

**Interbasin Compact Committee
Gunnison Basin Roundtable Meeting
Virtual and In-Person Meeting
Montrose Pavilion
September 15, 2025**

Voting Members Present:

Thomas Alvey	North Fork WCD
Bruce Bair	At-Large Member
Sonja Chavez	Upper Gunnison River WCD
Kathleen Curry	Saguache County
Bobbie Daniel	Mesa County
Allen Distel	Bostwick Park WCD
Joanne Fagan	Ouray Municipalities
Steve Fletcher	At-Large Member
Jonathan Houck	Gunnison County
Austin Keiser	Grand Mesa WCD
Wendell Koontz	At-Large Member
Mark LeValley	At-Large Member
John McCLOW	House and Senate Ag Committees
Scott Murphy	Montrose Municipalities
Bill Nesbitt	Gunnison Municipalities
Jim Plumhoff	Industrial
Steve Pope	At-Large Member
Mark Ritterbush	Mesa Municipalities
Dave Traylor	Ute WCD
Adam Turner	Local Domestic Water Supplier
Henry Woods	Hinsdale Municipalities
Jerry Young	Tri-County WCD

Voting Members Excused/Absent:

Steve Anderson	Agricultural
Mike Cleary	Crawford Water Conservancy District
Nancy Fishering	Montrose County
Jonathan Hare	Environmental
Michael Murphy	Hinsdale County
Mark Roeber	Delta County
Neal Schwieterman	Recreational
William Tedrow	Delta Municipalities
Martha Whitmore	Ouray County
Vacant	Colorado River WCD

Liaisons and Non-Voting Members Present:

Sharon Dunning (Assistant Recorder), Raquel Flinker (CRWCD), Jeff Rodriguez (CWCB), Jedd Sondergard (BLM), Savannah Nelson (PEPO).

Public: Online: Ethan H Knight, Joely Anysz (Mesa CD), jwriter, LGriffith, Tanya Ishikawa, Robert Sakata, Riley Scott (Rep. Hurd), Beverly Richards (UGRWCD), MB Eland, John Miller (CDA).

In Person: Christine Collins (TCWCD), Cindy Dozier (Club 20), Alyssa Bentele and Rob Bleiberg (CO West Land Trust), John Perusek (UGRWCD), Erin McDermott and Melissa Neubaum (RiversEdge West), Luke Gingerich (J-U-B).

Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Chairperson Wendell Koontz.

Roll Call/Introductions

After roll call a quorum was not present. A few members arrived late and a quorum was achieved.

Wendell Koontz discussed dark times and read a quote by John F. Kennedy. He thanked the members for their civil and respectful work on the Roundtable.

Public Comment

None.

Agenda Approval

One additional item was added to the agenda on the Ag tax credit. There were no objections from the Roundtable.

Approval of Minutes from the July 21, 2025 Meeting

Bill Nesbitt moved to approve the Minutes of the July 21, 2025 meeting as submitted. Austin Keiser seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Basin Implementation Plan Update (K. Curry, T. Alvey, W. Koontz)

Raquel Flinker and Roundtable members reviewed and updated the BIP project list for Montrose and Ouray Counties. There are twenty more projects to be reviewed from Mesa County. Directions for next steps will be coming from the CWCB in upcoming months.

PEPO Committee Report (Savannah Nelson)

Savannah Nelson reported on the following PEPO efforts:

- The PEPO Committee has primarily been working on updating the Gunnison Basin Handbook. A first draft is compiled and is being reviewed. The committee is hoping to present the first draft at the next Roundtable meeting.
- The fall newsletter is currently being compiled and is anticipated to go out in early October.
- The committee coordinated with the River District with their Water with your Lunch webinar series. The topic was Zebra Mussels in the Colorado River. The next webinar event will be on October 15, and the topic is The History of Water Law in the Black Canyon.

Grant Review Committee Report (Tom Alvey)

Kathleen Curry presented one project:

- RiversEdge West

This request is for \$34,218.28 for a restoration project on the Uncompahgre River in Montrose. The Grant Committee has recommended to fund only the actual work portion of the project and none of the administrative overhead costs, in the amount of \$18,800.

Erin McDermott and Melissa Neubaum were present to give an overview of the project and answer questions.

Sonja Chavez moved to approve funding for the implementation component of the project in the amount of \$18,800 from Basin funds. Bill Nesbitt seconded and the motion carried unanimously. Scott Murphy recused.

CWLT Water Plan (Rob Bleiburg)

Rob Bleiburg, Executive Director for Colorado West Land Trust, gave a presentation on the history and function of the organization. Alyssa Bentele spoke about their approach to water in conservation easements and the priorities. Luke Gingerich with J-U-B serves as a consultant on this project

Colorado Water Conservation Board Report (Jeff Rodriguez and Amy Ostidek)

Jeff Rodriguez gave updates on the C9 Summit to be held on October 28-29, 2025 at the Sheraton Hotel, 360 Union Blvd. in Lakewood, CO. Registration is open. He also discussed water supply updates, loan money available for emergency wildfire and flood impacts, funding reminders and upcoming events.

Ag Stewardship Tax Credit (John Miller)

John Miller, Soil Health Program Manager for the Colorado Department of Agriculture, discussed the Ag stewardship tax credit, which he also manages. This tax credit rewards Ag producers for implementing qualifying stewardship practices on a per acreage basis. Applications are first come first serve and open at 10:00 a.m. on November 10 for the 2026 tax year.

Colorado River District Update (R. Flinker)

Raquel Flinker gave the following River District updates:

- A new engineer has been hired at the River District
- River District board meetings – 2 in October
- Water Resources and Agriculture Review Committee
- Shoshone Water Rights Preservation – upcoming hearing
- River District Strategic Plan for Next 5 Years – available on website
- 2025 Annual Water Seminar - Across Divides - Friday October 3
- CPWs Press Release - Colorado River Technically Infested with Zebra Mussels

Wendell Koontz will request the CPW to come back to the Roundtable to discuss zebra mussels.

Interbasin Compact Committee Report (K. Curry, M. Roeber)

Kathleen Curry reported there has not been an IBCC meeting since the last Roundtable meeting. The C9 Summit meeting will be the next opportunity for IBCC members to meet.

Gunnison Basin Drought Update (B. Richards)

Beverly Richards, Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District, gave an update on the Gunnison Basin drought. A large portion of the western slope is still in extreme drought. Some recent precipitation has caused some improvement.

2025 Legislative Update (K. Curry)

Kathleen Curry reported on the following legislative items:

- There was a special session in August. There was no impact to funding for water mentioned during the session, but with the Governor's budget recommendations there may be some impact to the perpetual base account. Jeff Rodriguez added that a \$1.6M transfer from the severance tax perpetual base fund is being recommended as a supplemental budget action for the current fiscal year
- The Ag Resources Review Committee met and voted on 4 potential bills to be drafted - none are water bills but they are Ag related.

- Next session some bills that might come forward are stream access and possibly something demand management related.

Other Business

Bill Nesbitt commented on a letter and lack of response.

Robert Sakata spoke about the film *Legacy*, a 45-minute film, which will be presented after the Roundtable meeting in November.

Wendell Koontz mentioned the November meeting will include election of officers.

Upcoming Meetings

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| ➤ CWCB Board | Sept 16-18 in Durango (virtual and in person) |
| ➤ C9 Summit and IBCC | October 28-29 in Denver |
| ➤ CRD Across Divides | October 3 at Colorado Mesa University |
| ➤ Sustaining CO Watersheds | October 7-9 in Avon CO |
| ➤ GBRT | Nov. 17 with screening of <i>Legacy</i> following |

Action Items

None.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Roundtable, the meeting was declared adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

Adam Turner, Recorder