

NPBRT Meeting Minutes: 5-17-21

Members/Liaisons present

*Ty Wattenberg (Chair)
*Coby Corkle
*Pat VanValkenberg
*Jimmer Baller
*Bryce Russell
*Barbara Vasquez
*Kari VanValkenberg
Aleigh Aurin (CSU Extension)

Non-RT members present

Dr. Telck (Water Equity Taskforce)
Matt Reddy (DU)

Members/Liaisons not present

*Blaine Evana
*Mark Hackleman
*Carl Trick
*Randy Miller
*Rick Wyatt
*Jim Dustin
*Wade Allnutt
*Mike Allnutt
Paula Belcher (BLM)
Christopher Old (USFS)

Members/Liaisons participating remotely

David Graf (CPW)
Tara Wertz (USFWS)

Non-RT members participating remotely

Erin Light (Div. 6 Engineer)
Amy Honholz (Div. 1 Water Comm, Dist 48 & 76)
Sam Stein (CWCB)
Russ Sands (CWCB)
Robert Sakata (Governor Appointee: IBCC)

(*NPBRT voting members)

This meeting was held in a multimodal approach with 10 people attending physically and 7 attending remotely via zoom. Thanks to Sam Stein & for Aleigh Aurin for the support for remote participation.

1-Agenda Review

Agenda accepted with the following changes:

- Due to problems with her computer, Deb Heeney's presentation completed agriculture infrastructure projects is postponed.

2) Review/Approval of draft minutes yet to be reviewed/approved from 6 meetings held in June, July, Sept & Nov 2020 and Mar & Apr 2021.

Pat VanValkenberg made a motion to approve the draft minutes as submitted. Jimmer Baller seconded the motion. Approved unanimously by members present.

3) Update on Irrigated Meadows project

Matt Reddy, DU

Note: The power point presentation made by Matt will be sent separately from the minutes due to file size.

Matt reviewed the timeline for the project including the notice to proceed in 2019 with an end date in 2024. Funding included a research and assessment (with CSU) that will not be reported on tonight, but is important to provide data to support the assumptions about waterfowl productivity of irrigated hay meadows. Casey and her team will come back to the RT to provide an update and should have an article in the JC Star soon.

The WSRF grant included 4 subprojects initially that will be reported on tonight.

NPBRT Meeting Minutes: 5-17-21

a) The Newport ditch off Pinkham Creek subproject is on track. Proposal shared with the private landowner and the USFWS. Negotiations are underway with DWR to determine what the private landowner wants. The Arapaho National Wildlife Refuge wants their full right conveyed. Budget includes \$37k WSRF with \$200k DU match. The project will modernize and beaver-proof the headgate and upgrade/fix the ditch. Plan is to start this fall with intention to complete by 2022.

b) The Lost Creek project (between Rand and Buffalo Mountain). After a few meetings, owners of the Deline Ranch decided not to proceed. After summarizing status of the other two subprojects, Matt said he would propose a replacement for this subproject.

c) Jennie Ditch project. As currently configured, there is no infrastructure to turn on/off regardless of flow. Diversion is on USFS land out on Buffalo Pass Road providing irrigation water for Little Grizzly Creek Ranch which has a Colorado Open Lands conservation easement. The design has been approved. A 30-yr site agreement is in place. Currently working with USFS on permitting. Budget includes \$34k WSRF/ \$110k DU match (includes NACA funds). Delivery anticipated in 2022.

d) Sherman/Hamilton Ditch subproject was completed in 2020 with a few issues remaining to be addressed this year. Budget includes \$34k WSRF/\$110k DU match. It is supporting 375 irrigated acres and addressed erosion control.

Barbara asked if any of these projects increased irrigated acreage in the basin. Jimmer asked Coby more specifically if the Sherman/Hamilton Ditch project converted pasture to irrigated acreage. Coby commented that the soil out there is really sandy and that the ditch on the north was blown out. So it's quite possible.

e) Legal Tender Ditch rehabilitation as replacement for the Lost Creek subproject

This project would address CPW interest in the N Fork of the North Platte. The ditch is used to fill Lake John. The ditch also conveys water for Jeff Richards and Silver Spur to irrigate approximately 500 acres. The ditch bank failed 3 years ago and was provisionally restored previously but is still leaking badly. DU has surveyed the ditch and is holding final reviews with landowners. Budget contributions from CPW and landowners (\$60k-\$100k) still being worked out. The project will include installing a liner system in trouble spots of the ditch bedded in bentonite below/above. Other parts of the ditch that are less troublesome will be lined with bentonite only. Culvert will be replaced. Delivery planned for this fall if the replacement is approved.

Matt reported that during discussions with Craig Godbout last year, Craig said a letter of support from the RT would be advised/required before approaching CWCB for approval. So he is asking for that support.

Ty indicated he appreciated Matt's update but raised procedural concerns about the request. In his long experience with WSRF projects, this type of change had always involved direct discussions between the grant principal and the CWCB staff. He wasn't objecting to the replacement. Indeed, the response from RT members present was quite positive.

Barbara asked Sam Stein, the current NPBRT liaison to the CWCB staff, if the letter of support was required. Sam turned to Russ who said he'd look into it and get back to us soon. (The answer received after this meeting confirmed that a letter of support from the RT was not required and that Matt could work directly with CWCB staff.)

NPBRT Meeting Minutes: 5-17-21

4) Old business

None

5) New Business

a) Membership

Ty reported that Blaine Evans indicated his desire to step off the RT. Ty is therefore looking for a water rights holder to take his place.

b) Next meeting

Next meeting set for **Wednesday June 2** from 5-7pm in the basement of the SCD building. The day of the week and week of the month is shifted from our normal pattern to accommodate Director Rebecca Mitchell's schedule. The agenda will include a CWCB update from her as well as a BIP update session with RT's local expert, Kara Sobieski (Wilson Water Group). The majority of the RT members look forward to meeting in person. However, virtual option will be provided to allow the broadest participation.

6) Meeting adjourned