

Interbasin Compact Committee  
**Southwest Basins Roundtable Meeting**  
Durango Public Library  
Durango, Colorado  
October 9, 2019

**Members Present:**

Jarrold Biggs	La Plata County Muni	Frank Kugel	SW Water Conservation District
Greg Black	At Large Member	Ed Millard	Montezuma County
John Currier	Colorado River WCD	Carrie Padgett	Domestic Water Representative
Ken Curtis	At Large Member	Mike Preston	At Large Member
Sonny Frasier	Dolores County Muni	Justin Ramsey	Archuleta County Municipalities
Karen Gugliemone	San Miguel County Muni	Charlie Smith	San Juan County
Tom Hartnett	Animas La Plata WCD	Guy Stees	La Plata WCD
Steve Harris	Legislative Appointee	Doug Stowe	Dolores County
Celene Hawkins	CWCB Representative	Andrew Straub-Heidke	Southern Ute Indian Tribe
Brandon Johnson	At Large Member	Ed Tolen	At Large Member
Phil Johnson	Montezuma Municipalities	Val Valentine	At Large Member
Gary Kennedy	Mancos WCD	Mely Whiting	At Large Environmental

**Public:**

Kara Armano (Trout Unlimited), Elaine Chick (Water Information Program, PEPO Liaison), Travis Custer (Montezuma Land Conservancy), Bill Frownfelter (SEH Engineering), Dave Henry (Harris Water Engineering), Jay Loschert (Montezuma Land Conservancy), Blake Mamich (Southern Ute Indian Tribe), Ann McCoy-Harold (U.S. Senator Cory Gardner's Office), Louis Meyer (SGM), Gigi Richard (Fort Lewis College), John Simpson (Colorado Division of Water Resources), Laura Spann (SW Water Conservation District, Recorder), Greg Vlaming (High Desert Conservation District), Ryan Unterreiner (Colorado Parks & Wildlife), John Whitney (U.S. Senator Michael Bennet's Office)

**Introductions & Review Agenda**

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

**1. Administrative Reports**

**Minutes Review and Approval**

Minutes from July 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 reported that Ed Zink, La Plata County Representative, suffered a major heart attack and was in critical condition at Mercy.

Frank Kugel, SWCD's new executive director and Roundtable representative, introduced himself. He summarized the program for SWCD's Annual Water Seminar to be held November 1<sup>st</sup> and reminded the Roundtable to submit 2020 applications to SWCD's grant program by December 13<sup>th</sup>.

Steve Harris, Ed Millard, and Mely Whiting reported on the most recent joint CWCB/IBCC meeting. There was a preview of the Technical Update to the Colorado Water Plan, which will endeavor to bring consistency to the nine Basin Implementation Plans across Colorado and provide more cost estimates for Identified Projects and Processes. There will be an RFP published to seek a consultant to manage the statewide BIP update, and this person may sub-contract locally to ensure basin perspectives are incorporated. There was discussion of Proposition DD, which will be considered by voters in November 2019. This ballot measure would allow sports betting at existing casinos, the tax revenues from which would be used to support implementation of Colorado's water plan. Other key topics discussed at the IBCC meeting were forest health and proportionality in the proposed demand management program. Ed Millard noted that the southwest Colorado IBCC members are well informed and provide balanced representation of

agricultural, environmental and municipal/industrial interests. Mely Whiting noted that definitions of words like “temporary” and “equitable” in the demand management investigation will be a big focus of the IBCC going forward.

Celene Hawkins, CWCB Board Member, reported that this year’s first round of Water Plan Implementation Grant Program applications has been received and there were not many environmental projects put forward. She encouraged southwestern Colorado project sponsors to seek that funding opportunity. CWCB has formed a subcommittee to review the WSRF guidelines, and Celene solicited feedback on the WSRF grant program and recipients’ experience. She invited comments and conversation about any policy items that come before CWCB.

### **PEPO Liaison**

Elaine Chick, Water Information Program, reported that PEPO funding supported publication of the “Our Animas” report produced by the Animas River Community Forum. In conjunction with the Statewide Roundtable Summit, Elaine attended several statewide meetings to develop a Statewide Water Education Action Plan (SWEAP), an effort that has flowed from goals in the water plan. She also reminded the Roundtable that it’s time to develop our basin Education Action Plan, which will guide her PEPO activities and related funding for the coming three years. Elaine noted that the strength of the Water Information Program gives southwestern Colorado a head-start on water education.

### **Basin WSRF Fund Balance**

As of September 30, 2019, the fund balance was \$385,748.

## **2. Administrative Adjustments**

CWCB’s Finance Committee expects that the coming year will bring WSRF revenue increases, but forecasts are a little less positive for severance tax revenues. There was consensus to make the following administrative adjustments: 1) hold the next meeting on January 15, 2019, and future quarterly meetings on the fourth Wednesday; 2) maintain a general \$25,000 limit on Basin WSRF requests, although higher requests can be considered with justification; and 3) move to WSRF application review at every meeting, instead of every other meeting.

## **3. Water Plan Technical Update/Common Platform**

### **Report Out Roundtable Summit**

Mike Preston reported on the Statewide Roundtable Summit (C9) in Winter Park in late September. The CWCB is working to develop several tools to help evaluate IPPs, including a costing mechanism, water quantity measurement, and others. For the Technical Update (formerly the Statewide Water Supply Initiative), several climate change scenarios will be included. Part of the goal is to have more accurate cost estimates as CWCB requests additional funding from the state legislature for water plan implementation.

In order to execute the technical update to the water plan, the CWCB has hired a consultant to manage various consultants across the basins and for different specialties. Each Roundtable will be able to provide input on which contractors would be most qualified and effective in updating their BIP; however, CWCB will make the final contracting decision. Several local contractors can be selected.

It was suggested that the Southwest Basin Roundtable develop readiness criteria for local IPPs that are ready to be evaluated by the new costing and water supply tools, so that projects with sponsors and a strategy are well positioned to receive state funding. Roundtable members were encouraged to begin reviewing IPPs in their sub-basin. There was consensus to wait until the sub-contractors are hired and a process is in place for reviewing the IPPs. There was discussion regarding how longer-term stream management planning efforts across southwestern Colorado, and how the gaps in supply and projects they identify will be included. There was also discussion of how costs would be estimated for “catch all” IPPs such as ditch system improvements.

## **4. Drought Contingency Planning (DCP)-Demand Management (DM) Committee**

### **DCP-DM Subcommittee Summary**

Celene Hawkins summarized the afternoon DCP-DM subcommittee meeting. It was clear that there are many topics beyond just demand management for the committee to discuss in further detail. John Currier further summarized the

Phase III Risk Study and Ed Millard provided a preview of his presentation for the Colorado Mesa University Upper Colorado River Basin Forum.

### **Phase III West Slope Risk Assessment**

John Currier directed the Roundtable members to a two-page summary of the Phase III preliminary results presentation given by John Carron. John Currier provided more detail on the basin-specific risk study results and pointed the Roundtable to how these results might inform the demand management conversation around equity and proportionality.

### **Demand Management Workgroups**

Those Roundtable members and partners participating in the CWCB's demand management workgroups reported on highlights from their respective meetings. The Administration and Accounting Workgroup has not yet met, and the Tribal Interests Workgroup has been scheduled to meet in October. Brent Newman, CWCB, has moved on to a position with the Louisiana Audubon Society. There was discussion of the fairness and the "why" for water users for any proposed demand management.

Ed Tolen moved that the Roundtable direct its IBCC representatives to request that actions in the DCP to augment supply be pursued simultaneously with demand management evaluations, particularly weather modification, phreatophyte control, and, though not in the DCP, forest health management. Brandon Johnson seconded. The motion was passed by unanimous consent. The next IBCC meeting will be held on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, at which the IBCC members will carry this message.

### **Renegotiation of the 2007 Interim Guidelines**

There was discussion regarding how southwestern Colorado can prepare for renegotiation of the 2007 Interim Guidelines. It was mentioned that CWCB may not have the bandwidth and resources to do the demand management feasibility investigation and prepare for the Interim Guidelines renegotiations at the same time. There was discussion around the Roundtable's role in educating constituents about the history of Upper and Lower Basin negotiations, which has arguably facilitated overuse in the Lower Basin, the political and legal dynamics on the Colorado River, and the importance of all Upper Basin water uses being represented.

## **5. Report Out Cloud Seeding Workshop**

Ken Curtis, DWCD, reported on the weather modification workshop held earlier in the day. He provided background on the current weather modification program in southwestern Colorado. In 2015, the Roundtable supported a WSRF grant to fund a plume modeling study to help identify opportunities to modernize the local program and improve its efficiency. Frank McDonough presented on the final report at the workshop and made several recommendations for program upgrades. A smaller workgroup was formed to develop a wish list for equipment, additional modeling and studies, and other tools to modernize the program. Ken Curtis invited any interested party to contact Laura Spann to be added to the small workgroup meetings. Frank Kugel stated that CWCB has funded the installation of a remote generator in the La Plata Basin near Hesperus Ski Area. There was discussion regarding the costs for residents of an extended winter season.

## **6. Stream Management Plans: San Miguel, San Juan**

Celene Hawkins reported that there have been three meetings of the San Miguel Stream Management Plan, with 20-30 people attending regularly. This phase of engagement has been effective. The next several meetings will be focused on reviewing the San Miguel River needs assessment. Mely Whiting reported on the Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership. The first project has been identified prior to any assessment being conducted. Phase I was to form a Steering Committee and begin engaging the public. Phase II will involve retaining a consultant to develop an environmental and recreational needs assessment in cooperation with the San Juan Conservation District and NRCS. The RFP has been released, with selection to be made shortly. There will be an inventory of agricultural diversion structure needs.

## **7. Review of WSRF Applications and Concept Proposals**

**Concept Proposal – Conservation Education for Youth Fozzie's Farm, Montezuma Land Conservancy**

Travis Custer, Montezuma Land Conservancy, presented their proposal to work with Colorado State University and other community partners to pursue funding from the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) for an agricultural water efficiency study with the primary goals to 1) develop and research innovative agricultural techniques that conserve water and improve soil health, and 2) create an opportunity for broad community and partner engagement around water conservation strategies and education. There was consensus to provide a Roundtable letter of support for the Montezuma Land Conservancy's application to the Water Plan Implementation Grant Program (Engagement and Innovation) to support conservation education and research on Fozzie Farm.

Carrie Padgett invited Roundtable members to reach out if they are interested in commenting on the draft EIS for the Paradox Valley Salinity Unit. She summarized the proposed alternatives being considered currently.

### **8. Public Comment**

Elaine Chick, Water Information Program, announced the Water Law in a Nutshell course to be held on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Gigi Richards, Fort Lewis College, invited the Roundtable members to attend the water speaker series beginning next month.

### **9. Upcoming Events**

SW Basin Roundtable Meeting	January 15, 2020	Cortez	Dolores WCD
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### **10. Adjournment**

Chair Mike Preston adjourned the meeting at 5:30 p.m.