



Arkansas Basin Roundtable

PLANNING OUR
WATER FUTURE

Arkansas Basin Roundtable Meeting Minutes and Recorded Decisions

Wednesday August 13, 2025, 1:00 pm
Otero College and Virtual via Zoom

Members Present: Noted on sign-in sheet.

Chair Mark Shea called the meeting to order at 1:10 pm.

- Welcome and Introductions
- Quorum was determined and the meeting commenced.
- August 13, 2025 Agenda was approved
- Minutes of July 9, 2025, was approved by consensus.
- Public comments: Rick Kienitz with Aurora Water addressed the meeting with information about a template for a public comment letter that Aurora Water created. The letter addresses issues pertaining to the Shoshone water rights case and concerns about the upcoming Colorado Water Conservation Board decision on an associated Instream Water Right. Chair Mark Shea reminded everyone that the Arkansas Basin Implementation Plan has several objectives that focus on the protection and maintenance of imported water supplies because of their value in the Arkansas basin. The Roundtable membership showed interest in possibly utilizing this letter as a template and it was decided to distribute the letter to members.

Andy Klakulak, U.S. Geological Survey reminded everyone that the USGS Science Day is September 24th, starts at 9am and goes to 4.30. It will be held at Pueblo Community College, in the ballroom where the Roundtable meets.

Reports

- Chair Mark Shea thanked the Lower Arkansas Valley Water Conservancy District for organizing the [Lower Ark Valley Farm Tour](#) this morning for members and visitors. The tour was very interesting and was well attended.
- **CWCB Report** - CWCB Director Greg Felt reported a public hearing regarding the Shoshone in-stream flow water rights will be held September 18th at the CWCB meeting. A CWCB board decision on the instream flow right is currently scheduled for the September meeting. Mr. Felt stated that some members of the Board have expressed they would prefer more time to make a decision under these unusual circumstances. It appears that the Colorado River Conservation District agreed that the hearing could be

delayed until the November CWCB meeting. Mr. Felt felt that the decision-making process will be better informed with more time to consider the public comments and to ask questions. Terry Scanga asked Mr. Felt to explain the quantification of the Shoshone water right. Mr. Felt replied that some are questioning the water court application the River District intends to file because the quantification of the data that was used is unclear. Such as which years did they look at? Which measuring points did they look at? When they didn't have actual diversion records, what assumptions were made? The front range entities objecting to the quantifications are mostly concerned about the junior right, not necessarily the senior right. The junior right is where there's an awful lot of uncertainty, and where the big front-range interests have done their homework to show that it's a huge swing. Chairman Shea stated that it's something that needs to be approached with caution, and with real science, and good analysis. He stated the important part is that CWCB as a state agency representing all Coloradans, their involvement needs to reflect the benefit for everyone throughout the state of Colorado, this isn't something that just benefits the function of the state.

Jeff Rodriguez reported that CWCB has created a website for the [Shoshone In-Stream Flow \(ISF\) acquisition](#). The ISF process, who's applied for party status, and the public comments are all on the website. The deadline for public comment is the September CWCB board meeting. The CWCB board meeting is September 16 - 18 in Durango at Fort Lewis College. Mr. Rodriguez reminded everyone that the [C-9 Summit](#) will be on October 28 - 29 in Lakewood. CWCB has funding available for 10 Roundtable members to be reimbursed for hotel room and mileage. Contact him if interested. jeff.rodriguez@state.co.us. Mr Rodriguez provided a water supply update, stating that D3 has almost doubled across the state since last week. The Water Conditions Monitoring Committee has a meeting on August 26th from 9:30 to 12. He stated that CWCB staff is reviewing Colorado Water Plan grant applications from the July cycle. It's a competitive application period, requests are around \$38 million for \$37 million available for two cycles. Staff will make recommendations to the board in September for approvals. Jeff also provided the following links in the Zoom Chat for interested parties:

Water Conditions Monitoring Webinar:

<https://cwcb.colorado.gov/Water-Conditions-Monitoring-Committee>

Fluvial Futures Webinars:

https://www.casfm.org/2025/06/05/fluvial-futures-webinar-series/cwcb-fluvial-futures-webinar-series_20250522/

DWR Ag Protection Water Rights Meetings:

<https://dnrweblink.state.co.us/dwr/ElectronicFile.aspx?docid=4462805&dbid=0>

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- **IBCC Report** - No report this month.
- **Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative Report** - Executive Director Jonathan Pakalian reported Rio Grande Basin Roundtable will attend the September Roundtable

meeting. Mr. Pakalian asked for 15 minutes on the agenda for introductions and an opportunity to inform us about what they do. On the following day, Sept. 11th ARWC, in conjunction with PEPO, has planned a day-long tour featuring the Bessemer Ditch project, Minnequa Diversion Dam, and a Pueblo Dam / Fish Hatchery tour. All Roundtable members are encouraged to attend and a flyer with tour details and how to register will be distributed.

- **Needs Assessment Committee** - Chair Gracy Goodwin did not provide an oral report but put in the zoom chat that WSRF Grant applications are due Friday 8/15 and the Needs Assessment Committee Meeting will be Aug 25th at 10am.
- **PEPO Workgroup** - No report this month.
- **Enviro/Rec Committee** - Chair Bob Hamel reported that the Voluntary Flow Management Program is ending this weekend. Mr. Hamel thanked the partners who helped out with the program, stating it would have been very difficult to maintain sufficient flows without the program and their participation. It's an incredible program that is well appreciated. Chairman Shea stated that Roundtable should provide a VFMP presentation for the members in the near future.
- **Ag-Muni Committee** - No report this month.
- **Presentations**

Chairman Shea organized an excellent panel discussion with the following:

Moderator: Kristi Bartolo, Research Associate, Arkansas Valley Research Center - Changing trends of water supply availability and crop consumption – Does agricultural irrigation need to become more efficient to be sustainable?

Panelists:

AJ Brown, Agricultural Data Scientist, CSU Ag Water Quality Program – New Developments in Irrigation and Agricultural Practices Agronomic controls during water scarcity as it relates to the soil-water health nexus with innovative technologies.

Jeff Davidson, Research Lead, Arkansas Valley Research Center – Current Research at the Arkansas Valley Research Center Examining lower water use crops and reducing irrigation inputs for existing crops, with a focus on economic impacts for producers.

Jared Gardner, Ag Producer – Irrigation Efficiency and Challenges in Today's Agricultural Production. Lessons learned in the field: the benefits and pitfalls of increased irrigation efficiency.

Dan Tucker, AGRA – Effects of Changes in Irrigation Practices on Water Management in

the Lower Ark Valley. Irrigation efficiency inferred through well user allocations and changes seen through Rule 10 Plan operations.

["The Water - Soil Health Nexus in the Lower Arkansas Agricultural Irrigation".](#)

The meeting was adjourned by Chair Mark Shea at 3:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Van Pelt
ABRT Admin Recorder

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