

Drought Contingency Planning – Demand Management Subcommittee

Southwest Basins Roundtable

SWCD Office, 841 East Second Avenue, Durango, Colorado

April 10, 2019 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Roundtable Members Present:

Jarrod Biggs, La Plata County Muni
Greg Black, At-Large
Glen Fish, Dolores WCD
Karen Guglielmone, San Miguel County Muni
Steve Harris, Legislative Appointee
Celene Hawkins, CWCB Board
Phil Johnson, Montezuma County Muni
Ed Millard, Montezuma County

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Carrie Padgett, At Large Domestic
Al Pfister, San Juan WCD
Mike Preston, At Large, Roundtable Chair
Ed Tolen, At Large
Val Valentine, At Large
Mely Whiting, At Large

Other Subcommittee Members Present:

Ken Curtis, Dolores Water Conservancy District
Don Schwindt, SW Water Conservation District
Andrew Straub, Southern Ute Indian Tribe

Public:

Aaron Somogyi, Florida Water Conservancy District
Chad Hill, City of Cortez
Megan Holcomb, CWCB Staff
Kelsea Macilroy, CSU Graduate Student
Louis Meyer, SGM, Inc.
Steve Ruddell, Animas La Plata WCD
Laura Spann, Recorder, SWCD

1. Introduction and Meeting Purpose

Mike Preston called the meeting to order and introductions were made.

2. Materials Generated Update

a. Historical Information Document

Carrie walked the subcommittee through this draft document, which summarizes key “Law of River” agreements, federal project information, and recent hydrologic conditions. Since the last meeting, Carrie has added appropriation dates and administration numbers for regional federal projects and West Slope transmountain diversions. She also added the most recent USBR forecast. This document identifies important questions and key documents, not legal interpretations of the documents. Roundtable members suggested adding Section 602, 603, and 301 from the Colorado River Basin Project Act, relevant dates regarding the Colorado River Compact (1922, 1929), add in bullet regarding the penalty clause, a transmountain diversion map, more information regarding the San Juan Chama diversion, and an additional Colorado River basin map including irrigated acreage.

b. Planning Efforts for Drought in the Colorado River Basin Document

Carrie reorganized and renamed this document, including a table of contents. Roundtable members suggested clarification on the drought contingency planning agreements, providing a link to the CWCB policy rather than trying to summarize it, DWR compact administration, the mention of water supply augmentation alternatives (e.g. weather modification, forest health, phreatophyte removal), and other areas. Carrie added content regarding CWCB’s demand management work plan and workgroups. Compact administration discussion: there may not be consensus on the Western Slope that now is the time to discuss what compact administration would look like. The results of Phase III of the Risk Study may inform this decision. It would be good to have certainty regarding the impacts of a compact administration on individual water users. Mike emphasized that he is not pushing or advocating for Roundtable consensus on Colorado River issues. Rather, now is time for the gathering and dissemination of information. There was discussion regarding Reclamation’s potential role as administrator and operator of federal reservoirs and projects such as San Juan-Chama. It was suggested that the Roundtable DCP-DM subcommittee meeting review Reclamation’s 24-month study.

3. DCP Federal Legislation Update

Federal legislation authorizing the DCP has passed the House and Senate, and is awaiting the president’s signature. Carrie referred the group to the seven basin states letter to Congress in support of the DCP legislation’s passage.

4. CWCB 2019 Work Plan Outline

Megan Holcomb, CWCB, outlined the eight demand management workgroups, the membership of which has yet to be determined. CWCB staff has indicated that they want to achieve a west slope-east slope balance in workgroup membership. Those interested in participating were asked to send an email to Brent Newman, CWCB, by April 19. Each

group will have two co-chairs. Open quarterly workshops will also be held in July, September, November 2019 to give high-level reports out on workgroup progress. There will be opportunities to engage in the workgroup progress and will be transparent.

5. Phase III West Slope Risk Assessment Update

John Currier provided an update on Phase III of the West Slope Risk Assessment. Depletions assumptions for the study put future West Slope development at an increase of 300,000 af. The study will evaluate how West Slope basin water users may be impacted under different compact curtailment scenarios. The Ten Tribes study informed future depletions assumptions for Phase III. The study may inform questions around proportionality for an equitable demand management. It may also point out the winners and losers in compact administration, given that different basins developed at different times. It was suggested that Roundtable members have a clear understanding of the Phase III assumptions, and which questions it answers and which it doesn't.

6. Future Involvement Opportunities

Stay tuned for a new date for the West Slope Roundtable Summit in late June. Registration is open for the Statewide Basin Roundtable Summit in Winter Park on September 25-26. A Demand Management Program Outreach Workshop will be held in our region soon, date to be determined. The IBCC meeting will be held on October 23.

Roundtable members suggested inviting representatives from Grand Valley Water Users Association and Front Range Water Council members to future meetings.

7. Reporting Out to Roundtable (Everyone)

The group planned for reporting out to the Roundtable.