

Interbasin Compact Committee
Southwest Basins Roundtable Meeting
Zoom Videoconference
October 22, 2020

Members Present:

Ken Beegles	At Large Industrial	David Liberman	Animas La Plata WCD
Leland Begay	Ute Mountain Ute Tribe	Ed Millard	Montezuma County
Jarrold Biggs	La Plata County Muni	April Montgomery	San Miguel County
Greg Black	At Large Member	Al Pfister	San Juan WCD
Ken Curtis	At Large Member	Kathy Rall	Southern Ute Indian Tribe
John Ey	Florida WCD	Ellen Roberts	La Plata County
Glen Fish	Dolores WCD	Charlie Smith	San Juan County
Becky Guilliams	Hinsdale County	Ed Tolen	At Large Member
Karen Gugliemone	San Miguel County Muni	Val Valentine	At Large Member
Celene Hawkins	CWCB Representative	Jim Wells	San Miguel WCD
Kenny Heldman	Montrose Municipalities	Mely Whiting	At Large Environmental
Brandon Johnson	At Large Member	Bob Wolff	SW Water Conservation District
Phil Johnson	Montezuma County Muni		

Public:

Russ Anderson (Michael Baker International), Peter Barkmann (Colorado Geological Survey), Elaine Chick (Water Information Program, PEPO Liaison), Clyde Church (La Plata County Commissioner), Carolyn Dunmire (Montezuma Land Conservancy), Mandy Eskelson (Mountain Studies Institute), Bill Frownfelter (SEH Engineering), Marcel Gaztambide (San Juan Citizens Alliance), Hattie Johnson (American Whitewater), Allen Maez (Public), Blake Mamich (Southern Ute Indian Tribe), Mike Preston (Rocky Mountain Restoration Initiative), Gigi Richard (Four Corners Water Center at Fort Lewis College), Carrie Padgett (Harris Water Engineering), Gretchen Rank (Mancos Conservation District), Russ Sands (Colorado Water Conservation Board), Danielle Snyder (Brown and Caldwell), Laura Spann (SW Water Conservation District, Roundtable Recorder), Ian Stafford (American Whitewater), Sam Stein (Colorado Water Conservation Board), Ryan Unterreiner (Colorado Parks & Wildlife), Nathan Van Schaik (U.S. Forest Service), Greg Vlaming (High Desert Conservation District), David Wegner (Public), Kat Weismiller (Colorado Water Conservation Board), Tyson Williams (HydroSource Inc), Jim Yahn (South Platte IBCC)

1. Introductions & Review Agenda

Roundtable Chair Ed Tolen called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. The attendee list was read and Zoom instructions were reviewed.

2. Administrative Reports

Minutes Review and Approval

Al Pfister moved to approve the July 23, 2020 Roundtable meeting summary. Jarrold Biggs seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent. 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 Reports

Elaine Chick, Water Information Program, reported on the joint meeting between the Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC) and Public Education Participation and Outreach (PEPO) liaisons on October 21st and updated the Roundtable on progress toward completion of the educational video focused on southwest Colorado river basins. CWCB and IBCC reports were provided as part of other agenda items.

Basin WSRF Fund Balance

The current WSRF Basin fund balance was \$443,251.

3. Elections

First Vice-Chair Brandon Johnson chaired the At-Large Election as Chair Ed Tolen was a candidate under consideration. The seven applicants for at-large seats made short presentations to the Roundtable.

The following applicants ran unopposed: Ken Beegles for At-Large Industrial Representative, Carolyn Dunmire for At-Large Recreational Representative, and Ed Tolen for At-Large Local Domestic Water Provider Representative. Ken Curtis moved to appoint said applicants to their respective At-Large seats by acclimation. Al Pfister seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

Four applicants ran for the three remaining At-Large seats: Bill Frownfelter, Gretchen Rank, Gigi Richard, and Val Valentine. Bill Frownfelter, Gretchen Rank and Gigi Richard were appointed as At-Large Representatives via secret electronic ballot. Roundtable members thanked Val Valentine for his many years of service and dedication.

Ken Curtis volunteered to serve as the IBCC Alternate Representative. Jarrold Biggs moved to appoint Ken Curtis as the IBCC Alternate Representative by acclimation. Ed Millard seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.

4. CWCB Update

Russ Sands, Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), demonstrated features of the Water Plan Update engagement webpage. He also summarized recent changes to the Water Supply Reserve Fund (WSRF) guidelines and application submittal dates. Funds will now be distributed once a year to the WSRF State and Basin accounts rather than three times annually. The WSRF Basin accounts each received a \$100,000 distribution in September, likely the last income for the next three years. The WSRF Statewide account will have a balance of \$599,000 for the March 2021 board meeting, which is approximately \$66,000 for each Roundtable.

Celene Hawkins reported that a principal topic of discussion at the September CWCB board meeting was Colorado River issues and demand management. She directed Roundtable members to the webpage which outlines current funding availability for various CWCB grant programs and encouraged applicants to move forward with Colorado Water Plan Implementation grants as that deadline is approaching. Celene is available to answer questions from any potential grant applicants in southwestern Colorado.

5. IBCC Update

Al Pfister, Ed Millard, and Mely Whiting summarized the joint IBCC-PEPO meeting on October 21st. There was a robust discussion of the Roundtable member survey results regarding which topics the IBCC should address in the coming years. It was clear there was statewide lack of understanding among Roundtable members regarding the role of the IBCC. Several topics emerged as priorities, including drought/climate change, Colorado River issues, regional planning and identified projects. It was noted that the survey included only three responses from southwest Colorado. Regarding the demand management feasibility investigation, the discussion has formed around three principle questions: can Colorado have a demand management program, how does Colorado have a program, and finally, should Colorado have a program.

IBCC members reported the recent meeting was one of the best so far and thanked the CWCB staff for their efforts to promote productive discussion. IBCC members solicited feedback regarding how to best report to and represent Roundtable members. It was suggested that IBCC members distribute the IBCC meeting recording, notes, or other documents for review, or potentially hold a de-briefing meeting after IBCC meetings that Roundtable members could attend.

6. Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) Update

Carrie Padgett, Harris Water Engineering, summarized progress on the Projects List update. Carrie solicited new Identified Projects and Processes (IPPs) by December 1st. The current IPP list is available on the Roundtable webpage. After all the IPPs have been submitted, the Roundtable will review and recommend new IPPs for inclusion on a quarterly basis. Among the next steps are identifying Tier 1 projects, which are projects that have clear cost estimates and project details. The BIP Update's Tier 1 and 2 projects will help support the governor's Wildly Important Goals. She also described goals and draft agenda for the upcoming Forest Health Workshop on November 19th from 3-6pm. Finally, Carrie outlined the upcoming Roundtable meeting schedule and next steps. The BIP subcommittee members provided comments on the process so far.

7. Colorado River Issues Subcommittee

Ken Curtis summarized the Colorado River Issues Subcommittee meeting in the morning, which included a presentation on the Upper Basin Demand Management Economic Impact Study in Western Colorado, an update from CWCB, a summary of the recent stateline delivery pilot release from Homestake Reservoir, and a discussion regarding the future of Colorado River hydrology. It was suggested that Roundtable meetings, subcommittee meetings, and other related events be posted on YouTube.

8. WSRF Funding Subcommittee

Mely Whiting summarized activities of the WSRF Funding Subcommittee, which met to make recommendations regarding distribution of the limited WSRF Basin Account funding available because of COVID-19 and recent reductions in severance tax revenue. The Roundtable discussed the subcommittee's recommendations and made some adjustments as follows in red:

- Stretch the WSRF Basin Account balance of \$443,251 through FY2023 **with the following general targets for fund distribution**: FY2021 \$64,000 (with \$125,000 of funds already committed to projects for this fiscal year), FY2022 \$189,000, and FY2023 \$189,000;
- **Consider WSRF requests at the November 19th Roundtable meeting in order to leverage statewide funds;**
- Award grant funds only once per year;
- Award grant funds through a two-step process, with a meeting in March to hear all applications and an April meeting to select projects for approval;
- Keep the maximum project award amount of \$25,000 but be prepared to reduce it;
- Require applicants to explain the level of urgency for funding and timeframe for use of grant funds, including the consequences of not obtaining funding within the requested timeframe; and
- Limit Basin Account contributions in applications that leverage statewide WSRF funds to the 10% required match or the \$25,000 ceiling, whichever is less, unless circumstances warrant otherwise.

The following recommendation was tabled until the January Roundtable meeting: create a WSRF subcommittee to review grants for completeness and potentially make recommendations to the Roundtable before the April meeting.

The WSRF subcommittee did not reach consensus regarding one member's concerns about a question in current Roundtable application materials: "What benefit(s) does the project provide? Are there multiple purposes? Note: this does not mean that a single purpose project would be rejected, but for major funding requests, addressing multiple use needs would be an advantage." After some discussion, this topic was tabled to allow the WSRF subcommittee to develop definitions of benefits from multiple purpose projects and bring those recommendations to the January Roundtable meeting. In the meantime, these changes to WSRF funding consideration by the Roundtable and other updates will need to be incorporated in the application materials.

9. American Whitewater – Water Plan Grant Letter of Support

Ian Stafford and Hattie Johnson presented the request for a Roundtable letter of support for American Whitewater’s Colorado Water Plan grant application to support a project entitled, “Economic Impact of River Recreation.” This grant would provide funding to complete the development and implementation of an economic impact analysis tool that can be utilized to identify river recreation’s impacts on local economies. The project would also propose to review synergistic opportunities, identified by basin roundtables and local stakeholders, that have the potential to expand and/or preserve flow conditions that support river recreation throughout the state. This will provide a tool for parties with interests that either directly or indirectly allow more water to freely flow downstream to assess an economic metric of recreation in their decision making. There was Roundtable discussion and questions regarding the proposal. The Roundtable recommended more stakeholder outreach and support for the economic impact analysis tool, as well as further clarification regarding how opportunities to expand and/or preserve flow conditions would be reviewed, considered, and proposed. There was not Roundtable consensus to provide a letter of support for the Water Plan grant application at this time.

10. Upcoming Events via Zoom

Roundtable BIP Update, WSRF Grant Review	November 19, 2020
Regular Roundtable Meeting	January 28, 2021
Roundtable BIP Update	February 25, 2021
Roundtable BIP Update or WSRF Grant Review	March 25, 2021
Regular Roundtable Meeting	April 22, 2021
Roundtable BIP Update	May 27, 2021
Roundtable BIP Update	June 24, 2021
Regular Roundtable Meeting	July 22, 2021

It was suggested that the Roundtable address a conflict with the July CWCB board meeting.

9. Adjournment

Chair Ed Tolen adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.