



SPBRT Roundtable Meeting Summary

Tuesday, February 11, 2025

Time: 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Roundtable Voting Members in Attendance: Adam Gates, Brent Schantz, Bruce Gerck, Daylan Figgs, Donnie Dustin, Garrett Varra, Gene Manuello, Hally Strevey, Jason Gemmer, Jim Hall, Jim Yahn, Joe Frank, Julia Gallucci, Kirk Vincent, Larry Rogstad, Lisa Leben, Lynda James, Scott Griebing, Sean Chambers, Stephen Larson, Steve O'Doriso

Roundtable Non-voting Members in Attendance: Casey Davenhill, Donald Baggus, Matthew Schultz, Sean Cronin

Guests: Alex Davis, Carmen Farmer, Cory Channell, Corey Deangelis, Courtney Massey, Daniel Gallen, Dawn Jewell, Ed Millard, Erin Messner, Greg Brinck, Jason Ullmann, Kara Sobieski, Karen Schlatter, Kyle Whitaker, J. Byron Fanning Jr., Jason Stawski, Jeff Stahla, Joan Green Turner, Lauren Hix, Lottia Villalba, Lynette Pepler, Matt Lindburg, Micaela Vondy, Meghan Bell, Michael Welsh, Noelle Fillo, Patrick Wells, Phyllis Thomas, R. Stroud, Robert Sakata, Toby Stuart, Tom Cech

CWCB: Director Brad Wind, Amy Ostdiek, Esther Malers, Jackie Carano, Kathryn Weismiller

1. Welcome/Introductions (Sean Chambers – 5 min.)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sean Chambers at 4:04pm

2. Approval of Agenda (Sean Chambers – 5 min.)

It was agreed that IBCC members would share “low & no regret” feedback under item five and in advance of the subcommittee’s update. It was moved by Garrett Varra to approve the agenda. It was seconded by Scott Griebing and the motion carried.

3. Approval of [SPBRT Meeting Summary January 14, 2025](#) (Sean Chambers – 2 min.)

It was moved by Scott Griebing to approve January 14, 2025, SPBRT Meeting Summary. It was seconded by Garrett Varra and the motion carried.

4. Public Comment (3 min.)

No public comments.

5. Update on Process for Refining “Low & No Regrets” Feedback (Sean Chambers – 10 min.)

Background: The *concept* of “Low & No Regrets” has been in development since 2006. In 2015, widely supported strategies to bolster water supply were described as “Low & No Regrets.” In 2024, the SPBRT members were asked to identify and provide their IBCC representatives with the South Platte Basin’s “Low & No Regrets.” Refinement continues.

1. IBCC Feedback:

RT members were applauded for high engagement and interest in the “low & no regret” discussions. As a result, the RT produced an extensive list of “actions” which reflect the values and needs of the South Platte, while also maintaining a statewide perspective. However, the IBCC encouraged the RT to identify one priority action to be discussed in depth at upcoming meetings. It was clarified that the SPBRT’s “low & no regrets” project is the same as the CWCB’s “Drought Resiliency Action Plan.” There was a discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of each name, their different connotations, and understandability for the public and RT members.

2. Subcommittee process to refine “low & no regret” strategies:

The subcommittee met 02/19/25 to refine the “low & no regret” document which will be discussed at the RT’s March meeting. The objective of subcommittee and continued RT conversations will be to design a process for effective discussion, engagement, and shared vocabulary which results in specific identified goals.

3. Preparations for potential joint meeting with Metro RT

The Metro and South Platte RTs are developing “low & no regrets” independently to identify respective interests and needs. A joint session with Metro would be an opportunity to collaborate on:

1. Effective RT operations: how might WSRF funding be operationalized to fulfill the identified BIP or “low & no regret” needs of each basin?
2. Identifying the highest BIP or “low & no regret” priorities of the region. Given the geographical proximity of the basins and their frequent support of the same projects with WSRF funding, sharing priorities may be mutually beneficial.

6. Lower South Platte Operations Discussion (Joe Frank – 20 min. presentation available by request)

[The Lower South Platte Water Conservancy District](#) (LSPWCD) monitors developments and Interstate Compacts which may impact its constituents. In January of 2022, the State of Nebraska invoked Article VI of the South Platte River Compact (1923).

ARTICLE VI

1. Rights for Nebraska to construct, maintain and operate Perkins Canal in CO. to irrigate lands in Nebraska

2. Perkins Canal may divert net future flow in Lower Section

- a. Colorado reserves the prior, preferred, and superior right to store 35,000 AF
- b. Between Oct. 15 and April 1, Canal entitled to divert 500 c.f.s. under a Dec. 17,1921 appropriation date; no claim to water in Upper Section

3. No claim to water between April 1 and Oct. 15 other than surplus flows

Nebraska was forced to abandon the canal project in the late 1890s due to draught and insufficient funding. The same concerns exist now; the project would be expensive and there are not always excess flows from CO available for Nebraska’s use. Additionally, if the canal were to be completed, over 15 augmentation plans would be impacted in District 64. Nebraska has renewed Perkins Canal efforts based on a study of storage capabilities on the South Platte. Since Nebraska has a winter right, construction plans for the canal include potential reservoir sites where water would be stored until summer and then released. The LSPWCD will continue to monitor developments.

7. 2025 Legislative session (Jim Yahn – 15 min.)

Bills of interest:

- [HB25-1009](#) Vegetative Fuel Mitigation: Allows a fire protection district to mitigate dead or dry plant materials on privately owned property within a district.
- [HB25-1010](#) Prohibiting Price Gouging in Sales of Necessities: Prohibits the price of a necessity from increasing more than 10%. The question of concern is whether water is included as a “necessity.”
- [HB25-1014](#) Increasing Efficiency Division of Water Resources: Modifies procedures and fees for permitting groundwater use, and the timing of a decennial report on abandoned water rights by the Division of Water Resources in the Department of Natural Resources. The bill aims to increase the efficiency of water resource administration.
- [HB25-1029](#) Municipal Authority over Certain Lands: Grants a municipality full authority over land acquired outside its limits for use whether open to the public or not.
- [HB25-1099](#) Water Quality Data Standards: Requires the water quality control commission to issue guidance for the daily maximum amount of pollutant from all sources that is allowed to enter state waters so that an applicable water quality standard is met.
- [HB25-1106](#) Remove Precipitation Collection Limitations: Removes 100-gallon limitation on the amount of rooftop precipitation that may be collected from a small residence and removes all limitations on how collected precipitation may be used.
- [HB25-1115](#) Water Supply Measurement & Forecasting Program: Authorizes the CWCB to administer a water supply measurement and forecasting program to collect and disseminate data (relates to [ASO](#)).
- [SB25-040](#) Future of Severance Taxes & Water Funding Task Force: Establishes a Water Resources and Agriculture Review Committee; a task force responsible for recommending ways to continue funding water needs as severance tax revenue is decreasing.
- [SB25-081](#) Treasurer’s Office: Allows the State Treasurer, Dave Young, to finance eligible projects, including water projects.
- [SB25-137](#) Greenhouse Gas Credits for Water Quality Projects: Authorizes owners to sell or trade greenhouse gas credits.
- [SB25-140](#) Irrigation Districts Inflation Adjustments: Adjusts limitations on administration costs set in 1905 to account for inflation.

8. WSRF (Garrett Varra – 5 min.)

1. WSRF Update and SPBRT Funds Status CWCB Basin Account Funds: \$230,000-235,000 remain in the Basin Account.
2. WSRF 2025 Cycle 1 Application Period: [Grants- South Platte Basin](#)
Summary submittals are due March 1st. Draft applications are due to CWCB in April.

9. Committee Updates (15 min.) [Roundtable Meeting Records – The South Platte Basin](#)

[Link to Announce a Meeting Form - Add a meeting – The South Platte Basin](#)

1. PEPO Committee (Casey Davenport – 5 min.) (no summary)
 - 2025 Colorado Farm Show was an excellent experience. The PEPO booth engaged over 200 people, including a highlighted conversation with water-interested folks from Los Sauces. Many educational materials were shared.
 - PEPO will continue going to conservancy district meetings.
 - Water Workforce Career Fair 02/13/25- PEPO had a booth.
2. E&R Committee (Larry Rogstad – 5 min.) (no meeting)
Scheduled to meet 02/26/25. Roundtable members are welcome to join the committee.
3. M&I Committee (Jim Hall – 5 min.) (no summary)
Discussed “low & no regrets” at the meeting 01/17/25. Further discussions will need to be sequenced and coordinated with other committee and RT discussions about “low & no regrets.”

10. IBCC Update (Jim Yahn & Sean Cronin – 15 min.) ([Link to IBCC Webpage](#))

The next IBCC meeting is scheduled for 2/26/25 at DoubleTree in Westminster. The agenda includes: “Drought Resiliency Action Plan,” a legislative update, the IBCC report, an update and discussion of the Colorado River, CWCB Guide discussion and review, a discussion of C9, and brainstorming ideas for 2025.

11. CWCB Update (20 min.)

1. CWCB Staff Report (Kat Weismiller – 10 min.)
 - [CWCB Climate & Water Workshops](#): The workshops will foster discussion that will help inform a forthcoming Climate Impacts Report. The report will expand on the [Climate Change in Colorado Report](#) by exploring how climate change is impacting Colorado communities through case studies. **Events are free, but require an [RSVP](#).**
 - April 3rd at CSU Pueblo
 - April 23rd at Clifton Community Center, Grand Junction.
 - Grants:
 - [Agricultural Emergency Drought Response Program](#): provides up to \$1 million annually in loans or grants for emergency drought-related water augmentation purposes to CO agricultural water users. **Deadline: 04/15/25.**
 - [Water Plan Grants](#): **Deadline: 07/01/25.**
 - [PEPO Grants](#): **Deadline: 06/01/2025.**
 - Reports & Resources:
 - [2025 CWCB Guide](#)
 - [Colorado Water Plan Progress Report](#)
 - [10 Strategies to Protect Irrigated Agriculture](#)
 - [CWCB Floatovoltaics Feasibility Report](#) in response to [SB23-092](#)
2. Director Wind Update (10 min.)
 - The [2025 Colorado Water Plan Progress Report](#) is out and Director Wind applauded CWCB staff for assessing themselves and their progress in relation to the Water Plan goals. Nearly \$38 million has been awarded since 2023 as Water Plan Grants, \$232.7 million in Water Project Loans, \$97.8 million in Projects Bill Grants, and \$20.5 million in Water Supply Reserve Fund Grants.
 - The next CWCB meeting will be in Greeley, March 19th and 20th. Director Wind encouraged RT members to approach CWCB staff, build connections, or host educational tours.
 - CWCB members were happy to attend the Colorado Farm Show.

12. Member Updates (5 min.)

1. Two water grants awarded to the [Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed](#) (CPRW) from the Bureau of Reclamation are now frozen. Those grants accompanied by matching funds by non-profits were dedicated to projects for the Poudre, Greeley, and Windsor. Many coalitions are navigating uncertainties and are striving to remain viable, strong resources for their communities. Senator Hickenlooper, Senator Bennet, and Governor Polis have responded to the funding freezes with concerns regarding its effects and the availability of fire-related emergency funds.
2. The RT thanked Chair Sean Chambers for his participation and representation at Colorado Water Congress.
3. [Poudre River Forum](#)- AIMS Community College Welcome Center 03/07/25.
4. [Opinion](#): Extracting Water Supplies from Remote Rural Communities Causes Long-Term Impacts by Brad Wind.
5. [Arkansas River Basin Forum](#)- Pueblo Convention Center 03/05/25-03/06/25.

13. Upcoming Public Meetings Schedule – See CWCB’s [Online Calendar](#) and [EngageCWCB.org](#)

1. Alternate location for April 8th meeting: Greeley FunPlex, 1501 65th Ave, Greeley, CO 80634
2. Alternate location or date for November 11th meeting (Veterans Day)- **TBD**

Meeting adjourned at 6:30