

North Platte Basin Roundtable

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 19th, 2024

7:30 p.m. - 8:45 p.m.

Basement of SCD Building, 312 5th Street, Walden

**For those who would like to participate
virtually by Zoom or phone, the link is listed below.**

7:30 - 7:40 pm Call to order, Introductions & Agenda Review 7:32

Michael Hein, Erin Light, Ramon Torres, Bruce Russell, Wade Allnutt, Mike Allnutt, Mark Hackleman, Barbara Vasquez, Paula Belcher, Stephen Hampton, Ty Wattenberg, Tammy Neiswender, Jeff Rodriguez, Jackie Daoust, Aleigh Aurin

7:40 - 7:45 pm Approve minutes of October 17th, 2023 meeting

**7:45 - 8:15 pm WSRF Grant Application – Jackson County Water
Conservancy District**

Greg Peterson - Colorado Ag Water Alliance

Jim Baller - Jackson County Water Conservancy
District

The request for purchasing a Radiometer. This would be different from the leased machine from the state like the one in Gould. We would be able to keep it set once it is in place. The radiometer is for forecasting. Incar out of Cheyenne would like more data out of the basin as well. The state only has one or two that move around. The ask from the basin is \$149,995 from the NPBRT. The Water Conservancy District is doing 25% match of \$49,999.

Jimmer Baller made sure we stayed under \$200,000 as asked by NPBRT. This radiometer will be missing some of the bells and whistles like maintenance contracts but CWCB reports not having had problems with theirs. We have been using the one in the basin for a year, but it is set to move around the state again. It will cease operations on April 15th. This project can start on November 1st, 2024.

Wade asked if it has been successful. Aerial finds show to be very beneficial. We can end aerial and focus on the ground base. It

projects better costs and privacy with the radiometer. Other partners were asked about participating and there has been no luck. No one else seems to be interested in helping with the funding.

Mark asked if the whole system is automated. Yes, all of the program is on a computer program for the ground base. Do we pay Desert Research for their program and work? The conservancy district and state pay them. Various programs help to fund the Desert Research work. There is confidence from the conservancy district that it is worth it to get more water. Aerial and ground programs are producing the same amount of water based on research. This is based off of target control analysis when they are on par.

Is there any argument for state contribution instead of all from NPBRT? Probably not. There are two ground burners. Right now Brocker Mountain and Green Ridge are location ideas. Both tributaries are water short on occasion and fit other parameters. Probably won't have it set up on the west side of the county.

Right now our basin balance is at \$394,500. We do still have time to spend as well. Unspent money does not go back to basin account. It might be worth pulling statewide funds for this to try and get some money back. This could be a way to use the money that used to be the NPBRT and bring it back to the basin. Could there be statewide request? Yes. If the WSRF fund is asked for the funding, \$150,000 would come from the state fund, \$30,000 from applicant match, and \$20,000 from NPBRT. It can fall in the drought resilience bucket.

Are we ok approving the project and having the state make numbers work? The radiometer is more accurate in Gould. Upslope, so near Silver Creek. South Michigan and Jack Creek area would work. If precipitation in this area and a southwestern storm, green ridge will get precipitation.

The plan is to build the radiometer where it can be left. This includes helping protect it from weather in summer. It looks like a large mailbox. Bryce approves. Wade seconds. All passed.

8:15 - 8:25 pm CWCB Board Member Updates

Barbara Vasquez

There was a two day meeting, one day in person and one day virtual.

The Hunter Reservoir phase two and Mexican reservoir were on the ballot. The water plan grants have allowed a lot of money to go out the door, 17 million awarded, 25 million for the year was asked.

There is a tentative plan to meet here in July - opportunity for a local welcoming and information about basin, coming to ask Ty and Jimmer about welcoming the group. Other ideas include speaking with refuge for information and ideas as well. It will be the 17th and 18th of July.

There were no questions.

8:25 - 8:35 pm CWCB and IBCC Comments

IBCC meeting was in February. It was a great meeting. They are working on projects and looking for feedback from the roundtables. Surveys will be sent out. There is discussion on what IBCC does, who should serve on IBCC, and generate some conceptual framework for water plan.

The CWCB guide is getting close to a final draft. There is a collection of resources for round table members, IBCC and new board members. There has been 17 years of Basin Roundtables and IBCC with no official guide on coordination. This will not replace the Bylaws. It is for collecting best practices and a policy handbook for boards. The full draft is hopefully going to be out this spring. The goal is to have it complete by June of 2024, and through the CWCB board in September. If we have questions please reach out to Jeff with questions.

The Colorado River Team with the upper division states submitted an alternative for 2026 Tahoe and Mead plans. There is a webinar series with one more on April 4th.

WSRF deadline is April 1st.

July is the first water plan deadline. Talk with Jackie if you have questions. Federal Technical Assistance and local capacity is available to help write federal grants tied to state ARPA funding. This funding needs to be spent by end of this year. The Wildfire Ready Watershed program is funded through this program. It is also still accepting grants on a rolling basis.

Becky Mitchel took over IBCC. Unsure of exactly who she reports to. Director Gibbs is over DNR. Becky's commissioner role is with the governor, but IBCC is under Director Gibbs ultimately.

8:35 - 8:40 pm Old Business

none

8:40 - 8:45 pm New Business

Next Meeting - Kari would like to become chair, but a vice chair will be needed. June is most realistic for next meeting. June 19th at 7 pm

BLM - The Tributaries of The North Platte - There are IRA dollars, restoration areas being identified, the office is receiving money to do projects with NGO's as well to do work in North Park. The Aquatics section of BLM received quite a bit of money, but BLM does not have many stream miles. With the stream miles they do have, restoration projects and habitat enhancement will take place this summer. The Wheeler Creek tributaries will get pseudo beaver dams to restore habitat. The Beaver Creek Fire - Since the fire, the dams have not been rebuilt. The Wildlife Program - The draws are getting attention. Bolton Draw has had some work. Last year the BLM worked on five wells and converted them to solar. Allotment Projects - With any questions get ahold of Olivia Clark with BLM. North Park - Right now is a good time to step up and get projects done. The Refuge - They are looking at using virtual fencing and improving fencing in general. Stephen Hampton now covering for Paula, she is retiring. Reach out to him if you want to see some of the projects. The North Fork of the North Platte - They are getting out and assessing by looking at what is lacking. If there is nothing found lacking, it will just be monitored. They will reach out and share proposals of projects. There will be more focus on habitat with protection and enhancement. North Sand Creek stakeholders are trying for grant money to go in with game cameras to watch sediment wedges and sediment catchers,

Laramie River

Radar on Flumes - There is talk about it but people are not very interested. If it does become a need they might come ask NPBRT for help. Currently people in the valley are not interested.

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 8:53 pm.

Topic: North Platte Basin Roundtable

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