



SPBRT Roundtable Meeting Summary

Tuesday, August 12, 2025

Time: 4:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Roundtable Voting Members in Attendance: Brent Schantz, Bruce Gerk, Darren Beck, Daylan Figgs, Deb Daniel, Donnie Dustin, Garrett Varra, Gary Barber, Jason Gemmer, Jim Yahn, Kevin Ross, Kirk Vincent, Larry Rogstad, Lisa Leben, Lynda James, Randy Ray, Scott Griebing, Sean Chambers, Stephen Larson

Roundtable Non-voting Members in Attendance: Casey Davenport, Don Baggus, Esther Malers, Mathew Schultz, Sean Cronin

Guests: Alana Helin, Caleb Cullen, Carmen Farmer, Chelsea Perts, Corey DeAngelis, Courtney Massey, Dan Betts, Dan Gallen, Dawn Jewell, Gisela Merino-Soler, Jake Nemmers, Josh Boissevain, Kelly Morgan, Krystle Morey, Mathew Redmond, Micaela Vondy, Michael Welsh, Laura Chartrand, Lilly Cory, Lynette Weld, Meghan Bell, Nathan Boyer-Rechlin, Noelle Fillo, Patrick Wells, Robert Sakata, Scott Benton, Skylar Zilliox, Tessa Adkins, Tom Cech

CWCB: Jackie Carano, Jenna Battson

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

The meeting was called to order by Chair Sean Chambers at 4:11pm

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

It was moved by Jim Yahn to approve the agenda and seconded by Kirk Vincent. The motion carried.

3. Approval of [SPBRT Meeting Summary June 10, 2025](#) (Sean Chambers – 2 min.)

Jim Yahn moved to approve SPBRT Meeting Summary June 10, 2025. It was seconded by Kirk Vincent and the motion carried.

4. Public Comment (3 min.)

1. A RT member shared that Boulder County may soon have a Municipal Representative on the SPBRT.
2. Jake Nemmers from the office of Senator John Hickenlooper provided an update:
 - Colorado's entire congressional delegation, Republicans and Democrats alike, sent a bipartisan letter to the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation, calling for the release of \$140 million in frozen funds for water projects.
 - In July, Senator Hickenlooper and Senator Curtis introduced the bipartisan Snow Water Supply Forecasting Program Reauthorization Act of 2025 which would aid monitoring, forecasting, and technical updates for five years. The House companion, H.R. 3857 is being led by Congressman Joe Neguse and Jeff Hurd.
 - For anyone in need of help with federal agencies, seek aid from the case workers available at Senator Hickenlooper's office or any congressional office.
3. USGS Colorado Water Science Center welcomes all at the 'STREAM' Workshop event, September 24, 2025. The hybrid event will be accessible online and in person at three locations: Lakewood, Pueblo, and Grand Junction. See the [homepage](#) for the agenda and more information.
4. A member notified the RT that federal bill H.R. 4403 Clear Skies Act, prohibits weather modification (including cloud seeding) within the United States and authorizes a criminal penalty for offenders.

5. Urban Flow – CU Boulder [MENV](#) and [CWT](#) (Caleb Cullen, Chelsea Perts, Gisela Merino-Soler, Josh Boissevain – 10 min.)

1. A consultant team from CU Boulder's MENV program partnered with the Colorado Water Trust to develop a survey to better understand how cities and towns (and their residents) interact with their

urban streams and rivers. The team explained their process to the RT and encouraged members to participate in the [survey](#) (especially representatives of water providers), and distribute it further. See their [blog](#) for more information.

6. WSRF (Garrett Varra – 5 min.)

1. WSRF Update and SPBRT Funds Status CWCB Basin Account Funds: The funds are currently at \$248,000, but do not reflect deductions for Cycle 1 applications nor the refresh which occurs shortly after the start of the state's new fiscal year (July 1st).
2. [Cycle 2 Application Open](#)

Application Steps	Cycle 1 Deadlines	Cycle 2 Deadlines
Online summary proposal via www.southplattebasin.com/grants	March 1	September 1
Draft Full Application Submittal on CWCB Portal	3rd Friday in April	3rd Friday in October
RT Award Decision	May RT meeting	November RT meeting
Final Application submittal on CWCB Portal	June 1	December 1
CWCB Approval Meeting	September	March

- **Deadline extension:** September 1st falls on Labor Day, so the Cycle 2 application portal will remain open until Friday, September 5th.

7. Water Plan Grant Letter of Support Request (15 min.)

1. [Larimer County Groundwater Study](#) (Scott Benton – 15 min.): Larimer County applied for a WPG in July. A letter of support cannot be added to the application, but engagement and support from the RT is valuable, nonetheless. The goal of the study is to develop a robust baseline of groundwater information to support reasonable development and long-term sustainability. Donnie Dustin moved to approve a letter of support and Jim Yahn seconded. The motion carried.

8. Dredge and Fill Program Update (~~Annette Quill~~, Kelly Morgan, Tessa Adkins – 45 min.)

1. Background: The Dredge and Fill Program, established as a result of HB24-1379, granted the state authority to protect state water. Kelly Morgan and Tessa Adkins provided an update on the development of the program including: the status of rule-making, themes from stakeholder feedback, the nexus of water rights and policy, and the connection with watershed restoration as well as ditches, diversions, ag. Full presentation is available by request (esther.malers@trilynx.systems).

9. Committee Updates (30 min.) [Roundtable Meeting Records — The South Platte Basin](#) Link to Announce a Meeting Form - [Add a meeting — The South Platte Basin](#)

1. PEPO Committee Update (Casey Davenport – 10 min.) (07/31/25 [summary + calendar](#))
 - Casey Davenport informed the RT about the Memo “[Understand Colorado Water Plan Grants for Riverscape Restoration](#)” which provides an overview of grant resources for stream restoration projects. The Memo was created from the Water for Colorado Coalition and Audubon partnership. Further questions can be directed to nathan.boyer-rechlin@audubon.org.
 - PEPO has also been interested in making the [Special Study: Environmental and Recreational Benefits of Irrigated Agriculture in the Lower South Platte Basin](#) (V.II SP Basin Implementation Plan) more accessible. It discusses the benefits of return flow from irrigated pastures and cropland. ER&W continues to discuss this document and its thesis which is supported in the linked [OnLand article](#).
 - Colorado Watersheds Conference, October 7th-9th, 2025: The agenda has not been posted yet, but one presentation of interest will be “Rethinking Agricultural Efficiency- Return Flow Benefits to River Health” which promises a “geographically diverse panel.”
 - PEPO is getting more questions related to groundwater and PEPO needs updated resources to share. Please email Casey@coloradowater.org with educational materials or information.
 - PEPO had a good July meeting and continues to develop the document “What is the Roundtable?”
2. ER&W Committee (~~Larry Regstad~~ Kirk Vincent – 10 min.) (07/30/35 [summary](#))

- ER&W read and discussed the SP's BIP [Vol. II Appendix](#). The group commented that it is hard to find, is lengthy, and doesn't introduce the thesis early enough. ER&W is interested in making it more digestible and is exploring how they might create a standalone document, make it more concise, or develop it into a video. Some of the talking points have been how ag increases riparian areas, how buy and dry has consequences on ER&W benefits, and how enthusiasm for ditch lining varies geographically.
3. M&I Committee (~~Jim Hall~~ Donnie Dustin – 10 min.) (no meeting)
- The last meeting took place 05/23/25.

10. IBCC Update (Jim Yahn & Sean Cronin – 30 min.) ([Link to IBCC Webpage](#))

1. 06/25/25 IBCC meeting [summary](#). Discussions included:
 - Colorado River negotiations and the Upper Division States Alternative for supply-based management post-2026.
 - Developments on the Platte River and Perkins Canal (see the CWCB's [July Board Meeting](#)).
 - IBCC members provided project highlights from their basins.
 - Planning for the upcoming C9 summit in October continued.
2. IBCC "No and Low Regrets" subcommittee update ([executive summary](#)): The committee was tasked with identifying key topics from the 2024 C9 Summit's "Drought Resilience Action Plan" (DRAP) and within the IBCC's 2013 "[No and Low Regrets](#)" memorandum. After some months of meetings, the subcommittee completed this task and has produced the executive summary linked above. The IBCC subcommittee recommended that:
 - 1) That the SPBRT commit to a standing agenda item at monthly meetings to discuss the basin's NLR/DRAP priorities. It is the executive committee's responsibility to determine the allotted time and focus topics for the discussion. Lynda moved to approve a standing agenda item for "NLR/DRAP" with time allocated by the executive committee and Larry Rogstad seconded. The motion carried.
 - 2) That the IBCC subcommittee continue meeting to act as a link of communication between RT discussions and the IBCC. And, that the IBCC subcommittee continue to discuss what the process for developing NLR/DRAP priorities could be at the RT and IBCC level.

Context: The "No and Low Regrets" (NLR) concept refers to widely-supported, high-priority areas of focus for cultivating robust and resilient watersheds. The idea originates from the [No and Low Regrets](#) memorandum released by the IBCC in 2013. The idea recirculated at the 2024 C9 Summit under the name "Drought Resilience Action Plan" (DRAP) and the two titles are both used.

The original NLR memorandum did not progress further into "actionable items" because it predated the first Water Plan (2015), BIPs, and sources of funding implemented later such as sports betting tax revenue.

Now, the IBCC and nine RTs hope to work together to identify NLR/DRAP priorities at the state-wide and basin-specific level to inform the next iteration of the Water Plan (2027), its technical update, and BIPs. The next goal is to establish mechanisms and processes to efficiently fund projects addressing those priorities at the state and/or basin level.

Progress towards those goals has involved the IBCC creating a subcommittee, the IBCC "No and Low Regrets" subcommittee, general SPBRT discussions, a SPBRT "No and Low Regrets" subcommittee to refine the wider RT's ideas ([2025 draft](#)), and discussions between CWCB, IBCC, and RT members at the C9 Summit.

11. CWCB Update (25 min.)

1. CWCB Staff Report (Jeff Rodriguez Jenna Battson – 10 min.)

General:

- Drought Indicator shows extreme drought in CO.

Events:

- July 16th, 2025: [CWCB Board Meeting](#) (with Shoshone updates).
 - [Shoshone Webpage](#)
- August 20th, 2025: [DWR Ag Protection Water Rights Stakeholder Meeting](#).
- September 9th, 2025: [Fluvial Futures Webinars](#).
- September 17th & 18th, 2025: [CWCB Board Meeting](#).
- October 28th & 29th, 2025: [C9 Summit](#) registration will open soon.
- Monthly, typically on 3rd or 4th Tuesday: [Water Conditions Monitoring Committee](#) Meetings.

Deadlines:

- October 17th, 2025: WSRF Applications due.
- December 1st, 2025: WPG Applications.

2. ~~Director Wind Update~~ (15 min.)

- Not in attendance.

12. Member Updates (15 min.)

1. Upper South Platte Basin Field Trip Updates (Lynda James – 5 mins.):

- The 09/09/25 tour will take place in Fairplay, 12pm-4pm ([tour outline](#)). Members are encouraged to reserve the full day for travel, lunch, tours, the meeting, and dinner if possible. The tour is full, but Lynda has started a waitlist (contact her at jameslynda2@gmail.com).
- SPBRT's Regular Monthly Meeting 09/09/25: All are welcome at the SPBRT's regular September meeting which will take place 4pm-7pm at the Upper South Platte Water Conservancy District office (548 Front St, Fairplay, CO 80440).

2. Shoshone Instream Flow (ISF) Acquisition (Alex Davis- Aurora Water):

- The Colorado River District has entered into a complicated agreement to acquire historic water rights on the Colorado River from Xcel Energy. The District would donate the use, not the right itself, to the CWCB for an instream flow right. There are concerns that this senior right on the main stem of the Colorado River may impair transmountain diversions in the South Platte and the water security of large water providers with junior rights in the Front Range.
- The concerned parties endorse the acquisition, but under the condition that the instream flow is not an enlargement or expansion of use. Determination of injury from acquiring the ISF right is complicated because only the CWCB has the authority to put to Water Court, not the Colorado River District. One recommendation is that the CWCB remain neutral at Water Court.
- The Shoshone hearing will take place at the CWCB Board Meeting, September 16th-18th, 2025. Brad Wind and Greg Johnson have been recused, leaving the South Platte without representation on the CWCB board. Feedback must be submitted to Viola.bralish@state.co.us before the hearing. A template for comments is available by request (esther.malers@trilynx.systems).

3. Lower South Platte Update

- The South Platte River Compact is an agreement between Colorado and Nebraska that specifies CO's winter and summer delivery obligations. In July, Nebraska announced a lawsuit against the state of Colorado for alleged "unlawful water diversions." In response, a RT member explained that the wells in CO with junior rights are carefully augmented, replacing the water to satisfy the summertime obligations. In 2022, Nebraska started assessing the feasibility of exercising Article VI to create Perkins Canal in District 64. While those negotiations started, NE sent letters to community members in Sedgewick stating that they must accept an offer for their land or else condemnation proceedings would begin. RT members representing the Lower South Platte will continue to follow developments.

4. Colorado Water Summer Congress will take place August 19th – 21st, 2025.

5. City of Greeley has developed a Poudre River Restoration Initiative (PRRI) Master Plan to enhance the Cache la Poudre River corridor as a community asset. Contractors will present plans 09/14/25, identifying stretches of the river for restoration to lower flood risk, improve environment and recreation. The project may approach the RT for funding in the future.

6. Industrial Representative, Brent Schantz would like to present to the SPBRT on United Water's sub-surface irrigation project which may provide an opportunity for training and education. Additionally, the RT may be approached regarding a Letter of Support for a "Water Resources Program" at Front Range.
7. [RiverBank](#) will take place September 30th, at the Denver Botanic Gardens.

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

1. 09/09/25: SPBRT's regular meeting will take place in Fairplay (548 Front St, Fairplay, CO 80440).
2. 10/14/25: SPBRT's regular meeting will take place at Northern Water's Berthoud office (details to come).
3. 11/18/25: The Southwest Weld County Building will be *closed* for Veterans Day (11/11/25).
 - *Instead*, SPBRT will meet at the Southwest Weld County Building on the **third Tuesday of November, 11/18/25.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:12pm