

IBCC Colorado River Basin, Spring 2025 CWCB Grant Proposals, update on 2026 Interim Agreement negotiations, Legislative Update

March 24, 2025 CBRT Roundtable Minutes.

1. Upcoming Meetings & Deadlines.

- a. CWCB March 24-28, 2025

2. 2025 CBRT Meeting Schedule

- a. May 19
- b. July 28
- c. Grant committee meets in August
- d. September 22
- e. November 17

3. Recorder: These minutes were prepared by Ken Ransford, Esq., CPA, 970-927-1200, ken@kenransford.com.

4. Today's March 24, 2025, meeting was **conducted by Zoom and held in person at the Colorado River District Office.**

5. **CBRT Roundtable Members Present:** Peggy Bailey Summit County municipalities rep, Marc Baldo BuRec Loveland, Jeff Bandy Denver Water non-voting CBRT member, Nathan Bell Garfield County Rep, Abby Burk, Audubon Rockies & Vice Chair of CBRT, Kate Collins Middle Colorado Watershed Council, Carlyle Currier Colbran Conservancy District, Roger Day Silt Water Conservancy District, JJ Fletcher Mesa County Com'r, Vicky Flynn Eagle River Watershed Coalition & Eagle Munic Rep, Diane Johnson Eagle River Water & San District, Hattie Johnson American Whitewater, Ty Jones Clifton Water, Randi Kim City of Grand Junction, Kathy Kitzman Aurora Water non-voting CBRT member, Kirsten Kurath Vice Chair and represents water rights owners, Kelly McNicholas Kury Pitkin County Com'r, Brandon Langenhuiizen Colorado River District, Merrit Linke Grand County Com'r Ag At large member, April Long CBRT Chair and Ruedi Water & Power Auth. general manager, Ed Moyer Grand County Manager, PJ Murray City of Aspen, Maria Pastore Colo Springs Utilities non-voting CBRT member, David Payne Ute Water, Katie Randall Middle Park Water Conservancy District, Ken Ransford Secretary and Recreation member, Jeff Rodriguez CWCB, Charlie Spickert Basalt Water Conservancy, Chris Treese West Divide Water Conservancy District, Richard Vangytenbeek Env't Rep, Nina Waters Summit County Com'r, Greg Williams Ute Water, Tom Wood Grand Valley Water Users Association (Agric at large), Jeffrey Woodruff Pitkin County Comm'r

- a. **There were 32 persons in the room, and 50 attending online**

6. **Guests:** Beth Albrecht Brown & Caldwell PE, Matt Altman BuRec representing the Colbran Water Conservancy District, Matthew Anderson, Water Quality Technician Roaring Fork Conservancy, Joely Anysz Mesa Conservation District, Jenna Battson CWCB, Courtney Bennet Colorado Open Lands, Tyler Benton Colorado Springs Utilities, Perry Cabot CSU, Stan Cazier former rep for Middle Water Conservancy District with spot now taken by Katie Randall, Liberty Costello Middle Colorado Watershed Council, Jason Cowles Eagle River Water & San. Dist., Angie Davlyn Executive Director Roaring Fork Valley Wildfire Collaborative, Lindsay Defrates Colorado River District Public Relations, Aley Desiderio Colorado Water Congress "accelerator",

Todd Doherty Western Water Group, Anna Drexler-Dreis NWCCOG QQ Committee, Jackie Fisher Orchard Mesa Irrigation District manager, Kayli Foulk Water Quality Specialist with Grand County, Angie Fowler Schmueser Gordon Meyer PE, Tim Friday Eagle River Water & San. Dist., Ashley Garrison Colorado Water Conservation Board, Marcia Gillis director of Eagle County Open Space, David Graf Colorado Parks and Wildlife and Instream Flow coordinator for the Upper Colorado Endangered Fish Recovery Program, Andie Hall Esq. Balcomb & Green, James Heath Division Engineer in Div 5 in Glenwood Springs a non-voting liaison to the CBRT, John Hildebrandt Bluestem Water Ditch Co. at top of Debeque Canyon, Aaron Hilshorst Manager of Land & Water Resources at Climax Mine, Hannah Holm American Rivers, Kate Hudson, Roaring Fork Sierra Club, Sarah Smith Hymes Town of Avon, Karen Johnson, Castle Rock interested citizen and former Castle Rock Town Council member, Zane Kessler Colorado River District Legislative Affairs, Eric Kuhn author of Science be Dammed and former Colorado River District General Manager, Heather Lewin Science and Policy Director at Roar Fork Conservancy, Vanessa Logsdon Blue River Watershed Group, Becky Mitchell Colorado representative to Upper Colorado River Commission, Lisa MacDonald Pitkin County Healthy Rivers Program, Haley Markward Administrative Specialist Colorado River District, Megan McConville, Colo Parks & Wildlife, Kayla Mehrens Water Infrastructure Consultant AE2S (Advanced Engineering and Environmental Services, LLC), Bruce Michaelson Colbran Conservancy District, Shannon Mullane reporter for the Colorado Sun, Amy Ostdiek CWCB, Sarah Parmar Colorado Open Lands, Greg Peterson Executive Director of the Colorado Ag Water Alliance, Scott Price representing the Blue River Watershed Group and the Snake River Water District, Josh Rumble Eagle River Watershed Coalition, Heather Sackett Aspen Journalism, Robert Sakata Agricultural Water Policy Advisor for the Colorado Dept of Ag, Judy Sappington consultant with Bluestem Water Conservancy District, Holly Stanley, Exec Dir for Mesa County Conservancy Dis., Paula Stepp Middle Colorado Watershed Council and CBRT PEPO Coordinator, Lisa Tasker Pitco Healthy Rivers, Forrest Townes Colbran Conservancy District, Christina Welch CSU Student, Erin Wilson PE Wilson Water Group

7. **Summary of decisions made at the meeting; more detail below on the discussion.**
 - a. The CBRT unanimously approved April Long as the legislative appointee to the CBRT.
 - b. The CBRT unanimously approved Abbey Burk to fill the At Large seat.
 - c. The CBRT unanimously approved Hattie Johnson as
8. **River Forecast.** The Colorado River flow gage at the **Dotsero gage on March 24, 2025**, was 902 cfs, below the median of 1,050.¹ The Colorado River **at Cameo** flowed 1,500 cfs, below the median of 1,800 cfs on this date.²
9. **The January 27, 2025 minutes were approved with no change.**
 - a. Carlyle motioned, Nina Waters seconded, approved unanimously.
10. **April Long Director Comments.**

¹ Dotsero forecast: https://waterdata.usgs.gov/usa/nwis/uv?site_no=09070500.

² Cameo forecast: https://waterdata.usgs.gov/co/nwis/uv/?site_no=09095500&PARAMeter_cd=00065,00060
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- a. **April saluted Diane Johnson's longtime tenure.** Diane started in 2006, and said she valued the roundtable intent and the ability to build relationships.
- b. **Grand County Municipal Rep** is a new member: **Adam Cwiklin**
- c. **Stan Cazier was also saluted for serving as the IBCC representative since 2005.**

11. WSRF Grant Proposals

- a. **Blue River Watershed Group**, Vanessa Logsdon, Wildfire Ready Action Plan WRAP request for **\$30,000 to expand wildfire readiness plan**. They have selected a contractor, and received a \$450,000 CWCB grant to cover the **680-mile watershed**. 20 organizations are involved, but they need more representation from agricultural communities and the northern part of the district including Spring Creek, Heeney, Keystone, and Montezuma. They have a \$109,000 cash match, and need \$40,500, of which they are requesting \$30,000 from the CBRT.
 - i. **Kate Collins** said she just completed a Wildfire Ready Action Plan in the Middle Colorado Watershed Council region, and it was **very important to get the isolated communities to participate**.
 - ii. **Nina Waters** said the northern **remote parts of the region including Heeney are the most at risk for fire**.
 - iii. The CBRT made the recommendation to **fully fund** this grant request.
- b. **Roaring Fork Wildfire Collaborative**, Angie Davlyn, Roaring Fork Valley Wildfire Collaborative, **requests \$30,000 for a Wildfire Ready Action Plan WRAP**. They received a \$224,000 CWCB grant. The Roaring Fork Watershed is double the size of the Blue River watershed, but has received half as much funding. They need \$56,000 and are asking the CBRT for \$30,000. They expect to **complete the WRAP by the summer of 2026**.
 - i. The CBRT made the recommendation to **fully fund** this grant request.
- c. **Roaring Fork Conservancy, Heather Lewin**, is requesting \$30,867 for year 2 of a **Drought Resiliency Study**. The Roaring Fork Conservancy is a 30-year organization in Basalt investigating **whether soil health amendments can benefit soil during droughts**. Dryup leads to dust and weeds, or increased real estate development, neither of which is preferred. Four different ranches, one operated by Pitco Open Space, and 3 owned by families, are participating. Two ranches are in Missouri Heights and Emma in Eagle County, one is in the Fryingpan drainage in Pitkin County, and one is in Carbondale in Garfield County. Lotic Hydrological is consulting with the project. They are comparing yields from **fields amended with biochar, aeration, or no change** to current practices, **under both deficit and partial irrigation scenarios**, on six different test plots. After 1 year, the study results were inconclusive. Biochar soil amendments tend to have their greatest effects in years 2-5. The cost is \$41,867, of which they are requesting \$30,867 from the CBRT.
 - i. **After 2025**, they will not re-apply more biochar or aeration, but will continue with the deficit irrigation practices.

- ii. **Where does the biochar come from?** Denver. They are not adding nitrogen or other fertilizer to the test plots to fully understand the contribution of Biochar.
- iii. The CBRT made the recommendation to **fully fund** this grant request.
- d. **Pitkin County, Lincoln Creek Working Group, Lisa Tasker** of the Pitkin County Healthy Rivers Board (which was approved by a 1% sales tax passed in Pitkin County in 2008), presented a grant request to **investigate the cause of mineral contamination in Lincoln Creek upstream of Aspen** toward Independence Pass. A working group of 14 members including 7 governmental entities is investigating the source of contamination in Lincoln Creek. A **mineralized tributary flowing into Lincoln Creek has Ph of 2.9**, compared to Ph in water of 5.3. This is highly acidic, **where 6.5 to 7 Ph is ideal**.
 - i. **\$150,000 grant request toward a total project cost of \$207,000 for Phase 2; Phase 1 cost \$15,000.** A match has been offered by the Independence Pass Foundation, Twin Lakes Reservoir and Canal Company, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, Pitco Healthy Rivers Fund are all partners; The Pitkin county Healthy Rivers Fund HRF has contributed \$19,000 toward the \$57,000 match.
 - ii. **Heather Sackett has written extensively** on this for Aspen Journalism, available online.
 - iii. **They monitored water quality** at 8 locations including Grizzly Reservoir which has a high copper concentration.
 - iv. **A fish kill occurred in August 2021** from the release of copper into Lincoln Creek. The copper was from the vicinity of the Ruby Mine. Another fish kill occurred in August 2023.
 - v. **The EPA says the copper is naturally occurring.** The Ruby Mine was abandoned, but contributed only 2% of the mineral loading. Since the copper is naturally occurring, the EPA has no funding to remediate this.
 - vi. **This is happening in other areas of Colorado** so this study may lay groundwork for other sites.
 - vii. **Climate change may be involved, as permafrost has been melting**, including rock glaciers. Warmer temperatures are going deeper into the ground, causing ice to melt, and oxidation to occur, **resulting in the release of more metals**. The Lincoln Workgroup wants to establish a sampling and monitoring plan and a website to report the results.
 - viii. **Randi Kim of Grand Junction asked what the deliverable is. The goal** is to determine **a mitigation recommendation**.
 - ix. **Recommendation to fund:** \$100,000, so other participants can contribute more.
- e. Bruce ____ presented a Parker Basin **grant request of \$150,000** toward a \$923,596 project cost to **improve the South Side Canal which runs for 33 miles from Vega Reservoir to Collbran**. Vega Reservoir has capacity of 33,500 af, and 300 shareholders receive Vega Water to **irrigate 19,880 acres**. They have 57 turnouts and deliver natural

flow water for the entire 33-mile canal. The reservoir must remain 50% full to prevent fish kill.

- i. The **Salt Creek slide in 2014 was the largest slide in Colorado history, causing 3 deaths**. The ground is unstable, and has been since canal was built in 1960s.
 - ii. The project will **install 3,600 feet of HDPE pipe**, improve an inlet and surge structure.
 - iii. A **FEMA BRIC grant** (Building Resilient Infrastructure Communities) application requires a 25% match; **Ute Water conservancy Fund is contributing \$250,000**.
 - iv. The canal **helps Plateau Creek meet minimum flow requirements** to its confluence with the Colorado river in Debeque Canyon.
 - v. **Vega Reservoir shares are tied to the land** and dedicated to irrigation use only.
 - vi. The CBRT made the recommendation to **fully fund** this grant request.
- f. **Hattie Johnson, American Whitewater**, discussed the Recreation Committee's grant request for \$90,000 to **identify 5 reservoirs on the rehabilitation list** that can be improved and **provide flows to enhance recreation**, and **identify 5 water sharing agreement that can change the timing of diversions to leave more water in reaches** to enhance recreation in the state. Participants include **Erin Wilson** of the Wilson Water Group and former CWCB staffer **Todd Doherty** of Western Water Partnerships, and the roundtable Recreation Representatives (including Ken Ransford). American Whitewater's mission is to promote whitewater recreation, and this project grew out of a desire to identify where water for recreation would be impacted with climate change.
- i. The group is investigating restricted reservoirs in the DNR Dam Safety Database to see if 5 reservoirs can be identified that can be rehabilitated and also leave water in the river.
 - ii. The group is also looking at diversions above recreational reaches, to see if **diversions can be relaxed for a few days over a weekend or coordinated to promote fishing or other recreation**.
 - iii. The CBRT made the recommendation to **fully fund** the **\$90,000 grant** request.
- g. Scott. Keystone Ski Area and the **Snake River Water District found PFAS in 3 of 8 wells** providing drinking water, which they believe came from **fire retardant discharged in training exercises at a fire station**; wells upstream of the fire station are not showing PFAS. They **received a \$180,000 CDPHE grant**, and it recommends ion exchange or granulated active carbon to remove the PFAS. Alternatively, an old well near the original lift at Keystone is upstream of the fire station, and it may be able to be redrilled to produce clean water. It will cost \$5-7m to get rid of the PFAS. They are requesting \$100,000 (\$75,000 from the roundtable, with a \$25,000 match) to determine if the old capped well can be uncapped; this is a water supply request, and qualifies for WSRF funds.

- i. The existing well casing is 30 years old, so **a new well will likely be required**. They can use the same water rights and drill within 100 feet of the existing well.
 - ii. The CBRT made the recommendation to **fully fund** the **\$75,000 grant** request.
 - h. After funding these requests, **\$65,000 remains in the CBRT WSRF grant fund**.
 - i. Kirsten Kurath was under the impression that the grant committee did not recommend funding for Snake River because there were unanswered questions; April said they were related to finding funds from other sources, and learned today that there are no other available funds, and that the outstanding questions were answered today.
12. **Zane Kessler**, Legislative Affairs Director, Colorado River District, Legislative Update.
- a. Zane works closely at the legislature, and with Federal agencies including BuRec and the NRCS. The Colorado River District meets every 2 weeks to discuss bill progress during the legislative session; email smoore@crwcd.org to join the list.
 - b. It has been at least 5 years since there were 2 parties in power at the Colorado legislature. There is **currently a \$1.2B budget shortfall** since 3 to 4 years of federal funding are drying up, and the economy may be slowing.
 - c. The Colorado River District **supported the Water Projects Eligibility List**, and the Governor has already signed it into law. This is different from the CWCW Projects Bill.
 - d. House Bill HB25-1010 **prohibits price gouging** (defined as a more than 10% increase in price) **in the sale of necessities**. The Colorado River District does not oppose many bills but it opposes this because it affects organizations that sell or lease water. The bill was heavily amended, and only applies if the Governor declares a disaster. **The sale of peaches or hay could rise more than 10% in price, so Colorado River District opposed it.**
 - e. HB 1014 **staggers the 10-year water abandonment decennial lists** so that the abandonment list for **Water Div's 1-3 is released in 2030**, and in **2035 for Water Divisions 4-7**, and every 10 years thereafter.
 - f. HB 1099 Water Quality Data Standards. **Add clarity to establishing rivers with TMDL** Total Maximum Daily Load limits for contaminants. It was **postponed indefinitely**.
 - g. HB 1106 would **remove limitations on rain barrels**. This bill was **postponed indefinitely**.
 - h. HB 1113: Turf bill to limit **non-functional turf in new residential development**. Non-functional turf is defined as **lawn planted only to be mowed**. SB 25-2014 prohibited local gov't from using non-functional turf in common areas. HB 1113 expands the properties that have non-functional turf. Bill doesn't prohibit turf used in recreation, and it does not require local governments to adopt statewide standards, it just requires them to adopt standards, and it **does not require the removal of turf that was planted prior to January 1, 2028**.

- i. HB 115: **Water supply forecasting. Funds a new position at CWCB** to work on water forecasting like ASO. The fiscal note for this bill may cause it to fail. Colorado River District fully supports this.
 - j. HB 1211: **Tap fees: the Colorado River District opposed** this. Special Districts have been charging **high tap fees, and affordable-housing proponents opposed** these high fees for fear it was costing too much. This bill has **onerous reporting requirements**, and Colorado River District constituents have convinced the Colorado River District to oppose this bill.
 - k. SB 25-040 **creates a task force to make recommendations for future water funding needs as Severance Tax collections are expected to decline**. A seat was reserved for conservation districts that receive funds as special districts. The **Colorado River District supports** this bill.
 - l. Federal funding update. The Colorado River District provided a list of every B2E project to Jeff Hurd whose funding has been cut back or frozen by the Trump administration. **Kessler requested that CBRT members submit a list all projects whose funding has been frozen** so the Colorado River District can forward them to the Department of Interior.
 - i. Funding through the Inflation Reduction Act IRA is being released; funding through Bipartisan Infrastructure Law BIL is being held up.
 - ii. Kessler has heard that **every grant of \$50,000 or more has been held up**.
13. **Roundtable appointments.**
- a. **IBCC Representative:** April nominated **Angie Fowler. Director of Water Resources for SGM Engineering, was a former CBRT Roundtable member**, and wrote the 2023 CBRT BIP update to the Colorado Water Plan. Ken Ransford seconded, and it passed unanimously.
 - b. **At large industry representative.** April recommended **Hattie Johnson**, the Southern Rockies representative for **American Whitewater**, Ken Ransford seconded it, and it passed unanimously.
14. Jeff Rodriguez CWCB update.
- a. **New CWCB Appoints: Taylor Hawes** was confirmed to represent **Division 5, the Colorado Basin. Greg Johnson** was appointed to **represent the City of Denver and rancher Make Camblin for the Yampa River. 5 of 9 CWCB directors are new.**
 - b. Diane Hoppe scholarship closes April 1, a 1-year scholarship for a HS senior or college freshman interested in western water issues and planning.
 - c. Climate and Water Workshops: Colorado Water Plan Action 4.5 addresses Climate Change in Colorado, and how local action has affected future resilience. Audience are local water industry professionals, and climate resilience professionals.
 - i. April 3, Pueblo

- ii. April 23, Clifton Comm Center.
- iii. Workshops are free, but first register and can only attend in person.
- d. Agriculture Emergency Drought Program. **\$1m available annually for drought mitigation in grants or loans** for ag organizations in counties with a federally-declared drought designation. Deadline to apply for funds is April 15. Funds released in 2025 are to cover purchases that occurred in 2024.
- e. WSRF Deadline to CWCB is April 1.
- f. Colorado Water Plan grant deadline is July 1
- g. PEPO grant deadline is June 1. Next deadline is December 1.
- h. Recent CWCB Reports: Water Plan Progress Report, Photovoltaics Report, CWCB Guide, 10 strategies to Protect Irrigated Ag.
 - i. Action 1.7: State of the Science on Turf Replacement, by CWCB staff member Jenna Battson of the Urban Landscape Task Force
 - ii. Collaborative Water Sharing Report (formerly ATM Status Report), includes projects that have come online.

15. **Commissioner Mitchell updates on NEPA process to replace 2007 Interim Agreement.**

- a. **Operations of Powell and Mead must be supply-driven** based on actual supply conditions. The alternative must operate under a variety of hydrologic conditions.
- b. **Lower Basin will suffer 1.5 maf reduction** for evaporation and transit losses, which will go a long way to solving shortage problems.
- c. **Cuts will be variable year to year from basin to basin.**
- d. **Modified Powell release curve.** Guiding principle: Colorado does not want to agree to mandatory reductions based on use: LB wanted mandatory reductions in the UB. Becky does not want to commit to any mandatory reductions so the LB can continue using their historic use.
- e. **What creative solutions have been suggested?** Potential for pools. Env't and Tribes have recommended these.
- f. **Kate Hudson, Pitco Healthy Streams Board,** believes the Trump administration has eliminated the federal official formerly administering this process; Becky said the 7 states are continuing to meet, and the federal staff members are still involved.
- g. **Lower Basin suggests we can allow Lake Powell to decline below 3,490'** to continue Lower Basin deliveries; Mitchell does not believe this is a viable solution for the long term.

- h. The Lower Basin has gotten used to more water than is available. **The Lower Basin is facing a 40% reduction; the Upper Basin may be facing the same.** It is important that the 7 states form a solution.
 - i. There has been no decision regarding the release of federal funds.
 - j. April asked about the time frame, and next steps. The **2007 Interim Guidelines expire 12-31-2025, but govern operations through 2026.** We need to resolve this and get the main outline of an agreement in the next quarter.
 - k. April asked, “What have the 7 states agreed upon?” Typically there is not much movement until we get close to the finish line. There’s agreement that hydrology (actual precipitation and runoff) must govern water allocation. **We know we have to use less and we want to avoid litigation.**
 - i. **The Lower Basin will reduce use by at least 1.5 maf,** which it calls **the Structural Deficit.** The Lower Basin has **not accounted for evaporation and transit losses.** They are anticipating reductions of 760,000 af from AZ, 440,000 af from CA, and 50,000 af from NV, and 250,000 af from Mexico. Mexico has not agreed to this, so the reduction thus far agreed to is 1.25 maf.
 - l. **Open issues include:**
 - i. Will the 2026 agreement address management of 2 vs. 7 reservoirs.
 - ii. What are mandatory Upper Basin reductions.
 - iii. What do pools look like.
 - iv. Tribal water component needs to be addressed.
16. IBCC Update Carlyle Currier; the IBCC met in February in Westminster. The C9 Summit in Crested Butte in October was well received and they are planning to do another program, Carlyle requested that CBRT members send water topics to him. The next meeting is June 25 in Grand Junction. Another C9 Summit is planned for Denver in September.
- a. How to incorporate the drought resiliency action plan “No and Low Regrets” into Basin Implementation Plans.
 - b. The 2013 IBCC document set the stage for the first BIPs and first Water Plan. It had a 10-15 year horizon on all actions; the 2023 Water Plan update referenced back to the Low Regrets document.
 - c. **The Analysis and Technical Update for the next water plan will begin in the next year.**
17. Colorado River District Update, Brendan Langenhuizen.
- a. Colorado River District meeting is in April 15-16.
 - b. Colorado River District had biweekly legislative updates open to the public.

- c. Shoshone water rights preservation. Offering the use of the water right to the CWCB as an ISF; it would be an acquisition of an existing WR to maintain its existing priority. If so, go thru water court to change the water right to add another use (ISF in 2.5 mile stretch). Will present to CWCB in May 21, 22.
 - d. Update on federal funding. The \$40m award is still on pause. Colorado River District is working with Rep. Jeff Hurd, who is pushing this forward in Congress.
 - e. Dave Kanzer has retired after 30 years with the Colorado River District. His position is open at the Colorado River District.
 - f. State of the River events around the basin are scheduled; see the listing online.
18. Brendan Langenhuizen, Colorado River District, hydrology update. Powell and Mead are low, Flaming Gorge is full, and Blue Mesa 62% full.
- a. CRSP reservoirs are 1 maf lower than 2 months ago. **The most probable inflow is 6.77 maf. Lake Powell is in minimum 10% percentile.** We will likely be in mid elevation tier for next 2 years.
 - b. The Snow Water Equivalent overall for **Colorado River headwaters are 102% of average**, but it is **very dry in the southern part of the state**, particularly the Rio Grande Basin.
 - c. Colorado snowpack to date is average. Soil moisture is dryer the further west we go. On a **recent HUP call, participants are saying, “We never had winter.”**
 - d. The past 3 months of precipitation and evaporation show we are very dry, especially in the Grand Valley.
 - e. Watershed drought: the 28-day average flows are low in Southwest and Republican River Basins.
 - f. Drought is starting to creep in from the south and southwest.
 - g. The precipitation outlook is for below-average the next 3 months. NOAA presenter at HUP meeting showed a forecast for atmospheric rivers likely to come by the end of March. They will hopefully bring more snow.
 - h. Seasonal temperature outlook—above average.
 - i. Dust on Snow events have been rare this year.
 - j. At the January 27 meeting, Langenhuizen said the forecast was for below average precipitation, but that fortunately did not come to pass as the last 2 months have been higher than average, with Colorado snowpack as a whole at 102% right now.
19. PEPO Update, Paula Stepp. Grand Valley Children’s Water Festival \$1,000, Eagle River; Water Festival, \$1,000, and **the Blue River Water Festival** \$2,500.
- a. Of \$4,000 grants for festivals and water education workshops, \$2,000 was split between five West Slope groups.

- b. Paula asked grant recipients to send photos and updates on grant progress to add to the CBRT Facebook page.
- c. Contact Paula at: Cobrt.chair@gmail.com

20. Member updates

- a. Kate Collins announced that federal funding has been restored for grants awarded to the Middle Colorado Watershed Council.
 - i. She distributed copies of *Best Practices for Ecological Reclamation of Gravel Mines*, a 36-page guide produced with support from the CWCB. **It recommends to make bank slopes as mellow as possible, to actively restore vegetation after mining has ceased, to preserve original topsoil and pond muck since they contain seed banks and microbiomes, to make the pond bottom and shorelines diverse, to plan for the desired wildlife beyond sport fish after mining ceases, and to mine lower-quality resource deposits outside the river corridor.** The CBRT also helped fund this project.
 - ii. Mesa County has lost 50% of its riparian habitat in the last 100 years.
- b. Greg Williams announced the **Western Colorado Children's Water Festival** is being held at Los Colonias Park on May 12-13, the **largest water festival in Colorado**.
- c. Chuck Woodruff, Pitco BOCC, announced that Pitkin County reached an Intergovernmental Agreement IGA with Aspen to house single engine air tankers and to bring Firehawk to the RF Valley, a one-of-a-kind aircraft that can quickly slurp up and drop 1,000 gallons of water on flames. Woodruff is on the **Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code Board for Pitkin County**. The code is intended to **mitigate the risk to life and structures from wildland fire and adjacent structures** and to mitigate structure fires from spreading to wildland fuels.
- d. Sarah Parmar announced that **Colorado Open Lands has over 700,000 acres under easement and 700 water rights**. It **merged with the Colorado Headwaters Land Trust** in Grand County to manage their easements.
- e. Hannah Holm, American Rivers, announced the CWCB approved the latest Colorado Water Plan grant for the **Grand Valley Corridor Initiative**. They are **ready to do actual riparian water restoration work**.
- f. Katie Randall of the **Middle Park Water Conservancy District** announced there is a **board vacancy for the seat from Grand Lake to Hot Sulphur Springs**.
- g. Kayli Foulk, water quality specialist with Grand County, announced that a **Grand County award of WaterSmart funds worth \$1.5m for the Learning By Doing program has been unfrozen**.
- h. April Long is working with American Whitewater to do a **boatable days study of the Roaring Fork River**.

21. April Long announced that **zebra mussels have been now found in the Colorado River, unusual for a body of moving water**. Mussels have also been found in the Highline Canal in the Grand Valley. April recommends this topic for a roundtable meeting presentation.
22. James Heath, Colo Div of Water Resources, Div Engineer for Division 5, the Colorado Basin. The USGS is fully staffed on the Western slope; they manage the gages. Measurement rules are being presented to the Western slope. Div 7 filed water rules with the Water court, likely effective in 2026. Division 4, the Gunnison, will be the next basin to do this.
 - a. Div 5 will be last up, starting the process within the next 12 months. April recommended discussing this at the November CBRT RT meeting.
 - b. **CWCB has \$7m funding thru the Upper Colorado River commission to find a contractor to install measuring devices on ditches**; funding applications are pending.
 - c. They are developing **Diversion Measurement Rules to put everyone on same playing field**; they will address lockable & controllable headgates, flumes to measure water, and inline flow meters in pipelines.