applicant once again this year. The education committee requested a letter of support for the PEPO Grant. There were no objections to providing a letter of support.

Craig Cotton, Division of Water Resources, reported that the division is already dealing with several high-water situations around the valley. San Antonio has multiple flooding issues. Craig is also expecting a decision from the special master about the Rio Grande Compact Case. He noted that there will be a 5-week trial on the SWAG Augmentation Plan coming up this summer.

The meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.