

Yampa/White/Green River Basin Roundtable Minutes Summary

Wednesday, May 14, 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

1	Call Meeting to Order A regular Yampa White Green Basin Roundtable (YWG BRT) meeting convened virtually and in person. The meeting was called to order by Chairman Stephen Hinkemeyer @ 6:03 PM
2	Introduction of Members and Audience A quorum was formed with 22 voting members present at the call to order (at least 16 required) <u>VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:</u> Sonja Macys, Doug Overton, Ken Brenner, Stephen Hinkemeyer, Mario Sullivan, Andy Rossi, Shawn Welder, Alden Vanden Brink, Rebecca Briesmoore, Tim Sullivan, Will Myers, Kent Vertress, Frank Alfone, Jackie Brown, Jeff Meyers, Doug Monger, Jeff Comstock, Doug Davis, Charles Whiteman, Chris Collins, Jennifer Holloway, Travis Day <u>OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:</u> Sally Cariveau, Kristin Skowronski, Steve Hampton, Alex Hopkins, Kathy Barnes, Dierdre McNabb, Emily Burke, John Leary, Bailey Leppek, Tyler Desoderio, Ashley Garrison, Mendi Figueroa, Andi Schaffner, Amy Ostdiek, John Redmond, Erin Light, Michelle Mahosky, Robert Sakata, Jeff Rodriguez, Duane Zimmerman, Janelle Zimmerman, Phil Brink
3	Review and Approve Agenda Hinkemeyer noted that the next YWG BRT meeting date is July 9 th , 2025. Ken Brenner moved to approve the agenda, seconded by Frank Alfone and approved unanimously.
4	Review and Approve March 12, 2025 Minutes Sonja Macys moved to approve the minutes from the March 12, 2025, meeting as submitted, seconded by Tim Sullivan, and approved unanimously.
5	Public Comment for Items Not on Agenda Steve Hampton announced an upcoming, hands-on workshop to likely take place north of Craig at Willow Creek to learn about process-based restoration practices. Those interested should contact the White River Alliance for more details.
6	Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Update—Jeff Rodriguez Budget Report—Jeff Rodriguez gave updates on water supply conditions, program deadlines, and upcoming opportunities. <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ He noted April 2025 was the 15th driest on record, leading to early snowmelt with 75% of Colorado experiencing at least D0 (abnormally dry) drought conditions, and encouraged participation in the Water Conditions Monitoring Committee webinar on May 20th for more current data.▪ The deadline for 1051 data submissions (required for covered entities) and water loss audits is June 30, 2025. CWCB offers free training for entities needing support with the audits.▪ Fluvial hazard mapping survey open; training series coming.▪ Hiring two new CWCB staff: watershed protection and water plan update▪ New basin infographics have been released▪ Upcoming grant deadlines: June 1st (WSRF & PEPO), July 1st (Water Plan)▪ One Water Day: Denver Botanic Gardens, June 30th
7	CWCB Board Member Report/Introduction—Mike Camblin Mike Camblin reflected on his first CWCB meeting, encouraged attendance at the next one (which will include major in-stream flow items), and acknowledged ag producers' concerns about shrinking water supplies.
8	Water Commissioners Corner—Amy Ostdiek Amy Ostdiek provided an overview of ongoing post-2026 Colorado River operations negotiations. She emphasized the importance of a 7-state consensus to influence the Bureau of Reclamation's NEPA

	process and reiterated Colorado’s commitment to supply-driven operations. Discussions include defining “actual hydrology” and identifying reliable, non-manipulable indicators. She noted there’s no current authorization for the System Conservation Pilot Program past 2026, but a federal bill is pending.
9	Action Items
9a	<i>Grant Committee Update—Frank Alfone</i>
	Alfone reported that the Roundtable began the year with \$710,000 and targeted \$550,000 in WSRF spending. About \$240,000 has been awarded so far, with more applications expected later in the year. He thanked the committee for its time and emphasized the effort that went into the vetting process.
9b	<i>2026 PEPO Basin Coordinator Grant—Sally Cariveau, CAA</i>
	Brenner outlined a \$25,000 request for CWCB WSRF funds to support ongoing PEPO activities, including outreach materials, website updates, and events. Jeff Meyers moved to approve the request for \$25,000 of CWCB WSRF funds, Kent Vertrees seconded, and the motion passed. As PEPO Committee Chair, Brenner recused himself from the vote.
9c	<i>Fortification Creek Irrigation Diversion Project—Phil Brink, CAWA</i>
	Phil Brink presented on behalf of Duane and Janelle Zimmerman. The project aims to replace a damaged diversion structure on Fortification Creek with a multi-step boulder cross-vane system that supports irrigation and fish passage. The ask was for \$28,300 in YWG WSRF funds to complete surveying and design. Will Meyers moved to approve the grant request for \$28,300 of YWG WSRF funds, seconded by Jeff Meyers, and approved unanimously.
9d	<i>J.C Temple #1 Dam Repair Project—Kathy Barnes, Owner</i>
	Tyler Desiderio of the Applegate Group—this project addresses dam safety issues at a private reservoir south of Hayden. The dam has been classified as a significant hazard and has structural deficiencies, including embankment cracking and failing riprap. Owner Kathy Barnes is contributing over \$48,000 in matching funds, with additional support likely from Upper Yampa Water Conservancy District. Jackie Brown moved to approve the grant request for \$77,386 of YWG WSRF funds, seconded by Doug Davis, and approved unanimously.
	<i>Stillwater Reservoir Drain, Collar Project—John Redmond, Bear River Reservoir Co.</i>
	John Redmond presented a \$94,000 funding request as an addendum to a 2024 grant. The project addresses safety issues at Stillwater No. 1 Dam, including the need for a filter collar around the outlet conduit and channel stabilization below the dam. The work is required before the Division of Water Resources will lift the current storage restriction. Brown moved to approve the grant request for the \$94,000 of YWG WSRF funds, seconded by Vertrees. The motion passed. Andy Rossi abstained from the vote for a potential conflict of interest.
	<i>RiversEdge West Water Plan Grant LOS—John Leary, REW</i>
	John Leary asked the RT for a letter of support for a CWCB Water Plan Grant proposal for a project to restore 45 acres along the White River through invasive species removal, revegetation, community workshops, and youth engagement. Brown moved to approve the LOS, seconded by Shawn Welder. The motion passed unanimously.
9	Presentations
9a	<i>White River Alliance Project Update—Dierdre McNabb, WRA</i>
	Dierdre McNabb gave a presentation on the role of beavers and their dams in riparian restoration.
10	Division of Water Resources Report
	Erin Light introduced new staff, including Casey Lyons (Little Snake), Mark Munger (Elk and Yampa Rivers), and Willie Summers, who was promoted to Assistant Division Engineer. She emphasized stricter enforcement of measurement rules this season — diversions without compliant structures will be cut off or denied calls. She also gave updates on rulemaking in other divisions and noted that Division 6 currently has three active calls. Snowpack and runoff conditions resemble 2018, with an early peak likely before May 30. Light said the division will adjust administration based on available flows, even if it means administering less commonly managed streams.

11	Colorado River District Update
	Rebecca Briesmore reported that the River District’s \$40 million federal grant for the Shoshone Water Rights Preservation Project was approved but paused due to a federal funding freeze. With this grant, the project has secured \$96 million of its \$99 million goal. The CRD plans to offer the water right to CWCB for in-stream flow use, initiating a 120-day review.
12	Roundtable Projects and Committees
12a	Big River Committee/IBCC
12b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colorado Basin Hydrology Update—Briesmoore gave a hydrology update, noting a sharp drop in snowpack following a dry April and emphasized that runoff forecasts for the broader Upper Basin have worsened. IBCC—Brenner reported that Becky Mitchell is now Chair of the Interbasin Compact Committee, bringing renewed energy to statewide discussions. He emphasized the need for Colorado to remain proactive in shaping post-2026 Colorado River agreements and discussed the importance of the Upper Basin states preparing for difficult negotiations. He also expressed concern over media narratives suggesting inevitable curtailment in the Upper Basin. He stressed the importance of strategic, unified messaging and local engagement as part of broader water policy planning. BRC—Meyers emphasized the importance of West Slope engagement in shaping Colorado River policy and noted that the Big River Committee is focused on long-term drought planning, especially as Colorado navigates post-2026 negotiations. He encouraged Roundtable members to stay informed and participate in discussions that could impact local water users. He pointed out the value of maintaining strong representation from the YWG Basin in statewide processes.
	PEPO
	Sally Cariveau gave updates on the Public Education, Participation, and Outreach committee. She highlighted the upcoming Story Map project, running April through December, and introduced the subcommittee overseeing it: Kristin Jespersen, Chris Collins, Chuck Whiteman, Alden Vanden Brink, and Kent Vertrees. An RFP for a Phase 2 contractor was issued in February. Cariveau also noted plans to promote local water projects through newspaper articles, as well as the upcoming BRT field trip July 9 th , 2025.
13	Announcements
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Next meeting location and PEPO tour opportunity b) Yampa Basin Rendezvous May 28 – 29, 2025 CMC SBS c) Yampa River Fest – State of the Yampa May 29, 2025 FOTY d) Yampa River Festival May 29, - June 1, 2025 FOTY
14	Next YWG BRT Meeting July 9, 2025 @ 6:00 p.m. Rio Blanco Fire Station
	Cariveau will send out a registration email for the July 9 field trip and meeting details. Field trip will be capped at 40 people.
15	Adjourn
	Doug Davis moved to adjourn Sonja Macys seconded, meeting adjourned at 9:09 p.m.