

Interbasin Compact Committee
Southwest Basins Roundtable Meeting
Dolores Water Conservancy District
Cortez, Colorado
July 10, 2019

Members Present:

Greg Black	At Large Member	Al Pfister	San Juan WCD
Sonny Frasier	Dolores County Muni	Justin Ramsey	Archuleta County Municipalities
Tom Hartnett	Animas La Plata WCD	Charlie Smith	San Juan County
Steve Harris	Legislative Appointee	Guy Stees	La Plata WCD
Celene Hawkins	CWCB Representative	Andrew Straub	Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Kenny Heldman	Montrose Municipalities	Ed Tolen	At Large Member
Tim Hunter	At Large Recreational	Mely Whiting	At Large Environmental
Brandon Johnson	At Large Member	Jim Wells	San Miguel WCD
Phil Johnson	Montezuma Municipalities	Bob Wolff	SW Water Conservation District
Ed Millard	Montezuma County	Ed Zink	La Plata County
Carrie Padgett	Domestic Water Representative		

Public:

Russ Anderson (Michael Baker International), Karen Barger (U.S. Representative Tipton), Stacy Beagh (Strategic by Nature), Tom Burris (Mancos Valley resident), Elaine Chick (Water Information Program), Ken Curtis (Dolores Water Conservancy District), Mandy Eskelson (Mountain Studies Institute), Bill Frownfelter (Russell Planning & Engineering), Rob Genualdi (Colorado Division of Water Resources), Nathan Goodman (Conservation Colorado), Tony La Greca (Colorado Water Trust), Chad Hill (City of Cortez), Megan Holcomb (CWCB), Blake Mamich (Southern Ute Indian Tribe), Aaron Kimple (Mountain Studies Institute), Bonnie Loving (Montezuma County), Louis Meyer (SGM-Bikis), Gretchen Rank (Mancos Conservation District), Gigi Richard (Fort Lewis College), Steve Ruddell (Durango Utilities Commission), Don Schwindt (SW Water Conservation District), John Simpson (Colorado Division of Water Resources), Bruce Smart (Dolores Water Conservancy District), Laura Spann (SW Water Conservation District, Recorder), Dave Stiller (Public), Greg Vlaming (High Desert Conservation District), Erin Wilson (Wilson Water Group)

Introductions & Review Agenda

First Vice Chair Ed Tolen called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Introductions were made.

1. Administrative Reports

Minutes Review and Approval

Minutes from April 10, 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 and Mely Whiting, IBCC Representatives, reported that there hasn't been an IBCC meeting since the last Roundtable meeting. The next IBCC meeting will be held in Leadville on July 17-18 in conjunction with the CWCB meeting.

Celene Hawkins, CWCB Board Member, invited questions about the upcoming CWCB board meeting agenda or staff memos. Applications for the CWCB Water Plan Implementation Grant Program are due August 1. Celene encouraged project sponsors to get their applications in, as this grant program received additional appropriations from the legislature. It's helpful for the CWCB board to see the range of projects and level of funding needs early on in the application cycle.

PEPO Liaison

Elaine Chick reported that PEPO funds will be used to support printing the "Our Animas" watershed health report.

Basin WSRF Fund Balance

As of July 1, 2019, the fund balance was \$341,118.

2. Elections

Ken Curtis, Bill Frownfelter, and Steve Ruddell provided letters of interest in the At Large roundtable position vacated by Ann Oliver. They each spoke briefly regarding their qualifications. Ken Curtis was elected to the At Large seat by secret ballot.

Current leadership—Mike Preston (Chair), Ed Tolen (First Vice Chair), Brandon Johnson (Second Vice Chair), IBCC Representative (Steve Harris)—were reelected by acclamation.

Steve Harris summarized the responsibilities of IBCC representatives. Phil Johnson, Ed Millard, and Al Pfister spoke briefly regarding their interest in serving as IBCC representative and IBCC alternate representative. Ed Millard was elected as the IBCC representative and Al Pfister as IBCC alternate representative.

3. Water Plan Implementation Working Group

Since January, Mely Whiting, Karen Gugliemone, and Phil Johnson have been participating in the Water Plan Implementation Working Group. They are advising CWCB staff on updating the Basin Implementation Plans (BIP) and state water plan and finalizing the technical update to the water plan (aka SWSI). It's clear that there has been significant turnover on the roundtables since the water plan was finalized, so it will be necessary to educate and familiarize the Roundtable with their BIP and the water plan process. Much of this work, and then the BIP updating to follow, will be led by a statewide contractor who will be supported by local sub-contractors. There was Roundtable discussion regarding the selection process for the local sub-contractors.

Megan Holcomb, CWCB, presented to the Roundtable on the recommendations from technical update to the water plan (SWSI), which will be released mid-July. Some of the considerations are: what is needed for the BIP update, how to better integrate BIPs across basins and with the state water plan, improving data, updating project status and cost estimates, developing a tiered approach to project consideration, how to improve education and modeling for the technical update, identifying future signposts to stop and reevaluate the plan, and how to better engage with new and existing stakeholders. At the Statewide Basin Roundtable Summit, the broader water plan update will begin.

4. CWCB Updates

Megan Holcomb encouraged Roundtable members to register for the (C9) Statewide Basin Roundtable Summit in Winter Park on September 25-26. CWCB has made available \$4,159 to assist the SW Basin Roundtable members with travel and lodging cost. The Summit agenda is not available. There was Roundtable consensus to authorize Ed and Mike to use their discretion to allocate the travel stipend among Roundtable members equitably, taking into account those who otherwise might be paying out of pocket. She directed the Roundtable members to a one-page update from the CWCB.

5. Drought Contingency Planning, Demand Management

DCP-DM Subcommittee Activities

Steve Harris summarized highlights from subcommittee meeting held prior to the full Roundtable meeting. There was interest from the subcommittee in learning more about the renegotiation of the 2007 Interim Guidelines and hearing from Reclamation regarding their 24-month forecasting study on Upper Colorado reservoirs. The October subcommittee meeting will likely be two or more hours to look at these topics. There was Roundtable discussion to ensure the range of expert presentations to the subcommittee balance different perspective on these complex topics.

Four West Slope Basin Roundtable Meeting, Phase III West Slope Risk Assessment

At the June 20th meeting of the Four West Slope Basin Roundtables, attendees heard a general summary of the preliminary results of Phase III of the West Slope Risk Assessment. Carrie has agreed to review the results in further detail to extrapolate the modeled impacts by sub-basin in southwestern Colorado under different hydrologic and administration scenarios. Carrie will let the Roundtable know when to expect the final Phase III West Slope Risk Assessment, and invite John Carron and John Currier to present to the SW Basin Roundtable on the results.

Demand Management Workgroups

At the interstate level, Ed Millard reported on the Upper Colorado River Commission demand management workshop held in mid-June. Wyoming is also conducting a feasibility investigation of demand management in partnership with the University of Wyoming. New Mexico and Utah does not yet have a robust investigation of demand management. More than 40 non-governmental organization representatives were in attendance.

There was discussion regarding whether the Roundtable should take a position regarding demand management and the Colorado River drought contingency planning to guide IBCC members in statewide conversations while continuing balanced representation of our stakeholders, maintaining the Roundtable's consensus-based decision making, and ensuring a beneficial timeline for that position development as it relates to interstate and intrastate developments.

At the intrastate level, CWCB is putting out updates on the Demand Management workgroups (available on CWCB's webpage) and there is an orientation webinar on Monday, July 15 from 1-4pm. The first regional Demand Management workshop is scheduled for the afternoon of Thursday, August 22 in conjunction with the Water Congress Summer Conference. CWCB has requested that all demand management workgroup participants sign a non-disclosure agreement. The following workgroup participants are from or will represent southwestern Colorado: Ken Curtis (Agricultural Impacts), Carrie Padgett (Monitoring and Verification), Al Pfister (Environmental), Steve Ruddell (Economic Considerations and Local Government), Laura Spann (Education and Outreach), Mely Whiting (Environmental), and Beth Van Vurst (Law and Policy). A Tribal Interests workgroup was discussed but not formed.

6. Public Comment

Tom Burris, Mancos resident, solicited assistance with a community effort to develop a rural domestic water system for 23 homes. Roundtable members provided technical advice and guidance.

7. Mancos Conservation District- Drought Resilience Plan

Gretchen Rank summarized the results of the Mancos Watershed Drought Resilience Plan, which aimed to engage stakeholders in identifying proactive strategies and actions that balance all needs and reduce conflict. Related goals include improvements to water quality, enhancing relationships and communication among water users (agricultural, environmental, industrial, municipal and recreational), improvement and maintenance of water-use infrastructure, aquatic and riparian habitat, and conservation and efficiency among all users.

In 2018 and 2019, the Mancos Conservation District worked with Mountain Studies Institute and partners including the Mancos Water Conservancy District, Mancos Valley Watershed Group, Colorado State University's Colorado Natural Heritage Program to engage a range of stakeholders in developing a Prioritized Drought Resilience Decision Support Framework, with funding from CWCB, Reclamation and the Colorado Non-Point Source Program. Parallel to this process and as part of the overarching Mancos Watershed Drought Resilience Planning effort, the Mancos Conservation District contracted with the Wilson Water Group to update and employ state water resources decision support models in order to quantify water currently available to support the range of current water uses and values and to model potential future hydrology. Together, these decision support tools assisted stakeholders in identifying priority areas, strategies and actions to balance and protect and/or improve the resilience of the Mancos River and the many values it supports, in the face of growth and a changing climate. This planning effort leveraged past and ongoing efforts of the Mancos Valley Watershed Group, a diverse collaboration of farmers, ranchers, nonprofits, agencies, managers, and concerned citizens, to support agriculture and the health of the Mancos River since 2006.

Gretchen presented the highlights from the draft report from Wilson Water Group on the CDSS model calibrated to the Mancos River Watershed. Erin Wilson also attended the Roundtable meeting and answered questions. The full report will be made available on the Roundtable webpage.

8. San Miguel River Partnership

Celene Hawkins and Kenny Heldman reported on the June San Miguel River Partnership stakeholder meeting, which had excellent turnout from the ag water users. While no decisions were made, the effort is off to a good start with

ground rules for participation and expectations for upcoming meetings. The next Partnership meeting is scheduled for early August. Stacy Beough, Strategic by Nature, is the group's facilitator.

9. Animas Consolidated Ditch Company – Post-416 Fire Ditch Rehabilitation

As a result of the 416 fire in summer 2018, significant amounts of sediment and debris affected water delivery in the ditch systems in the Animas River Valley. Ed Zink reported that the Animas Consolidated Ditch Company has completed their work to dredge the ditch of silt and debris, and has completed their mitigation plan, thanks to funding from the CWCB and the SW Water Conservation District.

10. Review of WSRF Applications and Concept Proposals

WSRF App – Montezuma County, Russian Olive and Salt Cedar Waterway Management

Bonnie Loving described Montezuma County's application for \$16,840 from the Basin Account to support Russian olive and salt cedar waterway management in Montezuma County. Montezuma County has responded to the overwhelming amount of invasive/nonnative Phreatophytes by hiring a two-person crew to make available to landowners for a low cost treatment. Phreatophyte removal conserves water, reduces nitrogen levels in the water, and promotes the health of native habitat. The crew has been working since May 1, 2019 and has treated 2,962 Russian olives and 158 Salt cedars. However, in McElmo creek the crew has realized that chainsaws are not efficient and spending extra time in thickets may be causing health issues for the crew. Therefore, Montezuma County is requesting funds for a Fecon FRM76 Rotary Mower for \$16,840.00. The total project cost is \$81,725, with additional matching funds from SW Water Conservation District, the Colorado Department of Agriculture, the CWCB Water Plan Implementation Grant Program, Montezuma County, and landowners. There was consensus to approve the WSRF application for \$16,840 from the Basin Account to support Russian olive and salt cedar waterway management in Montezuma County.

WSRF App – Mountain Studies Institute, Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership

Mandy Eskelson and Aaron Kimple described Mountain Studies Institute's application for \$7,500 from the Basin Account to support the development of a concept proposal for a multiple use project identified by the Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership (WEP). The WEP was formed as a community-led process to understand environmental and recreational water supply needs in the Upper San Juan River Basin and to identify opportunities to engage in collaborative projects that benefit all water uses, including agricultural, M&I, environmental and recreation. Through a steering committee composed of representatives of these various water uses, the WEP has been conducting public outreach and plans to proceed with a needs assessment. However, due to the significant knowledge and experience within WEP, the steering committee has already identified an opportunity for a multi-purpose project that would benefit all uses. The project could benefit the largest and most senior irrigation ditch in Archuleta County, which is also a municipal water supply, could restore two or more miles of fish habitat, and could provide badly needed river access that would significantly benefit recreation and the area's tourism economy. To further discussions of this opportunity with both potential partners and the public, a concept level proposal is needed. This application seeks funding to develop such proposal. The total project cost is \$11,000, and \$3,500 match is provided by Trout Unlimited, The Nature Conservancy, Mountain Studies Institute, and in-kind contributions from the Steering Committee members. Roundtable members provided comments and asked questions regarding the level of ag water user involvement. There was consensus to approve the WSRF application for \$7,500 from the Basin Account to support the concept proposal for a multiple use project identified by the Upper San Juan WEP.

WSRF App – Town of Sawpit Water Supply Plan & System Analysis

Louis Meyer, SGM, described the Town of Sawpit's application for \$35,000 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 the following: a water supply inventory, water demands assessment, water systems analysis, analysis of future potable water taps, water services cost analysis and rate structure development, recommendations for water conservation measures, new well and pump house investigation, recommendations for adoption of a water code, and summary of reporting and administrative requirements. Upon completion of the study, Sawpit will seek funding to support the recommended improvements. The Town of Sawpit has committed \$8,750, which did not meet the 25% match requirement for the total project cost of \$43,750. There was a lack of clarity regarding the total project cost,

Sawpit's match, and then the requested funding from the Basin Account. The request was also above the \$25,000 limit on Basin Account funding. The Southwest Basin criteria questionnaire was not included with the WSRF application. Roundtable members provided comments and asked questions. There was consensus to request the application be revised prior to another review at the January 2020 meeting.

11. Potential Discussion Topics for October Meeting

There was Roundtable discussion regarding lifting the \$25,000 limit on Basin Account requests and considering applications every meeting instead of every other meeting, now that the WSRF accounts have additional funding. This topic will be considered at the October meeting.

There was also a proposal to move Roundtable meetings to every third Wednesday, a change that will also be considered at the October meeting.

12. Upcoming Events

Statewide Roundtable Summit	Sept 25-26, 2019	Winter Park	Headwaters Center
SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	October 9, 2019	Durango	Durango Public Library

13. Adjournment

First Vice Chair Ed Tolen adjourned the meeting at 6:00 p.m.