

# Yampa/White/Green River Basin Roundtable Minutes Summary

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

Location: CNCC Craig Campus, Room 185

2801 West 9th Street • Craig, CO 81625

6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

Recorded by Kristin Skowronski

<b>1</b>	<b>Call Meeting to Order</b>
	A regular Yampa White Green Basin Roundtable (YWG BRT) meeting convened virtually and in person. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Steve Hinkemeyer @ 6:03 PM
<b>2</b>	<b>Roll Call</b>
	A quorum was formed with 18 voting members present at the call to order (at least 16 required)
	<b>VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:</b> Sonja Macys (Scott Cowman), Miranda Kawcak, Ken Brenner, Julie Baxter, Stephen Hinkemeyer, Mike Camblin, Shawn Welder, Alden Vanden Brink, Rebecca Briesmoore, Tim Sullivan, Will Myers, Frank Alfone, Jackie Brown, Jeff Meyers, Doug Monger, Jeff Comstock, Doug Davis, Charles Whiteman, Jonathan Bowler
	<b>OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:</b> Sally Cariveau, Ashley Garrison, Emily Lowell, Mario Sullivan, Betty Kracht, Erin Light, Jeff Rodriguez, Kathleen Voight, Amy Ostdiek, Holly Kirkpatrick, Grace Brofman, Heather Sackett, Deirdre Macnab, Kristin Skowronski, Thomas Kennedy, Ashley Garrison, Jennifer Bock, Annette Quill, Kelly Morgan
<b>3</b>	<b>Appointment of New Member</b>
	<b>Tabled until next meeting</b>
<b>*</b>	<b>Approve or modify the agenda</b>
	Jeff Meyers moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Ken Brenner, and approved unanimously.
<b>4</b>	<b>Review and approve minutes from the November 13, 2024 Meeting</b>
	Frank Alfone moved to approve the minutes seconded by Charles Whiteman, and approved unanimously.
<b>5</b>	<b>Public Comment Period for items not on agenda (3 mins per person, 5 mins per group)</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erin Light provided a reminder about the January 16<sup>th</sup> deadline for measurement rule compliance. She encouraged those needing an extension to file immediately and noted that orders for non-compliant structures would begin to be issued in the spring. Light also mentioned a pending public meeting in Meeker regarding the White River being designated as over-appropriated. The meeting date was tentatively set for February 5, 2025.</li> <li>Will Meyers gave an update on the Dresser Dam (east of Craig) jurisdictional reservoir. The design has been approved, and bids for improvements will be solicited. Work is anticipated to begin in the spring.</li> <li>Hinkemeyer discussed concerns about solar panel developments taking farmland out of production and mentioned ongoing discussions within Moffat County's Land Use Board and the Colorado First Conservation Board.</li> <li>Jackie Brown clarified that transmission capacity availability due to power plant closures is not guaranteed, as there is a waiting list for access to WAPA transmission lines.</li> </ul>
<b>6</b>	<b>CWCB Update – Jeff Rodriguez</b>
	Jeff Rodriguez provided a budget report and an update on the Statewide Fund. He noted that the statewide WSRF grant funds are nearly depleted, and projects will need to rely on basin funds moving forward. He also highlighted upcoming CWCB reports, including the Water Plan Progress Report and the '10 Strategies to Protect Irrigated Agriculture' report, both set to be available at Water Congress.
<b>7</b>	<b>Water Commissioners Corner - Amy Ostdiek</b>
	Amy Ostdiek presented updates on Colorado River negotiations, emphasizing the need for a supply-driven approach to managing Powell and Mead reservoirs. She provided an overview of potential refinements to the Upper Basin alternative, including adjustments to release levels and the recognition of hydrologic shortages.
<b>8</b>	<b>Action Items</b>
<b>8a</b>	<b>Grant Committee</b>
	Brenner moved to approve the new Grant Scoring Matrix, Alden Vanden Brink seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.

8b	Jeff Meyers moved to adopt the new LOS guidelines, Will Meyers seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved.
	<b>Yampa River Erosion Project LOS – Beau Cahil</b>
	Brenner moved to approve the LOS for the MWW Yampa River Streambank Erosion Project, Doug Davis seconded, and the motion was approved. Alfone recused himself from the vote.
9	<b>Presentations</b>
	<b><i>Dredge and Fill Rulemaking Information Gathering</i></b>
	Jennifer Bock, Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE), along with Annette Quill and Kelly Morgan from the Water Quality Control Division, presented updates on state-level dredge and fill permitting on Colorado's new state-level dredge and fill permitting process, necessitated by federal jurisdiction changes under the Clean Water Act. The discussion focused on how the new rules would impact water users, agricultural projects, and infrastructure improvements. BRT members expressed concerns regarding regulatory burdens and potential delays in project approvals. CDPHE seeks public input and will hold additional meetings before finalizing the rulemaking process.
10	<b>Colorado River District Update – Rebecca Briesmoore</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The year's first board meeting is approaching and will include a hydrology update.</li> <li>• Legislative monitoring continues, with staff at the Capitol weekly tracking water-related bills.</li> <li>• The Community Funding Partnership is accepting grant applications, with upcoming recommendations for the Upper Yampa Watershed Model Project and Airborne Snow Observatory flights to improve snowpack data collection.</li> <li>• Congress reauthorized the Upper Colorado and San Juan Rivers Endangered Fish Recovery Program, ensuring that regional water projects remain exempt from additional mitigation requirements.</li> <li>• A new state law was passed to address the spread of invasive zebra mussels in Colorado waters.</li> </ul>
11	<b>CWCB Update – Jackie Brown</b>
	Brown reported that the January CWCB board meeting agenda was pending release and noted that the 2025 in-stream flow recommendations, particularly for Milk Creek and Vermilion Creek, would be discussed at the March board meeting. She advised stakeholders to monitor potential impacts on local water users and stated that she looks forward to passing the torch as part of the upcoming leadership transition within CWCB.
12	<b>Roundtable Projects and Committees</b>
12a	<b><i>Big River Committee/IBCC</i></b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Briesmoore gave a brief hydrology update reporting that snow water equivalent (SWE) in the Yampa, White, and Little Snake Basins is at 94% of the 30-year average, though snowpack has flatlined due to La Niña conditions. Reservoir storage is near average, but Lake Powell and Lake Mead remain critically low (~30%), with Powell's inflow forecasted at 92% of average for spring runoff. The final April release determination for Powell is uncertain, and water levels are expected to remain unchanged or decline over the next year.</li> <li>• Brenner provided an update on IBCC, noting that three IBCC meetings are held annually, with the next scheduled for February 26, 2025. He highlighted the C9 Summit's success, with 260 attendees, and mentioned potential expansion to two full days in the future. The IBCC identified improving measurement of snowpack, soil moisture, and data collection as a top priority, which is now a focus for DNR funding requests. The No &amp; Low Regrets 2.0 initiative has evolved into the Drought Resiliency Action Plan (DRAFT), offering adaptable water management strategies for basins. Discussions are underway about forming an executive committee to assist in meeting preparation and adding a roundtable update segment to CWCB's agenda to increase engagement at the state level.</li> <li>• BRC Update: Meyers reported on Colorado River negotiations, noting tensions at the Colorado River Water Users Association meeting and challenges in messaging Upper Basin realities. The Bureau of Reclamation released five management alternatives, including a "Federal Authorities" plan allowing unilateral federal action. Some alternatives align with Upper Basin proposals, but the final decision remains uncertain, as past federal actions have shifted unexpectedly.</li> </ul>
12b	<b>PEPO</b>

	Sally Cariveau reported that the new \$25,000 PEPO grant for 2025 is in place to fund administration, outreach, and recorded services. She emphasized the need for increased participation in PEPO activities, particularly for the Story Map project, which will be developed from April to December 2025. A Story Map subcommittee is being formed, and volunteers are encouraged to join, even if they are not roundtable members. A Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued, with contractor selections expected by mid-March. Additionally, PEPO is working on newspaper articles and planning field trips to highlight regional water projects.
<b>13</b>	<b>Announcements</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <b>Colorado Water Conservation Board Meeting January 27-28, 2025</b></li> <li>b. <b>Colorado Water Congress, January 29-31, 2025</b></li> <li>c. <b>IBCC Meeting, February 26, 2025</b></li> <li>d. <b>Upper Yampa State of the River (CRWCD) March 25, 2025</b></li> <li>e. <b>Lower Yampa State of the River (CRWCD) March 26, 2025</b></li> <li>f. <b>White River State of the River (CRWCD) April 2, 2025</b></li> </ul>
<b>14</b>	<b>Next YWG BRT Meeting March 12, 2025 @ 6:00 PM CNCC Craig, CO</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Adjourn Meeting</b>
	Brenner moved to adjourn, Meyers Jeff seconded 9:09 PM.