



Arkansas Basin Roundtable

PLANNING OUR
WATER FUTURE

ARWC WORKSHOP - MEETING NOTES

February 12, 2020 – Pueblo Community College, Pueblo, CO

More information and presentations may be found at: www.arkansasbasin.com

Roundtable Business

Mark Shea called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm. Members and visitors introduced themselves. Twenty-three (23) members were present.

Mark Shea thanked Jack Goble for his service as CWCB board member. Jack has decided to step down. Greg Felt has been appointed to fill that seat. This will open up the Chaffee County seat.

Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative Strategic Plan – Chelsey Nutter (see annual report)

Our Mission

“To serve Arkansas River Basin Communities by addressing locally identified watershed issues for economic, ecological, and social benefit.”

Our Work

- Forest Health/Wildfire Mitigation
- Post-Fire/Flood Recovery
- Water Quality & Quantity
- Collaborative Development

Chelsey discussed work that was accomplished in 2019, and the growth of ARWC during this time.

ARWC Grants 2018 – 2020

- Total of \$3,402,801 in grant and cash matches procured
- Funds used to-date: \$843,172

2020 & Beyond

- Expand cut-to-length treatments on steep slopes around major reservoirs.
- Increase acres treated by expanding partnerships and leveraging funding on private, state, and federal lands.
- Execute recovery projects on all post-fire landscapes to reduce the risk of catastrophic post-fire flooding.
- Position ourselves as the Basin’s go-to organization for wildfire mitigation, post-fire recovery, and multi-purposed/multi-agency project development & implementation.
- Increase partnerships and explore new funding options to create a sustainable future for ARWC.

Needs:

- Your input as to projects and direction.
- Strategic planning around long-term funding of ARWC.

Mark Shea discussed the concept of an ARWC membership structure (three tiers) that would support ARWC operations so that it may continue to seek grants and develop projects. Roundtable discussion and feedback included the following thoughts:



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- Pre and post-fire and flood mitigation has dominated ARWC resources thus far.
- All of our built water infrastructure is predicated on a healthy forest as a background condition. Whether you're above or below Pueblo Reservoir, you benefit from fire and flood mitigation efforts.
- Chaffee County - In fall 2018 ¼ % sales tax (1mil/year) was voted to healthy future for ag, and forest health and fire mitigation. 25% of that is going to forest health - \$250-650k per year. Watershed health, fire and flood is still an emerging crisis.
- Education and outreach is important. When people can connect the dots, they understand the value.
- LAVWCD supported the founding of ARWC and the beginning projects. Issues are water quality down there.
- A presence in the Lower Valley would be helpful.
- As we get beyond immediate project needs, we'll be able to focus more throughout the watershed.
- If you take on too much, everything could implode. So far, ARWC has been reactionary, out of need, because of fire and flood.
- As you grow sustainably, you'll be able to spread into the entire basin.
- Palmer Land Trust would be happy to support an organization like this.
- This RT is the face for ARWC, so when we're talking about ARWC having a presence, this Roundtable is the presence of ARWC. The Board of Directors are the roundtable.
- It's important not to bite off more than we can chew and grow sustainably.
- Enviro/Rec committee would also welcome projects throughout the basin.
- We need project proponents in order to make projects.
- Here is how ARWC has assisted Huerfano County. They are hired as consultants to a local project proponent. The local proponent identifies the project and goes after funding. ARWC assists with developing the grant funding, but the local org is the instigator. We've found that ARWC is cheap, because they are a non-profit.
- Chelsey will bring a budget for the next year to the forum. Funding right now is only coming from grants.
- Does CWCB have funding for capacity building for ARWC?
- Any grants do not get us to long-term funding for ARWC's long-term future. Funding ARWC is about more than just what ARWC projects are happening right now.

New website: arkcollaborative.org

Strategic Planning – Review of the original strategic plan.

Discusses the origin of ARWC, the mission statement, the vision statement, values and strategic imperatives and direction.

After discussion of specific sections of the strategic plan, Chelsey was encouraged to come up with a new draft for consideration. Feedback included:

- Some basics, such as the definition of watershed health in the original plan should be updated.
- Stakeholders and Partners could be added as an appendix.
- Clarify the structure of the board and membership of ARWC.
- Roles for ARWC: Add project management. Put funding first. Could add "becoming the go-to organization for these projects."
- ARWC is not a project identifier. ARWC is part of the solution. We have to identify our own projects. Perhaps ARWC can recommend funding sources. Perhaps they can help with the scope of work.
- Consider adding a Long-Term Vision, but focus on the short-term, the next 3-5 years.



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- Avoid putting really specific things into the strategic plan. You may have to shift the plan annually for the first several years.
- Science Plan. Story map will be updated. Will provide data mapping and a hub for resources.

Other Matters:

IBCC March 4-5, Denver West.

March 12 Demand Mgmt workshop on monitoring in Salida

Feb 24 next enviro/rec meeting

Water Forum April 23-24 in Salida

Admin Email: ARKBASINRT@GMAIL.COM

MEETINGS/LINKS:

- Next Meeting – March 11 , Pueblo Community College
- Env/Rec Committee meets the last Monday of each month, 10 am, Canon City BLM office
- Arkansas Basin Roundtable: www.arkansasbasin.com
- PEPO: www.pepoarkbasin.com
- Arkansas River Basin Water Forum: <http://www.arbwf.org/>
- CWCB: <http://cwcb.state.co.us/Pages/CWCBHome.aspx>
- Colorado Water Plan: <http://coloradowaterplan.com/>
- Colorado Flood Threat Bulletin: www.coloradofloodthreat.com
- Stream Management Plan Resource Library: <https://coloradosmp.org/>