

Interbasin Compact Committee
Southwest Basins Roundtable Meeting
Durango Public Library
Durango, Colorado
April 10, 2019

Members Present:

Ken Beegles	At Large Industrial	Ed Millard	Montezuma County
Jarrold Biggs	La Plata Municipalities	Carrie Padgett	Domestic Water Representative
Greg Black	At Large Member	Al Pfister	San Juan WCD
John Currier	Colorado River WCD	Mike Preston	At Large Member
Anthony Edwards	San Juan Municipalities	Justin Ramsey	Archuleta County Municipalities
Glen Fish	Dolores WCD	Charlie Smith	San Juan County
Karen Gugliemone	San Miguel Municipalities	Andrew Straub	Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Steve Harris	Legislative Appointee	Ed Tolen	At Large Member
Celene Hawkins	CWCB Representative	Val Valentine	At Large Member
Kenny Heldman	Montrose Municipalities	Mely Whiting	At Large Environmental
Brandon Johnson	At Large Member	Ed Zink	La Plata County
Phil Johnson	Montezuma Municipalities		

Public:

Russ Anderson (Michael Baker International), Richard Ballantine (Durango Herald), Eric Bikis (SGM, Inc), Ken Curtis (Dolores Water Conservancy District), Bill Frownfelter (Russell Planning & Engineering), Tom Hartnett (La Plata Conservation District), Chad Hill (City of Cortez), Megan Holcomb (CWCB), Kelsea MacIlroy (CSU Graduate Students), Louis Meyer (SGM-Bikis), Ken Neubecker (American Rivers), Gigi Richards (Fort Lewis College), Steve Ruddell (Durango Utilities Commission), Don Schwindt (Dolores Water Conservancy District), Buck Skillen (Five Rivers Trout Unlimited), Laura Spann (SW Water Conservation District, Recorder), Dave Stiller (Public), Karen Wogsland (Colorado Water Trust), Greg Vlaming (High Desert Conservation District), John Whitney (U.S. Senator Michael Bennet)

Introductions & Review Agenda

Chairman Mike Preston called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Introductions were made.

1. Administrative Reports

Minutes Review and Approval

Minutes from January 9, 2019 were approved. Roundtable meeting documents and other files for reference are housed online for public and Roundtable use at <https://waterinfo.org/resources/southwest-basin-roundtable/>.

Officer and IBCC Representative Reports

Steve Harris reported that he is serving as interm executive director for the SW Water Conservation District after Bruce Whitehead's recent retirement. He encouraged those interested to review the executive director job announcement, which would be posted at swwcd.org on April 11. Several people volunteered for the Annual Children's Water Festival on May 1 at Fort Lewis College.

Mely Whiting reported on the IBCC meeting held in late February, which focused on the direction of the IBCC. Several IBCC members indicated their interest in contributing to the demand management investigation. Russ George was appointed to replace John Stulp as IBCC Director.

Celene Hawkins reported that at the CWCB board meeting in March, all WSRF funding requests from southwestern Colorado were approved. The CWCB thoroughly discussed the Colorado River drought contingency planning effort and Colorado's exploration of a demand management program. The Colorado River Storage Project MOA funding that supports several projects and O&M in our area. CWCB staff provided a report on drought and flood; with the snowpack, the State is trending toward more flood risk in parts of the state. There was a lot of instream flow activity, including proposed state legislation, appropriations on Himes and Disappointment Creek, and a lease to support flows through the 15-mile reach near Grand Junction. Megan Holcomb explained that of the proposed legislation to

appropriate \$10 million from the general fund for water plan implementation, \$1.7 million would support the investigation of a demand management program and \$8.3 million would support water plan implementation grants. Celene invited everyone to review CWCB's meeting agendas and board materials, which are posted on the website prior to each meeting. There was a request to add the impact of the revision of oil & gas regulations on severance tax revenues for state water project funding.

Roundtable IBCC & Officer Elections – July 10, 2019

At the July 10, 2019 meeting, the Roundtable will hold IBCC elections to fill the vacancy created by Bruce Whitehead's retirement, as well as the vacancy in the IBCC Alternate seat created by Mely Whiting's gubernatorial appointment. General officer elections will also be held. Mike Preston, Roundtable Chair, and Ed Tolen, First Vice-Chair, expressed interest in serving in their roles for another year.

Basin WSRF Fund Balance

As of April 1, 2019, the fund balance was approximately \$238.618.

2. Plan Implementation Working Group

Megan Holcomb described the Water Plan Implementation Working Group, which meets monthly to inform CWCB as it works to efficiently merge the primary planning processes of the Statewide Water Supply Initiative, the Colorado Water Plan, and the Basin Implementation Plan (BIP). The working group helps to guide how these processes are merged, communicated and used to create relevant tools for the Roundtable. Mely Whiting, Phil Johnson, and Karen Guglielmono have been participating from the Roundtable. It is clear that most Roundtables are not interested in a wholesale update to the BIPs. The Working Group is being supported by several graduate students who are reviewing the BIPs and identifying opportunities for greater consistency and improvements going forward. The next meeting is on April 23, at which the group will review one-page BIP summary factsheets to use as communication tools to Roundtable members and stakeholders. Mely will be working to bring information and questions for consideration from the Working Group back to the Roundtable, possibly at a pre-workshop for a future meeting, to allow for further airing of planning goals through member feedback. Phil described the matrix CWCB is developing for evaluating water plan projects. Karen is evaluating the BIP through the eyes of a new Roundtable member. Roundtable members highlighted the importance of maintaining the "catch-all" Identified Projects and Processes (IPPs) that can be applied to many important, but unanticipated, projects in southwestern Colorado. The webinar recordings are available at coloradowaterplan.com.

3. CWCB Updates

Megan Holcomb invited all Roundtable members to attend the C9 (Colorado 9 Roundtables) Summit on September 25-26 in Winter Park. Registration is now open, and scholarships may be available to support Roundtable member travel to the event. Two more technical webinars will be held regarding Ag Data and Methodologies and Environmental Data & Methodologies, and their recordings will be posted online. Megan directed the Roundtable to a one-page CWCB staff update.

3. Colorado River Management (Drought Contingency Planning, Demand Management) Overview of Updated Info Presented at DCP-DM Subcommittee Mtg

Carrie Padgett summarized the Colorado River educational documents developed and informed by the DCP-DM Subcommittee: "Planning Efforts for Drought in the Colorado River Basin" and "Historical Information for the Roundtable." The updated versions will be posted on the Roundtable webpage, and can be used by local water entities to inform discussions on Colorado River management and drought planning. Carrie has also been documenting Frequently Asked Questions and any answers that has been provided. Carrie is available to present at local water meetings on these topics, and has developed a two-page summary factsheet. She presented at the Pine River Irrigation District annual meeting and the Four Corners Ag Expo.

Status of DCP Federal Legislation

John Whitney, U.S. Senator Michael Bennet, reported that the federal legislation authorizing implementation of the Colorado River drought contingency plan quickly passed out of the House and Senate, and is awaiting the president's signature. Dolores Water Conservancy District and the Colorado River Water Conservation District expressed support

for passage of the bill. Mike Preston acknowledged the strong coordination and consensus among the Congressional delegation.

Phase III – West Slope Risk Assessment

John Currier, Chief Engineer for Colorado River Water Conservation District and SW Basin Roundtable member, provided background on the impetus for the Colorado River Risk Assessment, now in Phase III, which has been led and conducted by the Western Slope. Previous phases of the Risk Assessment addressed the risk profile at Lake Powell given various hydrologies. Phase III intends to model various mandatory curtailment scenarios, and the impacts at the basin level, given current water development (depletions) and future development. John Currier clarified that these scenarios are distinct from the current investigation of a voluntary demand management program to move water to a unequalized storage pool in Lake Powell to ensure against Upper Basin curtailment.

Major tasks of Phase III was to groundtruth the Colorado Decision Support System (State Mod) as it models water rights administration in Colorado, and ensure the model accurately reflects current water use in Colorado (reconciling discrepancies between the statewide modeling and basin modeling). The foundation is now built, and John Carron, Hydros Consulting, is just beginning to use this foundation to evaluate the scenarios of interest.

Another question that is arising in the study: Colorado is accustomed to water administration by basin, but mandatory curtailment would apply across various West Slope basins.

John Currier did say that these modeling situations are focused on curtailment scenarios, and may not inform the demand management program discussion as people expect. However, the present and future depletions modeling may help inform the demand management investigation, and be immediately useful for stakeholders.

The West Slope Roundtable Summit has been postponed to late June to allow Phase III of the Risk Assessment to advance further, and ensure that Roundtable members have thoroughly vetted results for discussion.

CWCB Demand Management Investigation

Megan Holcomb described the eight workgroups the CWCB is organizing to explore the feasibility of a statewide demand management program. Those interested should send an email to Brent Newman, CWCB, by April 19. The goal is to keep the groups small, efficient, and creative. Once the group members have been selected, the meeting schedule will be released. CWCB will also hold larger workshops in July, September, and November to allow for broader public engagement on the investigation of a demand management program. Preliminary reports plan to be released in early 2020 on the outcomes of the workgroup discussions. Details of the workgroups and workshops are currently in development.

Roundtable Discussion

Mely Whiting added that the DCP-DM subcommittee is filtering a tremendous amount of information, and commended Carrie for synthesizing information regarding drought planning and Colorado River management. Celene Hawkins added that the subcommittee has discussed frequently the distinction between demand management and mandatory curtailment, and how Phase III could inform the risk/need for a demand management program. This is an opportunity for water managers and users to consider the on-the-ground implications of any program to reduce consumptive use. Any statewide program may not hit on local issues, including for example the San Juan-Chama Project. Ed Millard requested that Mark Harris, Grand Valley Water Users Association, or Jim Lochhead, Denver Water, be invited to the next Roundtable meeting to provide other expert perspectives on Colorado River management. It was suggested to invite those speakers to the Annual Water Seminar, but have our own conclusions formed before engaging Front Range experts directly. Mike Preston encouraged the Roundtable to consider this policy effort as a marathon, not a race, and the Roundtable can play the role of building a good foundation of knowledge and public engagement.

5. Public Comment

There was a vigorous discussion regarding Colorado River issues among the public and Roundtable members. Topics included: conclusions of the U.S Bureau of Reclamation's 2012 Colorado River Supply & Demand Study; the root causes of the water demand/supply imbalance, specifically land use and population growth; balancing the sense of

urgency on Colorado River issues with appropriate, diligent outreach to water users and managers; the Roundtable’s role in identifying priority concerns when it comes to demand management; Phase III informing the position and concerns for individual water users and water managers; hard decisions for our communities and how we best prepare residents; the importance of communicating complex issues for public digestion and engagement; and the foundational role of the prior appropriation system in protecting water rights.

Kelsea MacIlroy, Colorado Water Institute, described her graduate studies on the Roundtable process from a sociological perspective. She invited participation in a listening session on May 8-9.

6. WSRF Concept Proposals Review

WSRF Concept Proposal – Town of Sawpit Water Supply Plan & System Analysis

Eric Bikis described the Town of Sawpit’s concept proposal for \$15,000-\$25,000 from the Basin Account to support a water supply plan and system analysis. The Town of Sawpit currently serves 23 active taps. The investigation will evaluate upgrades to the town’s public water supply system to allow for future growth. Specifically, the study will provide recommendations for instituting water conservation measures and adoption of a water code for the Town, as well as investigate the feasibility for construction of a new well and pump house. Upon completion of the study, Sawpit will seek funding to support the recommended improvements. The Town of Sawpit has committed 25% of the total project cost, which is estimated at \$20,000-\$35,000. Roundtable members provided comments and asked questions. There was consensus to encourage the applicant to present a full WSRF application at the July meeting.

Request for Water Process – Colorado Water Trust

Karen Wogsland provided background on the Colorado Water Trust and CWCB’s Request for Water Process, which is a voluntary process open annually to all water right owners, including agricultural, municipal, industrial, or other users, to explore various flow restoration and transaction options for their water. Types of transactions include temporary short-term or longer-term contracts, permanent donations, or purchases of water rights. Karen invited interested water rights owners to explore optional, flexible uses for their rights through a confidential review with the Colorado Water Trust. The deadline to pursue this process is June 30. Additional information is available on their website.

7. Upcoming Events

SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	April 10, 2019	Durango	Durango Public Library
West Slope Roundtable Summit	Late June TBD	Grand Junction	Ute Water Conservancy
SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	July 10, 2019	Cortez	Dolores WCD
Statewide Roundtable Summit	Sept 24-25, 2019	Winter Park	
SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	October 9, 2019	Durango	Durango Public Library

8. Adjournment

Chairman Mike Preston adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.