

Yampa/White/Green River Basin Roundtable  
Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 13, 2024  
Location: CNCC Craig Campus, Room 185  
2801 West 9<sup>th</sup> St • Craig, CO 81625  
Recorded by Kristin Skowronski

ATTENDANCE

**Voting Members**

In person: Frank Alfone, Bill Badaracca, Ken Brenner, Rebecca Briesmoore, Chris Collins, T. Wright Dickinson, Callie Scritchfield, Jennifer Holloway, Miranda Kawcak, Madison Muxworthy, Will Myers, Jeff Myers

Zoom: Julie Baxter, Doug Davis, Travis Day, Stephen Hinkemeyer, Doug Monger, Alden Vanden Brink

Quorum reached with 19 members present

**Others in attendance**

Paul Kehmeier, Jeff Rodriguez, Jackie Brown, Amy Ostdiek, Brendon Langenhuizen, Zane Kessler, Patrick Stanko, Erin Light, Sally Cariveau, Kristin Skowronski, Kari Valkenburg, Andy Rossi, Rebecca Mitchell, Emily Zmak, Alyson Gould

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Steve Hinkemeyer called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Live role-call. Ken Brenner took chair for this meeting, as Hinkemeyer is out of town.

The Roundtable took a moment to recognize member Pat O'Toole, who passed away suddenly.

T. Wright Dickinson motioned for the Roundtable to send a card to O'Toole's family. Multiple members seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Rebecca Briesmoore suggested the Roundtable could also create a scholarship in O'Toole's memory.

APPROVE/MODIFY AGENDA

Frank Alfone moved to approve the agenda with one edit to item 12, changing subitem f) from Yampa River Rendezvous to Yampa Basin Rendezvous. Madison Muxworthy seconded the motion. The agenda was unanimously approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVE JANUARY 10, 2024 MINUTES

Frank Alfone made a motion to approve the minutes from the January 10 meeting. The motion was seconded by Chris Collins. With no further discussion, the minutes were unanimously approved.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

### **Paul Kehmeier, Colorado Dept. of Ag, Lower Gunnison Basin Salinity Coordinator**

The BLM is open to creating other salinity areas along with the NRCS to help provide funding to improve irrigation efficiencies which tends to decrease the amount of salt leaching into the Colorado River Basin. Areas interested in salinity control should reach out to Kehmeier.

## CWCB UPDATE

### **Jeff Rodriguez**

Deadline for 1051 reporting is June 30<sup>th</sup>

New requirement for covered entities to submit an American Water Works Association M36 Water Audit starting 2024

Due to the increased complexity, CWCB can offer a grace period until June 2025 for covered entities having trouble getting the audit (contact Kevin Reedy and Sam Stein).

CWCB offers free training through the Colorado Water loss Initiative

Water Supply Reserve Fund grant deadline April 1<sup>st</sup>

Water Planning grant deadline July 1<sup>st</sup>

Federal technical assistance and wildfire-ready watershed programs are accepting applications on a rolling basis. Contracts must be completed by December 2024.

IBCC Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/ZWRTT3N>

Water Conditions Monitoring Committee: <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/events/water-conditions-monitoring-committee-meeting-march-2024>

Wildfire Ready Watersheds: <https://www.wildfirereadywatersheds.com>

### **Jackie Brown**

New CWCB Board Members: John McClow, Gunnison & Brad Wind, South Platte; New Vice Chair: Nathan Combs

CWCB Approved the Upper Yampa Water Trust lease for the instream flow

Approved Water Plan grant for the Yampa River Scorecard

## WATER COMMISSIONERS CORNER

### **Amy Ostediek**

Upper Division States Alternative  
[cwcb.colorado.gov/coloradoriver](https://cwcb.colorado.gov/coloradoriver)

Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming submitted it to the BLM on March 6<sup>th</sup> as an alternative to the BLM's NEPA process for Powell and Mead's post-2026 operations (the 2007 guidelines expire in 2026).

We need operations at our nation's two largest reservoirs that reflect hydrologic reality. This will help rebuild storage and provide for sustainable operations going forward.

Powell Operations: releases are aligned with hydrologic conditions

Lake Mead Operations: Modeled Lower Basin operations call for reductions in use depending on reservoir conditions

CWCB is committed to continued collaboration with the lower basin states while also upholding the negotiating priorities and boundaries set by Commissioner Mitchel

## PRESENTATIONS

Colorado River District update on Shoshone Water Right

### **Brendon Langenhuizen, CRWCD Director of Technical Advocacy**

On December 13, 2023, the Colorado River District executed a Purchase & Sale Agreement with Public Service Company of Colorado (a subsidiary of Xcel Energy) for \$98.6 million. (Purchase and sale agreement, not purchased).

#### Timeline

1. Negotiating an Instream Flow Agreement between seller, CRD, and CWCB
2. Successful completion of a change case
3. Approval from Colorado's Public Utility Commission
4. Ongoing fundraising with support from local, state, and federal partners
5. Anticipated Closing in 2027

Colorado River District Legislative Update\*

### **Zane Kessler, CRWCD Director of Government Relations**

#### Legislature session updates

SJR24-004 Water Project Eligibility Lists: passed and signed by Governor Polis 3/8/2024; ensures proper funding and management of water supply and wastewater treatment projects in Colorado, aligning with state regulations and priorities in water resource management.

SB24-005 Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conservation: passed, pending Governor signature 3/11/2024; prohibits the use of nonfunctional turf for future government and HOA development.

SB24-037 Study Green Infrastructure for Water Quality Management: Introduced 1/10/2024; directs the division of administration in the department of public health and environment, in collaboration with CU and CSU, to conduct a feasibility study and establish pilot projects on green infrastructure and financing mechanisms for water quality management and to develop regulations and submit a progress report with recommendations to the Water Resources and Agriculture Review Committee.

SB24-026 Agriculture & Natural Resources Public Engagement Requirement: Introduced 3/13/2024; reinstates a requirement for members of the Colorado Parks and Wildlife Commission to hold at least two public meetings annually in their geographic districts.

SB24-038 Authorize Conservancy District Water Management: Introduced 1/10/2024; grants conservancy districts the authority to participate in water augmentation plans, contract with external water users for services, and manage the control, delivery, use, and distribution of water.

HB24- Measures to Incentivize Graywater Use: Introduced 3/6/2024; Concerning measures to promote the use of graywater.

SB24-127 Regulate Dredged & Fill Material State Waters: Introduced 2/6/2024; would create a dredge and fill program and an oversight commission with the DNR.

CDPHE/McCluskie Draft Legislation: Not introduced yet. It relies heavily on rulemaking by the Water Quality Control Commission.

Upcoming Legislation: CWCB Construction Fund Projects Bill, CDPHE Dredge and Fill Program, Implementation of Drought Taskforce Recommendations

## ACTION ITEMS

YWG BRT Presentation Guidelines

### **Jeff Meyers**

The purpose of the Presentation Guidelines is to give guidance to presenters on the purpose, message, and allotted time for their presentations. The guidelines explain the purpose and functions of the Roundtable for presenters to keep in mind while preparing presentations. Roundtables are good spaces for open discussion and sharing ideas, but not technical education. When using slides, presenters should consider how many slides they can reasonably cover in the allotted time.

Frank Alfone made a motion to adopt the presentation guidelines as presented with an amendment that they can be amended periodically by the executive committee, as needed. Will Myers seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

DWR Update

### **Erin Light**

The Measurement Rules were approved and made effective 1/16/2024. Phase In, Rule 17, gives water users set timeframes and deadlines to become compliant with the rules. DWR will do some workshops in the spring about the measurement rules and compliance.

Update on the ongoing process of abandonment cases: As it stands, most cases are nearing completion, with the majority having minor issues left to resolve. However, Twenty Mile remains heavily involved, with 10 to 11 pending court cases that are progressing slowly. The aim is to settle these cases without going to trial. The judge has already issued an order abandoning all unprotected water rights. Once the remaining contested water rights are resolved, a new order will be issued to reflect these settlements, including any water rights that were initially left out but are affected by these settlements.

Jeff Gobble hired as water commissioner for the Lower Yampa Basin, begins position 3/25/2024.

## ROUNDTABLE PROJECTS AND COMMITTEES

Big River Committee - **Jeff Meyers**

Overview of LDS Alternative Letter

Introduces the idea of 'system contents'

Sets operating parameters base on contents of all CRSPA reservoirs

Be aware of potential loopholes

Interbasin Compact Committee Update – **Ken Brenner**

### Successful qualities of potential IBCC projects

Broad, multi-basin support, not in conflict with any other water authority, within IBCC's purview, supported by CWCB staff, minimal cost or CWCB funding, IBCC can communicate project's results to Round Tables for feedback

### Cursory list of topics for BRT to consider acting on in the future

Brenner gave a list of topics and then asked members for input on what they see as priorities

Identified Drought Task Force recommendations, No/low regrets proposal 2.0, Wildfire Ready Watersheds, Enhanced infrastructure funding source, State Water Plan coordinated messaging, Shoshone water rights effort, Colorado River negotiations, CWCB/BRT handbook and BMPs for BRTs

Members identified Colorado River negotiations, Forest Health, and Wildfire Ready Watersheds as highest priorities, although they also agreed that all the list items are important.

Dickinson emphasized that single purpose, single issue projects tend to be most successful.

### PEPO Update – **Patrick Stanko**

New video for the YWG BRT website coming soon

Could use more content for White and Green rivers, non copywrited videos and pictures

Working on a story map with Yampatika to explain YWG BRT

Summer events are coming up, need volunteers to man the YWG BRT booth

Sally will become PEPO Liaison for CAA

Discussed the grant that CAA manages for PEPO and IBCC

### Grant Committee Update – **Frank Alfone**

Proposed a new grant scoring matrix to use

Vote to approve in May

Will be better able to accommodate a broader range of proposals

Helpful to differentiate and prioritize grants when funding is less abundant

Will use both scoring matrices on grant applications in April's meeting

### IBCC Representation Discussion – Chairman Hinkemeyer took back chair for this discussion.

District Judge appoints Upper Yampa Water Conservancy Board members. Did not reappoint Ken Brenner for the upcoming term. Brenner would still like to be part of the YWG BRT. Brenner is IBCC rep. He is effective in that position.

Brenner has 20 months left in his term. Could motion not to enforce section 2 of RT bylaws for the remainder of the term.

Callie Hendrickson questioned the purpose of bylaws if RT votes not to enforce them and cautioned against changing bylaws for an individual.

RT expressed wanting to keep Brenner as IBCC rep

Will wait and learn more about the situation after the next Upper Basin meeting.

Frank Alfone went on the record to say that Jeff Meyers gave excellent reasons why the RT needs to keep Brenner on because he shows up and is effective at what he does.

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS/ DATES AND TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Chairman Hinkemeyer gave an update on future presentations for upcoming meetings.

Have an opportunity to hear from Dave Kanzer from CRWCD about the cloud seeding feasibility study in the upper Yampa River Basin

Could hear from Mike Camplin and Jennifer Wellman on Maybell Diversion and Headgate modification

If there is interest, RT could do a field trip before July 10 to the Maybell Diversion in the morning and the Yampa River Corridor Project in the afternoon. It could also include updates from Sheriff's Reservoir or Stillwater Reservoir.

Open to other suggestions as well, email them to Hinkemeyer, and can send out a poll later on to finalize.

Send any upcoming events to [yampawhitegreen@gmail.com](mailto:yampawhitegreen@gmail.com) to be included in announcements.

#### ADJOURN

Jeff Meyer moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. Jennifer Holloway seconded, meeting was adjourned.

\* Meeting to this point was not recorded on Zoom, only audio.