

2020
Southwest Basin Roundtable
Public Education, Outreach, and Participation
Education Action Plan

Prepared and Presented by:

Southwest Basin Roundtable Public Education Participation and Outreach Committee

January 2020

Introduction

This is the Southwest Basin Roundtable's (Roundtable) updated Public Education, Participation, and Outreach (PEPO) Education Action Plan. This is a draft plan for activities to occur in 2020. This version will be reviewed at the next Roundtable for approval and finalization. This version focuses on the current priority for 2020 of the Roundtable. This education plan seeks to address the following taken from the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) *Basin Implementation Plan Draft Guidance* (CWCB, 2013) document:

It [the plan] will let the decision makers in the basin understand how they are represented, the status of the basin's consumptive and non-consumptive needs, planned projects, current river operation, and opportunities and constraints associated with different hydrologic cycles. Where appropriate, this effort can also help roundtables' outreach to potential project proponents for the new projects and methods needed to meet future water needs to determine if they are interested in being partners or the lead entity (p. 7).

To address the above goal, development of a couple short educational videos of our basin, a high-level introduction, broad idea of geography, biggest concerns and challenges for our basin, and where we are going. Also accompanying Esri story maps are proposed for actions in 2020. The Roundtable's focus in 2020 is to develop media and digital materials for wide distribution in the basin. The PEPO Coordinator will work closely with the Roundtable members will help with the creation of the materials and outreach to the public.

To set the context for this education plan, however, it was determined that background information may be helpful, especially for those who may be unfamiliar with the history of the roundtable process.

Background¹

The 2005 *Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act* (House Bill 05-1177), is based upon the premise that Coloradans must work together to address the water needs within the state. The legislation created a framework to encourage dialogue on water, broadened the range of stakeholders actively participating in water decisions, and created a locally driven process where the decision-making power rests with those living within the state's nine river basins. The statewide structure, the Inter-basin Compact Committee (IBCC), the local structures, and the nine basin roundtables, bring over 300 diverse citizens into water supply planning discussions across the state.

As each basin roundtable carries out its charge to develop basin-wide water needs assessments, they are also required to advance the understanding of future water needs through educational programs and processes. In the statutes of HB 05-1177, each basin roundtable has powers and responsibilities that include the following:

- "(c) ... Basin roundtables shall actively seek the input and advice of affected local governments, water providers, and other interested stakeholders and persons in establishing its needs assessment, and shall propose projects or methods for meeting those needs.
- (d) Serve as a forum for education and debate regarding methods for meeting water supply needs; and
- (e) As needed, establish roundtable subcommittees or other mechanisms to facilitate dialogue and resolution of issues and conflicts within the basin."

¹ This section draws heavily from the Colorado Foundation for Water Education Basin Roundtables Final Education Survey Report (2010)

Moreover, the Public Education, Participation, and Outreach (PEPO) Workgroup is a legislatively created committee of the IBCC. This group is tasked with: creating a process to inform, involve, and educate the public on the IBCC's activities and the progress of the inter-basin compact negotiations; creating a mechanism by which public input and feedback can be relayed to the IBCC and compact negotiators; and educating IBCC and roundtable members on water issues. The PEPO Workgroup's membership consists of the Education Liaisons, a volunteer position on each basin roundtable, members of the IBCC, statewide water education experts, staff of the Water Supply Planning section of the CWCB, and a consultant firm that facilitates the PEPO Workgroup. The members of this committee work to identify the best approaches for education and outreach at the statewide and basin-specific levels. The PEPO Workgroup and roundtable members are collectively defining the most helpful and meaningful ways in which the public can participate in the work of their basin roundtable.

In May 2013 Governor Hickenlooper issued an Executive Order directing the CWCB to develop a Colorado Water Plan. Creation of this plan was a grassroots effort drawing upon eight years of unprecedented work, dialogue, and consensus-building that water leaders from across the state have engaged in through the IBCC and basin roundtable process discussed above. Colorado's Water Plan was developed to be aligned with the state's water values: vibrant and sustainable cities; viable and productive agriculture; a robust skiing, recreation and tourism industry; and a thriving environment that includes healthy watersheds, rivers, streams, and wildlife.

In December 2015 the Final Colorado Water Plan was delivered to Governor Hickenlooper. The Colorado Water Plan, written by the CWCB, reflects efforts to confront challenges including a 163 billion-gallon projected water supply shortfall, as well as sustain a growing economy and population expected to double to 10 million by 2050. The Plan draws on river basin discussions held around the state, as well as each Basin's Draft Implementation Plans.

Roundtable involvement in development of this plan

Although the Roundtable membership has left the development of this EAP primarily to the PEPO representative, numerous members were involved in the planning efforts to varying degrees. As an example, the Roundtable Chair, BIP consultants, members of the Education and Outreach Committee were involved by providing direction, input, recommendations, and review.

Basin Educational Vision/Goals

The Roundtable's overall goals and priorities for education, participation, and outreach including target audiences are basically laid out in Section 1 of the Basin Implementation Plan—Basin Goals and Measurable Outcomes. Below is a summary of the education, participation, and outreach goals for this EAP:

- Measurable objective H in the Colorado Water Plan is focused on improving the level of public awareness and engagement regarding water issues in the state by 2020. By creating media and digital materials the Roundtable is working towards achieving this goal.
- By creating educational materials that can be easily dispersed, the Roundtable hopes to reach a wide range of people (both water users and general public). The

materials will be posted on the Roundtable/PEPO website. Links to these materials will be sent in email newsletters and referenced at any Roundtable public speaking engagement. Roundtable members will be encouraged to share the materials to the entities they represent, co-workers, and neighbors.

- The SW Basin Roundtable is unique in that the Water Information Program (WIP) Manager is also the PEPO liaison for the Basin. PEPO will be part of any outreach that WIP participates in. PEPO will have a dedicated page along with the Roundtable on the WIP website with links to the videos for anyone to access and use for educational purposes. The PEPO liaison will show the videos at organizational and community outreach meetings and schools.
- Provide educational material as necessary to support the Roundtable.

How is the Basin structured to implement the EAP?

- **How will programs be assessed/monitored?**
 - Roundtable members will participate in the development of the materials. If necessary, a sub-committee of the Roundtable may be formed. This will provide monitoring and oversight throughout the process. In addition to the Roundtable, the Southwestern Water Conservation District and the Water Information Program, who host the Roundtable's website, will provide oversight in outreach efforts specific to their organizations.
- **What are the key metrics that you use to track engagement?**
 - Successful engagement may be measured by increased website traffic. Ideally, non-Roundtable partners will request the materials for use within their own organizations. The Roundtable would like to see these materials used during conferences and hopefully classrooms (all age groups including college).

Critical issues currently in the basin that need to be addressed over the EAP planning period?

- The Roundtable believes it is important to plan education programs that allow for deeper exploration of the important water issues within the basin. The proposed actions for 2020 will continue to further the Southwest's BIP Goal A4, which is "*Promote dialogue, foster cooperation and resolve conflict among water interests in every basin and between basins for the purpose of implementing solutions to Southwest Colorado's and Colorado's water supply challenges.*"
 - Existing IPPs promoting dialogue, foster cooperation and resolve conflict will provide a place to view the media materials proposed in the 2020 EAP.
 - The Southwest BIP describes information events as a means to meet multiple measurable outcomes associated with the goals.

- **How would you design your programs to target these issues?**

The PEPO Coordinator will use the Roundtable's input when developing topics for the video and story maps. "Hot topics" as identified the Roundtable's January 2020 meeting will be target issues for the 2020 EAP. These topics range from drought contingency planning to forest health to phreatophyte removal.

- **Identify the audience the EAP will be targeting:**

- What new group (stakeholders/general public) are you hoping to engage?

The PEPO Coordinator will work with newly formed Four Corners Water Center at Fort Lewis College. This will allow engagement the college students who are interested in water issues. Respond to public requests for water and Basin information, which includes presenting or coordinating presenters at local events (e.g. Rotary or Kiwanis, CAG).

- **See Budget below on how the \$6,500 will be spent.**

Budgets

	Objective/Task	Lead	FY 2020
1	Watershed Education for SW Basin to include outreach meetings and attendance at a variety of organizational meetings getting input and promoting State and SW Basin Water Plans	Elaine Chick – PEPO Liaison	\$0.00
2	Education Videos on SW Basin to include overview of basin, specific interviews and targeting basin concerns and challenges, which could include Forest Health, Drought Contingency Planning, Ag Community and Phreatophyte removal,	Elaine Chick – PEPO Liaison & PEPO Committee	\$6,500
3	Additional funds will be put towards the production of the video sponsored by the Water Information Program		
6	Materials - Basin Implementation Plan: provide copies of the plan to local entities, libraries, and individuals	PEPO Committee	\$0.00
		Totals	\$6,500

Other funding sources to implement the EAP

Additional funds will be put towards the production of the video sponsored by the Water Information Program	WIP	\$4000.00
Create PEPO page on WIP website	WIP	\$500.00
Materials/Brochure- Roundtable specific needs	WIP	\$500.00
	Totals	\$5000.00