

Inter Basin Compact Committee Basin Roundtables  
Rio Grande Basin Roundtable  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 12, 2024, at 2:00pm  
Rio Grande Water Conservation District  
Alamosa, Colorado

**Call to Order**

Amber Pacheco called the meeting to order.

Member Name	Affiliation	2024	
		Nov	Proxy Held by:
Jim Ehrlich	Alamosa County		
Chuck Finnegan*	Conejos County		
Steven Romero*	Costilla County		
Robert Hurd	Hinsdale County		
Dale Pizel	Mineral County		
Nikita Cooper	Rio Grande County	1	
Tim Lovato	Saguache County		
<b>Municipalities</b>			
Michael Carson	Alamosa County Municipalities	1	
Vacant	Conejos County Municipalities		
Vacant	Costilla County Municipalities		
Vacant	Hinsdale County Municipalities		
Vacant	Mineral County Municipalities		
Gene Farish*	Rio Grande County Municipalities		
Vacant	Saguache County Municipalities		
<b>Conservancy and Conservation Districts</b>			
Dwight Martin*	Alamosa/La Jara Conservancy District	1	
Nathan Coombs (CWCB Rep), Non Voting	CWCB Board	x	
Nathan Coombs (Conejos)	Conejos Water Conservancy District	1	
Yates McConnell	Costilla County Conservancy District		
Heather Dutton	SLV Water Conservancy District	1	
Amber Pacheco (Chair)	Rio Grande Water Conservation District	1	
Wayne Schwab	Trinchera Water Conservancy District	1	
Karla Shriver	Legislative Appointee	1	Amber
Derek Shreak	Agriculture		
Keith Holland	Agriculture/Reservoirs	1	
Cindy Medina	Alamosa River	1	
Regan	Acequias	1	
James Henderson	Conejos Water Users	1	
Judy Lopez	Conservation Easements	1	Heather
Casandra McCuen	Education	1	
Cary Aloia	Environmental	1	
Mike Gibson*	General At Large		
Charles Spielman	Industrial/Domestic	1	
Brian Puccerella	Recreation	1	
Travis Smith	Reservoirs		
Greg Higel	Rio Grande Water Users		
Marty Peterson	SLV Well Owners	1	
Peter Clark	Water User		Travis
Virginia Christensen	Water User	1	
Daniel Boyes	Watershed Health	1	Casandra
Kevin Terry	Wildlife	1	Heather
	<b>Total</b>	21	
	Quorum	70%	

Red highlight – proxy given to another member

Karla moved to approve the agenda as presented. Heather seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

Keith moved to approve the minutes as presented. Dwight seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

**Public comment:**

Daniel Boyes, Rio Grande Restoration Project, announced that Rio Reels will be held November 15<sup>th</sup> at Ski Hi from 6-9 pm.

Heather Dutton, SLV Water Conservancy District, announced that the 1874 Seed to Bottle Party with the Rye Resurgence Project will be Saturday November 16<sup>th</sup>.

Save the Date for the Rio Grande Basin Symposium, it will be held March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

Amber Pacheco mentioned that the Colorado WeCO Water Leaders Application opens next week and recommend reaching out to Heather, Nathan or Amber for more information.

Craig Cotten, Colorado Division of Water Resources, gave an update for stream flows in the Rio Grande. 2024 stream flow was 78% of long-term average on the Rio Grande with an obligation to downstream states of 25%. 79% of the long-term average was delivered on the Conejos system with a 28% obligation to downstream states. Craig mentioned that they are not currently storing in Platoro Reservoir. Currently snow pack is at 264%. Upcoming Trials to be held in 2026 are Subdistrict 1's new plan of water management, SWAG augmentation plan and City of Alamosa. The proposed Southern Colorado Water Conservancy District will be approved by the judge soon.

Jeff Rodriguez, Colorado Water Conservation Board, gave updates about the state boards. The CWCB guide will be finalized this month and should be ready for the public by first of the year. The Upper Colorado River Commission has approved \$7 million dollars for Colorado diversions and structure improvements. Jeff noted that the Governor's Budget may impact CWCB's budget. The CWCB board meeting is November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. The IBCC meeting is February 26, 2025. \$1.4 million will be available in the Water Plan Grant next fiscal year starting in July of 2025.

Education Committee will not have an education committee meeting in December. The Annual Meeting will be coming up to plan for 2025.

There were several requests for Letters of Support for Water Plan Grants.

- Daniel Boyes, Rio Grande Restoration Project, requested a letter of support for the Wildfire Ready Action Plans in Conejos and Costilla Counties Project. Regan moved to approve a letter of support. Virginia seconded the motion and the motion carried.
- Katharine Cody, Ducks Unlimited, requested a letter of support for the San Luis Creek Watershed Restoration project. Virginia moved to approve the letter. Karla seconded the motion and the motion carried.

- Katya Schloesser, CIRES – Center for Education, Engagement and Evaluation requested a letter of support for the HEART Force and We are Water programs. Cindy moved to approve the letter of support. The motion was seconded and passed.

Fay Hartman and Emily Wolf, American Rivers, and Lydia Bleifuss, Virga Labs, presented on the San Luis Valley Funding Database and explained how this project will help gain capacity for projects in the San Luis Valley. This database will serve as a funding navigation tool. They also requested if the database could be housed on the Roundtable Website. American Rivers would keep the database up to date. The group agreed that the Roundtable Website will be a good fit for the database.

Connor Born, Rio Grande Restoration Project, presented on the Wet Meadow Work in the Valley as part of the RGNF Wetland Restoration Project. Connor gave an overview of the project and priorities of the project.

#### Final Funding Presentations:

Rob Phillips, San Luis Valley Irrigation District, presented the D1 Bridge Project. SLVID and the Rio Grande Canal have recharged a combined average of 134,000 AF per year into the Closed Basin. 66,000 irrigated acres are serviced by this bridge with 239 landowners. One third of the Rio Grande Canal service area is serviced by this structure. The funding request is for \$262,350, match of \$87,500 includes 10% of Basin and remainder from Irrigation District. The Irrigation District has an additional \$8,000 of in-kind match for engineering not included in the budget. Keith moved to approve the project. Heather seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Heather Dutton and Karla Shriver presented the Town of La Jara Park and Rio Grande Hospital Wellness Center – WaterWise Landscaping Demonstration Project. The project's goal is to promote water resilience, increase public education and awareness, and serve as a model to other communities. The request includes \$284,250 with Rio Grande Basin funds request of \$37,900 and the remainder from match. The total project cost is \$379,000. Cindy moved to approve the project. Casandra seconded the motion and the motion carried. Charlie noted that he was opposed.

Heather Dutton presented the Rio Grande and Conejos Basin ASO Flights in partnership with the SLVWCD, CWCD and RGWCD. Heather noted this project helps with water supply variability. She mentioned that changing conditions makes forecasting and administering water more difficult. Proposed project is completing 12 flights over the next three years. The total project budget is \$2.7 million dollars. WSRF state wide request is \$676,596, WSRF Rio Grande match of \$116,800 and the water districts make up the remainder in match. Total grant cost is \$1,168,396. Keith moved to approve the project. Virginia seconded the motion and the motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned.