

Inter Basin Compact Committee Basin Roundtables
Rio Grande Basin Roundtable

Tuesday, May 12, 2020 at 2:00 pm
GoTo Meeting Online

Meeting Minutes

Chairman Nathan Coombs called meeting to order at 2:01 pm. Daniel Boyes from the Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project gave pointers on attending a virtual meeting.

Attendance

Chairman Nathan Coombs read the list of attendees from the participants attending at the time. Latecomers to the meeting were asked to provide their names in the chat box to record their presence. Those in attendance included: Sam Stein, Gene Farish, Peter Clark, Keith Holland, Tony LaGreca, Emma Reesor, Cleave Simpson, Peter Barkman, Zena Buser, Dawn Krebs, Karla Shriver, Cathy Garcia, Daryl Kohut, Don Thompson, Nathan Coombs, Chuck Finnegan, Cathy Morin, Matt Lindburg, Kevin Terry, Bethany Howell, Kristine Borchers, Judy Lopez, Ryan Unterreiner, JoAnn Slivka, Sophia Sigstedt, Kathryn Weisman, Craig Cotten, Heather Dutton, Jim Erlich, Wayne Schwab, Larry Sveum, Darin Schepp, Dwight Martin, Erin Minks, Glen Guinevere, Lindsay Griffith, Russell Sands, Kathryn Weismiller, Connor Born, Daniel Boyes

Chair explained the agenda would be approved by general consent. Agenda was approved as no one objected.

Minutes from March 10, 2020 were approved by general consent.

Public Comment

Peter Barkmann from US Geological Survey introduced himself to the Roundtable. Discussed the latest updates to the GPS atlas on their website and welcomed community to check it out.

Bethany Howell updated the Roundtable on the latest quarterly newsletter. She explained that it will be sent out by a third-party email account and asked folks to be sure to check their spam folders if you don't receive it. If you currently are not receiving the newsletter and would like to, please reach out to Bethany at rgwcei@gmail.com

Ryan Unterreiner from CPW gave an update on rabbit hemorrhagic disease. He explained that community members should be on the look-out for dead rabbits, as the virus impacts wild cottontails and hares and is easily spread to domestic rabbits. Please call the CPW office if you find any sick or dead rabbits found on the landscape.

Coombs thanked Daniel and Emma for taking care of the technological side of the meeting.

Basin Implementation Plan

Daniel Boyes from the RGHRP gave an update on the Basin Implementation Plan. RGHRP were selected as the Local Experts and will be the liaison for the process. Boyes gave a background on the original BIP in 2015. Key aspects of the BIP update for the newest process, it will be streamlined through LE and use

of subcommittees. It will be an update to the original BIP and not an entirely new document. Emphasis will be placed on data and information going into each project will be well thought out. Major goal for the general contractor (Brown & Caldwell) and LE is to keep the process consistent across the state, including data fields. Matt Lindburg from Brown & Caldwell was on the call and introduced himself to the Roundtable. Lindsay Griffith also introduced herself. Russ Sands from CWCB spoke to CWCB's involvement in the BIP process with the Roundtable, along with Sam Stein, CWCB. Kathryn Weissmiller, new section leader for CWCB, also introduced herself.

Multiple contractors worked with the Technical Updates to provide modeling and data information on the various sections of the BIP. State and local planning efforts will be rolled into the BIP, as well as additional data gathering, and analysis as needed.

Technical update includes modelling and data sets within the same fields as last BIP, analysis of water supply and gap, municipal, industrial and agricultural use. Utilizing the last project list to inform new project list and using a costing tool to better understand project costs and implement consistency across basins. Environmental flow tools will also be used. Boyes also described the potential climate scenarios that will affect water planning. New analysis and studies will take place during the upcoming summer. Short term milestones for the next few months include creating a workplan for the BIP and data collection, particularly through project completion and results. There will be opportunities to incorporate new projects. Subcommittees have been formed but are open to others joining. Subcommittees include Agriculture, Municipal & Industrial, Environmental & Recreation, Water Administration, Education & Outreach. Kick off meetings from subcommittees have already occurred and have identified some new data gaps, analysis, and potential projects. Email Daniel daniel@riograndeheadwaters.org if you are interested in being on a subcommittee.

IBCC Update

Cleave Simpson gave an update on the meeting in early March and joint meeting with Demand Management workgroups. IBCC continues focus on role and support of the demand management analysis with CWCB. Simpson recommended watching a YouTube webinar link from Water Education Colorado regarding demand management.

He went to the Subdistrict report explaining they are transitioning from formation to operation for subdistricts 2 and 3, and this marks the eighth year for subdistrict 1. Aquifer levels from April 2019 to April 2020 showed 149,000 AF improvement in unconfined, still at a deficit.

Subdistricts 4 and 5 have had their groundwater management plans approved by state engineer and are scheduled to come back for their last step in the legal process which is scheduled for May 28th. The team will begin focusing on all six subdistricts and their Annual Replacement Plans in the next year.

Division of Water Resources Report

Craig Cotton gave the report and explained that the Rio Grande Basin percentage is at lowest in the state at 27%. Peak run off began at average, but has drastically dropped off due to lack of late spring snowstorms. Some snow still showing at sites on the Rio Grande, but the Conejos and Sangre systems are pretty dry. Precipitation outlook is below average for most of the summer months.

415,000 AF, 64% of average on Rio Grande. 25% of index owed.
Current curtailment 4% since irrigation season on April 1.

175,000 AF 58% of average on Conejos. Owe 19% to downstream. Curtailment is at 0%. No water delivered to the confluence through the irrigation season.

Groundwater rules are in place for non-exempt wells in Division 3. Non-sub district wells must have augmentation plans filed in court by March 15, 2021. All subdistrict wells must also be operational by March 15, 2021.

Heather Dutton asked Craig if they have used the radar data yet, but unfortunately, they have not been given the forecast by the National Weather Service. Nathan explained that the main scientist is working from home due to the COVID crisis and does not have access to modeling on his home computer. The data is there, but the forecast could not be built.

CWCB Updates

Russ Sands discussed the BIP presentation and because it is the most recent effort on the part of the CWCB. The department is exploring water plan listening sessions as they see a need for broader collaboration across basins.

The legislature is holding off on water plan grant funding until the next fiscal year as they try to figure out how recent events have impacted funding.

Sam Stein said the next CWCB board meeting will take place virtually in May. Heather Dutton pointed out that the CWCB staff have worked very hard during the quarantine time and have represented the agency well. Everyone on the Roundtable agreed and Heather went on to thank the CWCB staff for their effort.

Emma Reesor noted that she and Daniel will begin updating people on next meeting times and dates for BIP stakeholder sessions.

Nathan Coombs adjourned the meeting at 3:12 pm.