



COLORADO

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources
1313 Sherman Street, Room 718
Denver, CO 80203

June 3, 2019

Demand Management Investigation: The Path Forward

Colorado water users, stakeholders, and interested parties:

Now that the Colorado River Basin Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) is finalized, the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) is beginning its efforts to investigate the feasibility of a potential demand management program within Colorado.

The strong connection between Coloradans and our water has established a foundation of public input, deliberation, and participation in the decision-making process, which leads to informed and thorough policymaking. This is the model that informed the Colorado Water Plan, and it is this model that the CWCB will utilize to assess demand management: by Colorado, for Colorado.

At the March 2019 meeting, the Board of Directors of the CWCB approved the [2019 Work Plan for Intrastate Demand Management Feasibility Investigations](#). Below are highlights of the current and upcoming steps that the CWCB staff will be taking to implement the 2019 Work Plan, including opportunities for engagement, processes to inform the Board, and informational events. These elements are designed to ensure that the CWCB and all interested water users and stakeholders are fully informed of demand management concepts and challenges as they are identified. Through this process, the multitude of considerations demand management presents will be fully understood, to promote an informed and fully realized public policy discourse.

- **General Outreach:** Staff will continue to work directly with interested water users and stakeholders to inform them of the process for investigating demand management feasibility within Colorado, and to solicit input on specific elements of potential implementation and solution identification. The direct interaction between staff and the various basin roundtables, policy boards, water users, and stakeholder groups is where the conversations begin. This will then lead to identification of considerations and development of potential solutions, which will be used to inform an evaluation of demand management.
- **Workgroups:** Staff has begun to reach out to subject matter experts on various elements that must be considered for any potential demand management program within Colorado. The purpose of these workgroups is to help CWCB staff identify and frame the complex issues associated with demand management feasibility for public and Board consideration. In this capacity, workgroup members operate like “think tanks” to help CWCB staff prepare to conduct meaningful public discussion of the



issues associated with demand management based on useful insight and understanding from experts in the field. Workgroup members have been selected for their subject matter expertise and willingness to work in assisting the State as it implements the public process to evaluate a potential demand management program.

To respect the integrity of the workgroups, members are being asked to participate in a non-disclosure setting. This will allow the participants to brainstorm all sides of an issue, and to have open and frank discussions as they assist CWCB staff in framing demand management considerations for public discussion and evaluation. The decision-making process for consideration of demand management solutions and approaches for potential implementation will be achieved in public meetings and through the comment and input process established in the formulation of the Colorado Water Plan. The workgroups serve as the “think tank” for staff as they begin to develop an understanding of the full complement of considerations, issues, and challenges that demand management presents.

- Transparency of Process - Demand management investigations and decision-making by the CWCB will be done through an open dialogue. Once the range and multitude of complex topics associated with demand management are identified and framed, they will be introduced in a process akin to the development of the Water Plan, including workshops, basin roundtable presentations, consideration of public comment, and the like. Additionally, the CWCB will be updated regularly in open session on the progress of the demand management investigation process, and provided with any staff recommendations as appropriate.
- Upcoming Demand Management Investigation Events -
 - CWCB will be hosting an Orientation Webinar for members of the workgroups in July. This Orientation Webinar will be open to the public. The Webinar will provide an overview of the evolution of DCP and demand management, discuss the statewide perspective for analysis of demand management, and outline the timeline and process for the workgroups’ assistance in demand management issue identification. Information about the Webinar will be forthcoming as details are finalized.
 - The Upper Colorado River Commission will be hosting a Demand Management Stakeholder Workshop in Salt Lake City, Utah on Friday, June 21. The goal of this regional workshop is to provide a baseline understanding of the Colorado River DCP and discuss proposed next steps to examine the feasibility demand management in the Upper Basin. Additionally, Upper Basin State representatives will receive comment and input from interested water users and stakeholders on possible considerations in evaluating the feasibility of a successful demand management program throughout the Upper Basin. When the agenda is finalized, more information regarding the Workshop and registration will be posted on the CWCB website and circulated to interested parties.

- CWCB staff will be scheduling public demand management workshops around the state, as outlined in the 2019 Work Plan. These workshops will be in addition to the usual array of roundtables, Interbasin Compact Committee, informational forums, and other water meetings in which staff participate to discuss and receive feedback on demand management. Staff hopes to schedule the first intrastate workshop in alignment with the summer conference of Colorado Water Congress.

The investigation of the feasibility of a potential Demand management program presents a challenge for the CWCB, water users, and stakeholders across Colorado. The Board and staff take this assessment very seriously, and are committed to providing an opportunity for everyone with an interest in Colorado River system sustainability to make their voices heard, while remaining true to the water values identified in the Colorado Water Plan. For more information, to provide comments, or to learn more about the 2019 Work Plan and demand management feasibility process, email demandmanagement@state.co.us or contact CWCB staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rebecca Mitchell".

Rebecca Mitchell
CWCB Director