

South Platte Basin Roundtable Meeting
Tuesday, November 10, 2020
Remote GoToMeeting
4:00-7:00 p.m.

South Platte Basin Roundtable
Tue, Nov 10, 2020 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (MST)
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South Platte Basin Roundtable Business Meeting Minutes

1. GoToMeeting Orientation, Questions, and Comments (G. Varra – 10 min)

The meeting started at 4:04 p.m. Garrett Varra thanked everyone for attending the SPBRT's eighth virtual meeting. He reminded attendees of virtual meeting etiquette (e.g., mute yourself when not speaking, enter questions or comments into the chat box, be concise and follow agenda).

2. Welcome/Introductions (G. Varra – 10 min)

In attendance: Loretta Daniel*, Jim Yahn*, Garrett Varra*, Kirk Vincent*, Matt Jones*, Ken Huson*, Lisa Leben*, Kevin Lusk*, Kelsea Holloway*, Jim Ford*, Rich Belt*, Daylan Figgs*, John Kolanz*, Shane Miller*, Joe Frank*, Brent Nation*, Jim Hall*, Dick Elsner*, Larry Rogstad*, Deb Daniel*, Bruce Gerk*, Jason Roudebush*, Sean Chambers*, Sean Cronin, Casey Davenport, Sam Stein, Russ Sands, Kat Weismiller, Christy Wiseman, Bill Szafranski, Audrey Butler, Charlotte Roehm, Chip Paulson, Corey DeAngelis, Dave Colvin, David Takeda, Dawn Jewell, Erin Dodge, Donnie Dustin, Emily Carbone, Emily Hunt, Chad Endicott, Erik Jorgensen, Hattie Johnson, Ian Stafford, Josh Kuhn, Laura Belanger, Lauren Berent, Mary Presecan, Matt Cook, Kayla Ranney, Ray Douglas, Robert Sakata, Steve Malers, Taylor Winchell, Tyler Burhenn, Todd Fessenden, Tyson Williams, and multiple members of the public. Lynda James* and Larry Howard* were excused from the November meeting. 23 voting SPBRT members were present (* denotes a voting member).

3. Remembering Bob Longenbaugh (G. Varra – 5 min)

Garrett Varra shared news that Robert (Bob) Allen Longenbaugh passed away on October 17th. Bob Longenbaugh was an important figure in the Colorado water world. Notably, Longenbaugh was a

tenured professor in Civil Engineering at CSU and held the Assistant State Water Engineer position. Varra shared the obituary and invited SPBRT members to consider donating to Longenbaugh's endowed scholarship at CSU, which supports the studies of students interested in water resources and quality issues. Various SPBRT members then shared memories of Bob Longenbaugh and commented on his professional and personal impact.

4. Approval of October 2020 SPBRT Meeting Minutes (G. Varra – 5 min action required)

Dick Elsner made a motion to approve the October 2020 meeting minutes and Sean Chambers seconded. The motion passed unanimously without discussion or contest.

5. November 2020 Agenda Additions or Changes (G. Varra – 5 min action required)

There were no proposed additions or changes to the November 2020 meeting agenda. Shane Miller made a motion to accept the November 2020 meeting agenda and Dick Elsner seconded. The motion passed unanimously without discussion or contest.

6. Membership Updates (G. Varra – 5 min)

a. Local Domestic Water Provider

Garrett Varra noted that he has still not received an application for the open voting seat. There were no follow up questions from SPBRT members.

7. American Whitewater: Request for Letter of Support for Water Plan Grant (15 min action required)

Ian Stafford and Hattie Johnson presented American Whitewater's request for support of their Water Plan grant application. The proposed project, Economic Impact of River Recreation, will study economic impacts of river-based recreation and "develop a tool that can analyze management scenarios that could provide synergistic opportunities that create flow conditions that support river recreation throughout the state." Through the process, American Whitewater intends to work with Basin Roundtables and local stakeholders of four basins and five rivers (Yampa, Dolores, Crystal, Roaring Fork, and Cache La Poudre).

After the presentation, various SPBRT members asked questions about the grant proposal. Responding to a question from Lisa Leben, Stafford and Johnson explained why the selected study areas (i.e., river basins) were chosen. American Whitewater has existing engagement and community involvement in each of the rivers chosen for the study. Additionally, American Whitewater wants to study impacts of recreation in areas with diverse economic and demographic characteristics. Responding to a question from Larry Rogstad, Hattie Johnson clarified that this study is primarily focused on boating and rafting activities. Jim Ford noted that the fishing community needs to be included in the stakeholder engagement process. Ian Stafford agreed with Ford's comment and noted that many boaters, including himself, are also anglers. Ken Huson asked whether the outcomes of the study will be applicable to other rivers elsewhere in the state. Johnson explained that the goal of the study is to create a methodology for examining economic impacts of river recreation that can then be replicated. Larry Rogstad commented on the need to involve

federal and state agencies charged with managing public land along the chosen river reaches. Johnson agreed and noted that American Whitewater plans to work closely with agency staff. Sean Cronin and Hattie Johnson then discussed the scope of this project compared to work that American Whitewater previously conducted for the St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District. Cronin commented that his experience working with American Whitewater has been positive and that this is an important area of study.

Jim Ford made a motion to provide American Whitewater with the requested letter of support and Jason Roudebush seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Garrett Varra noted that he will follow up with American Whitewater staff. Ian Stafford and Hattie Johnson thanked the Roundtable.

8. Boulder County: Request for Letter of Support for Water Plan Grant (15 min action required)

Audrey Butler, Erin Dodge, Chad Endicott, and Bill Szafranski presented Boulder County's request for support of their Water Plan grant application. The presenters noted that consulting firm BrightLine Group is also helping with the project. Boulder County is applying for a Water Plan grant to develop a Watershed Health Toolkit and Planning Guide. The goals of the project are to "promote healthy watersheds by improving shared knowledge and coordination across watershed stakeholders" and to "inform future local planning efforts related to watershed health through the use of the best available science, policy, and planning information." The project's objectives are to improve coordination, define healthy watershed characteristics within Boulder County, highlight the most vulnerable watershed areas in Boulder County, integrate the science of watershed health into local government actions, and develop a Watershed Health Toolkit and Planning Guide.

After the presentation, Todd Fessenden with the Town of Erie asked about how this project will impact NPDES permits and other regulatory processes for wells along Boulder Creek. Erin Dodge, Matt Jones, and Audrey Butler responded and discussed the nature of cross-jurisdictional collaboration around water issues. Kirk Vincent then noted that the City of Boulder is doing watershed work on certain stretches of Boulder Creek; as a member of the city's Water Resources Advisory Board (WRAB), he is supportive of collaborating with neighbors on this work.

Larry Rogstad made a motion to provide Boulder County with the requested letter of support and Dick Elsner seconded. The motion passed unanimously. Garrett Varra noted that he will follow up with Boulder County staff. The presenters thanked the Roundtable.

9. Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) Update (G. Varra and Matt Cook – 30 min)

Matt Cook presented the latest progress on the BIP update. He went over the new organizational structure, revisions to themes/goals/strategies based on survey feedback, recent meetings of BIP subcommittees, and the project schedule. After the presentation, Sean Cronin noted that the SPBRT has a few new members who may not be in tune with the BIP update process. Matt Cook invited interested new members to reach out to Jim Hall (for the Municipal & Industrial Subcommittee) and/or Joe Frank (for the Agricultural Subcommittee). If a new member is interested in serving on the Joint Steering Committee (JSC), they should reach out to Garrett Varra.

10. Committee Updates

a. **South Platte Basin and Statewide Account Balances / Water Supply Reserve Fund (WSRF) (S. Stein and J. Roudebush – 10 min)**

Sam Stein reported that there is \$626,865 in the South Platte Roundtable Basin account. There is currently \$5,688,612 in the statewide account. Stein reminded SPBRT members that CWCB developed a three-year spending plan for statewide funds (due to budget shortfalls).

Jason Roudebush said that the WSRF Needs Committee has discussed what a three-year spending plan would look like for the SPBRT's current account balance. Roudebush shared his memo from November 5 and proceeded to discuss the financial outlook. Of note, \$50,000 in reserves is currently allocated for the BIP update process. CWCB is funding the BIP update process for all Roundtables, so the \$50,000 can be spent on projects. The WSRF Needs Committee recommends keeping the other two reserves funded. Roudebush asked if any SPBRT member is opposed to eliminating the BIP reserve. If the BIP reserve is reallocated, that would leave the SPBRT with approximately \$92,000 per cycle to put towards WSRF grant applications. Tonight's eight WSRF applicants are requesting a total of \$146,000 in basin account funds.

b. **WSRF Applications (5 min for each presentation, 5 min for questions after each presentation action required)**

i. **Colorado Watershed Assembly – Education and Outreach Coordination (10 min)**

Casey Davenhill and Mallory Hiss presented Colorado Watershed Assembly's WSRF grant application. The application is to continue funding public education and outreach activities for the South Platte Basin and Metro Roundtables.

Jason Roudebush noted that the WSRF Needs Committee recommends fully funding Colorado Watershed Assembly's application. The Metro Roundtable will vote on this grant application at their meeting on November 12. Joe Frank made a motion to approve the grant application and Jim Yahn seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

ii. **City of Thornton – Northern Properties Stewardship Plan: Land Use and Water Optimization (10 min)**

Emily Hunt presented the City of Thornton's WSRF grant application. Thornton "is seeking WSRF funds to establish a collaborative, community-driven effort to: (a) advance a land-use planning process that bridges social, economic, environmental, water, and land use silos; and (b) explore ways the continued irrigation provision in Thornton's decree can help agriculture continue to thrive."

Jason Roudebush noted that the WSRF Needs Committee recommends fully funding the City of Thornton's application. Jim Hall made a motion to approve the grant application and Sean Chambers seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

iii. Northern Water – Colorado Airborne Snow Observatory Expansion Plan (10 min)

Jason Roudebush announced that because Northern Water is acting as a fiscal agent for this multi-agency effort, Jim Hall has declared a conflict and therefore will abstain from voting.

Taylor Winchell presented the Colorado Airborne Snow Observatory Expansion Plan WSRF grant application. The project will address barriers to widespread adoption and consistent funding and "provide a roadmap to an expanded, collaborative Colorado Airborne Snow Observatories (ASO) program that is independent of annually-variable project funds."

After the presentation, various attendees discussed the differences between this project and other LIDAR data collection efforts across the state (such as in Alamosa). Jason Roudebush noted that the WSRF Needs Committee recommends fully funding the application. Roudebush further commented that he thinks these types of projects represent the future of water supply forecasting and management in the West. Shane Miller made a motion to approve the grant application and Kirk Vincent seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

iv. Greenway Foundation – Nautilus 2 (10 min)

Lauren Berent presented the Water Connection of the Greenway Foundation's WSRF grant application. The Water Connection "seeks funding for the next phase of development of Nautilus, an in-stream trash removal device to be installed and tested in a Metro Denver waterway of the South Platte River within the Chatfield to Sand Creek focus area."

Jason Roudebush noted that the WSRF Needs Committee wondered whether this was a commercial endeavor. Lauren Berent replied that this is not a commercial endeavor; this is a more permanent installation of a prototype device created by university students. The project aims to study how this device works in waterways. The device will stay in use at local waterways for local partners. Garrett Varra commented that he thinks it's an innovative project with potential to be applied more broadly in the future. Garrett Varra made a motion to approve the grant application and Daylan Figgs seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

v. Open Water Foundation – River Basin Information Websites (10 min)

Steve Malers presented Open Water Foundation’s WSRF grant application. Open Water Foundation “proposes to fully implement the Poudre Basin Information website in order to provide cross-jurisdictional information related to water issues in the basin... the website integrates information from many data sources including local up to federal datasets. The information can be used for education and to inform planning and operational decisions. The website is a community resource with a scope beyond any single project or organization and can serve many entities.” Malers demonstrated the prototype Poudre Basin Information website for attendees and described its current features as well as plans to add more datasets.

Jason Roudebush noted that the WSRF Needs Committee recommends fully funding the application. Roudebush added that the St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District provided a letter of support for the project because they utilize the website’s data on a regular basis and find it beneficial. Malers noted that his application includes multiple letters of support. Sean Chambers made a motion to approve the grant application and Jim Ford seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

After the vote, Steve Malers noted that he plans to apply for a Water Plan grant as well. He asked whether the SPBRT would provide a letter of support for his forthcoming Water Plan grant application. Garrett Varra and Malers discussed the timeline for obtaining a letter of support for the Water Plan grant application; Malers will need to submit his final Water Plan grant application beforehand so that the SPBRT can review relevant details. Varra and Malers agreed to follow up with one another about the Water Plan grant application.

vi. Town of Erie – Horizontal Well Pilot Project (10 min)

Jason Roudebush noted that the WSRF Needs Committee deliberated on this grant application for a while. The Needs Committee eventually decided to recommend funding 50% of the requested amount (\$25,000).

Tyler Burhenn and Dave Colvin presented the Town of Erie’s WSRF grant application. “The Town of Erie is planning the construction and pilot testing of a Horizontally Directionally Drilled (HDD) well to divert Boulder Creek water while gaining water quality improvements through riverbank filtration (RBF) processes... Erie will initially put the water to beneficial use by pumping raw water augmented with Windy Gap effluent into a non-potable water pipeline for municipal use. The WSRF Grant funding would be used for partial funding of the study portion, Task 3: Pilot Operations, Reporting and Community Workshop.

This task will serve as a demonstration project for other entities that may benefit from improved alluvial groundwater supply development. If approved, this grant application would partially fund an HDD pilot facility operation, development of a best practices public document, and a community workshop to share information.”

After the presentation, Joe Frank asked about well output. Deb Daniel asked whether Erie has presented their proposal to the Colorado Ground Water Commission. Erie has not presented their proposal to the Ground Water Commission. Joe Frank made a motion to approve the grant application in the amount that the WSRF Needs Committee recommended (\$25,000) and Jim Hall seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

vii. Western Resource Advocates – Enabling Large-Scale Replacement of Non-Essential Turf (10 min)

Jason Roudebush noted that the WSRF Needs Committee recommends fully funding Western Resource Advocates’ application.

Laura Belanger presented Western Resource Advocates (WRA)’s WSRF grant application. The requested WSRF funds will “enable large-scale turf replacement projects that otherwise face an economic barrier to implementation.” “Project results and information – developed working with South Platte and Metro region project partners – will be applicable and disseminated to communities and others throughout these basins and Colorado more broadly.”

After the presentation, Casey Davenport asked how the program addresses long-term maintenance of transformed landscapes. Belanger replied that a landscaping company that focuses on water efficient and native landscaping (Ecoscape) and Resource Central are both involved in the project. Individual landscapes’ project costs include maintenance. Sean Chambers asked about WRA’s plan to do broader statewide outreach. Belanger explained that WRA will author a white paper about financing mechanisms. WRA will also curate case studies and share lessons learned from pilot communities to share with Roundtables and Colorado Water Congress. Some outreach is included in the scope of this grant application; however, WRA will continue outreach outside the scope of this particular project. Jim Yahn commented that he likes incentive-based mechanisms for funding and that it’s good to reduce municipal water use on the Front Range, which can threaten irrigated agricultural lands. Belanger noted that part of the project’s economic and cost analysis scope will include quantifying the potential cost of developing alternative water supplies (i.e., what could be saved with turf replacement). Jim Yahn made a motion to

approve the grant application and Matt Jones seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

viii. Independence Water and Sanitation – Regulation 84 Edible Crop Irrigation Public Education and Outreach (10 min)

David Takeda presented Independence Water and Sanitation District’s WSRF grant application. “The project will develop materials, training guidance, a video, and other resources to help utilities educate potential customers on the safe and effective use of reclaimed water for edible crop irrigation. The project will create educational and training guide templates for three user types (commercial, non-commercial, and residential). These templates will ensure that all the necessary components are included to comply with CDPHE’s Regulation 84 and can be edited for the needs of individual end users. The Templates will ensure that required content is in place, but also provide recommended items that the end user may choose to retain, delete, or modify... The process will engage utilities, end users, and CDPHE to help develop templates that meet the needs of all stakeholders.”

Jason Roudebush noted that the WSRF Needs Committee recommends fully funding Independence Water and Sanitation District’s application. Jason Roudebush made a motion to approve the grant application and Garrett Varra seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

After the vote, Roudebush announced that the SPBRT approved \$121,000 in basin WSRF funds tonight. Varra thanked Roudebush and the other WSRF Needs Committee members for their work.

c. Public Education, Participation, and Outreach (PEPO) Workgroup (C. Davenhill – 5 min)

Casey Davenhill provided a PEPO update. A written report was included in the November meeting materials folder.

There was a joint PEPO/IBCC meeting on October 21. The agenda included the following presentations: PEPO Role, Goals and Aspiration by Basin (Russ Sands); Demand Management Education & Outreach Discussion (Amy Ostdiek, E. Zmak); Integrating Education into the Basin Implementation Plans (Ben Wade, Russ Sands); Future of PEPO and Coordinated Communication (Russ Sands). Demand Management is a high priority for 2021. PEPO Committee members are exploring educating themselves in order to craft a message that reflects the understanding of Demand Management from the Metro and South Platte Basin Roundtables. At the meeting, PEPO liaisons from different Roundtables were encouraged to engage with one another. CWCB staff reiterated that it is a goal for 2021 to reconnect PEPO to its roots in IBCC and take advantage of useful synergies between

the organizations. There was also considerable discussion of the reservoir release from the Homestake Reservoir.

As a reminder, the focus of the South Platte Video project is the hydrologic function of the South Platte River, the value of agriculture, and the unique character of the watershed. Since last month, videographer Christi Bode has completed field work and is now focused on presenting a municipal and industrial water supply perspective (thanks to Emily Hunt and the City of Thornton), following up with Denver Trout Unlimited and their urban angler and “Trout in the Classroom” outreach, and developing an appropriate forest health/wildfire segment. The project team wants to include reference to wildfire response and mitigation in the video; Casey will reach out to Matt Jones.

The PEPO Committee is in the process of reviewing a narrative provided by Evoque Communications as part of their agreement with the Live Like You Love It (LLYLI) campaign. Thanks to Kelsea Holloway and Darren Beck for their thoughtful review of a message which seeks to clarify the statistic that 86% of South Platte water is used in agriculture and positively showcase agriculture’s role in the community and watershed. The communications plan includes posting at least three times a week on each social media platform. Curating content and photos, utilizing icons provided by LLYLI, checking with the admin that all posts look accurate and aligned with South Platte Basin goals, and posting are the actions needed to successfully tell the South Platte Basin’s story to stakeholders, community members, and voters.

The Sustaining Colorado Watersheds Conference was conducted virtually October 6-7. There were more than 250 registrants, 20 videos, and more than 30 presenters. Highlights include: a presentation on the Colorado Water Plan moderated by Chris Sturm with a panel led by Heather Dutton of the San Luis Valley Water Conservation District and the Colorado Water Conservation Board; Alex Funk, Agricultural Water Resource Specialist with the Colorado Water Conservation Board; Heather Lewin, Roaring Fork Conservancy speaking on the Crystal River Stream Management Plan; and Nicole Seltzer, River Network, speaking to stream management planning in Colorado. Three small field trips took place including a tour of the 72.4 acre Big Thompson Confluence Mitigation Bank, a Bittersweet Park Turf Conversion Tour in Greeley, and a tour of Agricultural Practices and Soil Conservation Service Dams on Cherry Creek at Prairie Canyon Ranch in Douglas County. The tours were very popular.

The Education Action Plan is currently being updated for 2021. The updated plan is due in March 2021.

See the PEPO WSRF application to see identified tasks and objectives from the 2020 Education Action Plan with updates based on the PEPO/IBCC meeting.

Please visit the South Platte Basin [website](#). Give Casey feedback via the email link on the site.

11. Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC) Update (J. Yahn and S. Cronin – 10 min)

Jim Yahn provided an IBCC update. He noted the joint meeting on October 21 (that Casey mentioned). The meeting was recorded; the recording is on the IBCC webpage. Yahn commented that it was a good meeting with good discussion. IBCC members heard from Russ Sands, Russ George, and State Engineer Kevin Rein. The IBCC discussed Demand Management, which led into brainstorming about what the IBCC should focus on in 2021. So far, three IBCC meetings have been set for 2021. Yahn then commented that IBCC members have value to gain from listening to other Roundtables' meetings, especially with the virtual meeting format. Yahn recently listened to a Southwest Basin Roundtable meeting. Garrett Varra encouraged all SPBRT members to listen to IBCC and other Roundtable meetings when they are able.

12. Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) Update (S. Stein and J. Yahn – 10 min)

Jim Yahn provided a CWCB Board update. There is a board meeting next week on November 18 and 19. Sam Stein provided a few budget updates, including recent money allocated to wildfire impacts and CWCB's watershed restoration efforts. Stein noted that the five-year anniversary of the Colorado Water Plan is quickly approaching; people can share stories about the plan on engagecwcb.org.

Joe Frank then announced that Jim Yahn's current term on the CWCB Board is up in January. Yahn is willing to serve again and has reapplied. Frank commented that many SPBRT members, including himself, would agree that Yahn has done an amazing job representing the South Platte Basin. Frank brought up the idea of the SPBRT (or individual SPBRT members) writing a letter of support for Yahn's reappointment. SPBRT members discussed the appropriateness of submitting a letter of support on behalf of the Roundtable itself. Sean Cronin provided historical context and explained that when this has come up in the past, the Roundtable decided to not write a letter as a group. Garrett Varra added that he would leave it up to the membership.

13. Public Comment (5 min)

Garrett Varra noted that the November agenda included a "TBD" placeholder for a December meeting. Historically, the SPBRT has not held a December meeting. Given that there is not pressing business to take care of, there will not be a SPBRT meeting in December 2020. The next meeting will be Tuesday, January 12. It will be the annual meeting for 2021. Along with Jim Yahn's IBCC seat, there will be elections to reaffirm the SPBRT's Chair and Co-chairs. Varra announced that he is happy to continue serving in the capacity of Chair.

Members then returned to the topic of writing a letter of support for Jim Yahn. Joe Frank and Lisa Leben recommended submitting a letter on behalf of the Roundtable as a whole. Varra considered that a motion and a second. There was no opposition; the motion passed unanimously. Varra noted

that he will work on drafting a letter. Yahn expressed his appreciation and promised to represent the Basin well if reappointed.

Sean Cronin gave a quick overview on the recent outcome of St. Vrain and Left Hand Water Conservancy District's Ballot Issue (7A - Mill Levy Increase). Voters approved it by over 70%. Cronin shared his excitement for the ballot issue's success and said he is ready to implement local water projects.

Garrett Varra wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving and happy holidays. The meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.