

Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC)
December 2013 Meeting Discussion Topics for Roundtable Feedback

Context

The IBCC has begun a discussion on several concepts related to new supply; this process is outlined in the New Supply Work Plan distributed with this document. The December 2013 meeting was the first of several meetings that will focus on IBCC review and revision of preliminary language on discrete new supply issues, all with an eye toward putting the individual items together in a broader agreement in June and August of 2014. The IBCC discussed the following language at their December 2013 meeting. IBCC members viewed the language favorably, pending discussion by their roundtables and/or constituents. IBCC representatives invite feedback on this language in advance of the February 2014 IBCC meeting. Feedback should be given directly to IBCC members, who will then summarize what they have heard and provide it to staff by Friday, February 7, 2014.

Risk Management

Statement of Principle

Future supply of Colorado River water is highly variable and uncertain; therefore, any proponent of a "New Supply" project from the Colorado River Basin must accept the risk of a shortage of supply, however the shortage occurs, including compact compliance; strictly adhere to the prior appropriation doctrine, and protect existing water uses and communities from adverse impacts resulting from the New Supply project.

Moving Forward

By "New Supply," we mean any new transmountain diversion beyond those already contemplated under the Colorado Cooperative Agreement, Windy Gap Firming Project IGA, and Eagle River MOU. Because "New Supply," risk management and compact curtailment are inextricably intertwined and involve complex issues that cannot be resolved in time to be fully addressed in the 2015 Colorado Water Plan, the Plan should move the "New Supply" discussion forward by defining a process to resolve those issues and refrain from either endorsing or precluding any "New Supply" project.

Sequencing of Strategies

The M&I gaps¹ should be reduced as much as possible (thereby reducing the amount of water that will be needed from agriculture and new supply from the Colorado River Basin²) by implementing the IPPs that are not "new supply," municipal conservation and reuse, and other portfolio elements defined in the no/low regrets action plan. At the same time, discussion, evaluation, and possible implementation of the new supply component should continue in coordination with the other portfolio elements.

Relationship between Agricultural Transfers and New Supply

Colorado should promote viable and productive agriculture across the state, and agriculture should have the opportunity to exist statewide. Development of new supply should be evaluated on an equitable basis with the transfer of agricultural water to municipal uses, to the extent that the additional water supplies are available and those supplies can be developed³ without jeopardizing the certainty, reliability, and yield of already developed water supplies and environmental values. The IBCC should continue the dialogue about how to accomplish this.

Upcoming Meetings

IBCC: February 18 in Denver

Statewide Roundtable Summit: March 6 in Denver

¹ The M&I gaps are primarily on the Front Range and vary by time, location, and amount.

² "New supply" is defined as any new transmountain diversion beyond those already contemplated under the Colorado Cooperative Agreement, Windy Gap Firming Project IGA, and Eagle River MOU.

³ See Risk Management language above