

Interbasin Compact Committee
Southwest Basins Roundtable Meeting-DRAFT
Hybrid Meeting from Dolores Water Conservancy District
Durango, CO
January 25, 2024

Members Present:

Brandon Johnson	Agricultural Representative	Robin Young	Archuleta
Ken Beegles*	At Large Member-Industrial	Gretchen Rank	At Large Member
Ken Curtis	At Large Member	Aimee Tooker	Montrose County
Lorelei Cloud	CWCB Representative	Ed Tolen	At-Large-Chair
Karen Guglielmone	SMC Municipality	Buck Skillen*	At Large Member
Kevin Kissler	City of Cortez	Steve Wolff	SWCD
Rob Halberg	SJWCD	Geoff Burbey	LaPlata Water
Adrian Bergere	At-Large Member	Jim Wells*	San Miguel WCD
John Kleckner	Hinsdale County	Bruce Whitehead	Animas La Plata WCD
Dave DK Kanzer*	CO River District	Mely Whiting	Environmental Representative
Ryan Gray	DWCD	Kenny Heldman	Montrose
Al Pfister	SJWCD	Peter Butler	LaPlata County

Public:

Laura Spann (CWCB), Jeff Rodriguez* (CWCB), Wendy Weygandt (Recorder), Elaine Chick (PEPO), Pete Nylander* (Southern Ute), Ryan Unterreiner* (CPW), Blake Mamich* (Colorado Water Trust), Emily Zmak (CWCB), Mike Preston (UMUT), Nichol Winiecki (DWCD), Rob Hagberg (SJWCD), Ty Koppenhafer* (Jones & DeMille Engineering), Peter Ortega (UMUT), Ben Wade (CWCB), Lisa Yellow Eagle (Southern Ute), Letisha Yazzie (UMUT), Skylar Zilliox* (Wright Water Engineers), Candace Jones* (SJWC), Sara Burch* (San Juan Citizens Alliance), Greg Vlaming (Public), Laura Rieck* (Upper 42 Road Water Assoc.), Helen Silver* (CSU)

*Indicates Zoom Participant

1. Introductions & Review Agenda

- Roundtable Chair Ed Tolen called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2. Public Comments

- No public comment

3. Administrative Reports

- Review and Approval Minutes
 - Steve Wolff moved to approve the October 26, 2023 Roundtable minutes. Peter Butler seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.
- Officer Reports-Ed Tolen
 - Membership
 - There are several membership vacancies:Mely Whiting's At Large -Environmental position, Bill Frownfelter's At Large general position, Mesa County vacancy. Ken Curtis At Large position opens in July.
 - Ads in local newspapers and posting on the website will highlight these membership opportunities.
 - The Election will take place at the next meeting scheduled April 25.
- Colorado Natural Resources Damages funding-Peter Butler
 - This funding falls under the SuperFund that can remediate sites
 - The monies come from a trust that can only be used in Colorado to offset damages.
 - EPA identified historic mining sites around the Silverton area.
 - Remediation target items:
 - Stream habitat

- Wetlands
 - Water quality
 - It targets instream work in the Animas watershed
 - 50% match is required: it can include cash and in-kind contributions
- WSRF Basin Roundtable Fund Balance is currently at \$587,309. July 1 started the new fiscal year and \$300,000 was added October 1, 2023. The funding year runs from October 1 through September 30.
- IBCC Update
 - The next meeting will be February 27 in the Denver Metro area. Location TBD.
 - Commissioner Mitchell is in charge of IBCC and will give an update on the future direction
 - C-9 Conference was open to all Roundtables and IBCC . It prompted tools that led to gathering ideas that will help with determining the future direction of the Roundtables. It was a success per Ken Curtis.
- PEPO Liaison Report-Elaine Chick
 - PEPO funding was approved for 2023-2024: \$25,000 is available this year.
 - promoting good action items and more involvement and public outreach
 - Elaine visited Rio Grande Basin Roundtable to glean information
 - New website has some gaps and Carrie Padgett will assist Elaine Chick to further update
 - The Rio Grande Basin Roundtable is featuring “Dust on the Snow” on March 15. It will promote further roundtable involvement. The registration fee is \$50.
 - May 15 Children's Water Festival: Volunteers are needed; as well as presenters to give 20 minutes hands-on/interactive presentations to 5th graders.
 - Water Law In the Nutshell will be moved to this fall. Norwood is being considered for the location. Last year Aaron Clay facilitated, and he will likely facilitate the 2024 session as well. It will feature a four-hour online session.
 - Elaine is looking for new members for the education committee to help with roundtable events
 - These members will help with news releases, communication, tours, education programs
 - Members expressing an interest: Robin Young, Peter Ortega, Gretchen Rank, Steve Wolff, Ed Tolen, Kevin Kissler
 - PEPO funds can be used to create four outreach 2-3 minute videos. WIP has a small amount of money that can be used as a match. Topics might include Recreation, Agriculture, Interview with Partners, and Grant Programs.
- CWCB Update-Jeff Rodriguez
 - Climate Change in Colorado
 - Final Report Released-Update from the 2014 report. This new update focuses on new climate models and features interactive web based tools.
 - <https://climatechange.colostate.edu/>
 - Soil Moisture Survey - create inventory of soil sensors to find gaps in soil related data
 - Open until 2/5/2024
 - Results to direct focus and funding
 - CWCB Stakeholder Guide
 - In February CWCB Staff will be going on the road to get roundtable feedback
 - It identifies key information on Roundtables, IBCC, legislature, etc.
 - Colorado River Issues: <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/colorado-river-commissioners-corner>
 - Russ Sands and Jeff Rodriguez will get on a future agenda to review stakeholder guide details.
 - IBCC Meeting Dates
 - First meeting 2/27/2024
 - Denver Area
 - Continue with 3 meetings per year
 - 3rd meeting will be C9 Summit

- Reminders
 - CWCB Deadlines
 - WSRF Deadline Feb. 1
 - Wildfire Ready Watersheds
 - Accepting Applications
 - Wildfire Ready Watersheds: <https://www.wildfirereadywatersheds.com>
 - Direct questions/interest to Steve Reeves (steven.reeves@state.co.us)
 - Technical Assistant & Local Capacity
 - Accepting applications
 - Federal Technical Assistance and Local Capacity Grants: direct questions to Michael Regan (michael.regan@state.co.us)
 - Technical Assistance and Local Capacity programs (ARPA Funds)
 - Need to be contracted by 12/31/24
 - CWCB Reports Coming in 2024
 - Volume II has new data from initial rollout that was shared a couple years ago
 - ULCTF and BBC Turf Replacement Analysis
 - Colorado River Issues: <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/colorado-river-commissioners-corner>

4. Consider Approving A Resolution Designating a Posting Location.

- Brandon Johnson made a motion approving the resolution be posted at SWCD and the website. Ken Curtis seconded. The motion passed by unanimous consent.
- Elaine Chick wants meetings posted in newspapers. PEPO funds can be used to put ads in the Herald Online.

5. IN-RICHES Soil Health Presentation-Helen Silver

- Soil moisture is considered the largest reservoir in the state of Colorado.
- Colorado Agricultural Experimental Station & CSU are pursuing integration and innovation in approaching root causes through collective buy-in to address five focal areas of work to address soil health in the Rocky Mountain Region.
- Five Focal Areas of Work:
 - Collaboration. Multi-stakeholder, science driven dialogue and co-learning opportunities.
 - Investigation. Community engaged research that advances a holistic understanding of soil health and regenerative transitions.
 - Education. Scientifically grounded support for land managers.
 - Exploration. Helping all audiences understand the wonders of soil and advancing awareness of the critical role in human and planetary health.
 - Non-partisan expertise. Objective information and input for policymakers.
- Project phases:
 - Personnel recruitment (in-progress)
 - Standardization of data collection (in-progress)
 - Privacy protection (in-progress)
 - Data workflow and systemization (in-progress)
 - Collaboration (in-progress)
 - Data analysis
 - Creating an outward facing data repository.
- Open Soil Moisture Infrastructure and Information for Colorado
 - Objectives
 - Increase climate risk preparedness by filling critical information gaps
 - Create an inventory of existing networks and new networks for data sharing

- Drive information on land-atmosphere feedback loops
- Project Design
 - Collaborative project with stakeholder engagement
 - Initial investment in long-term infrastructure
 - Initial funding needed~\$1.05M for 2+ years
- Roundtable members and parties that could benefit are encouraged to participate in a needs assessment by Feb 5, 2024. This can be accessed at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScz5MVF_a1Ty_OUTDO11OrR_iaCi5-4ou385gQJ0AddRXgWBg/viewform and emailed to helen.silver@colostate.edu.
- Senator Hickenlooper's Office did apply for \$1.4 million in congressional funds which is widely supported by Congress and Colorado legislature. It is currently in appropriation and will be settled in March.
- Charlie Smith asked if there will be a correlation between atmospheric temperature and water vapor. Helene responded with an answer of absolutely.
- Bruce Whitehead pointed out that there is current discussion on potential impacts of adverse effects in water pollution control and drinking water. CDS funding sources may be susceptible or they may receive an exemption. Conversations among Keith McLaughlin and Senators Hickenlooper and Bennett and Representative Boebert continue.

6. Colorado River Issues Subcommittee-Ken Curtis

- Updates from Amy Ostdiek and Michelle Garrison indicated some improvements in water levels since January.
- DROA took a lot of water from the Upper Basin to support the Lower Basin. At one point 40 KAF was released from Blue Mesa to save some rafters. Bruce Whitehead added FCPP wanted Colorado to have a 17 KAF as the conservation goal but the release of the 40 KAF demonstrated the inequality of reservoir releases- and proof that there is no recourse and further demonstrates the problems of equalization of releases.
- Amy Ostdiek reported earlier that the Bureau of Reclamation's most recent information on the Lower Basin and Upper Basin use is from 2005.
- The Colorado River Drought Task Force provided recommendations on sub task force talking points. Letisha Yazzie, Steve Wolff, Lisa Yellow Eagle provided details on each sub task force recommendation. Tribal issues will be of great interest in the Southwest.

7. Colorado River District Update-Dave Kanzer

- Colorado River Risk Study-Phase 4
 - Hydrology is #1 indicator of system "health" and catalyst for risk to Colorado River water users
 - Increasing demands in Upper Basin = increasing risk of potential shortage/volume curtailment. 60% of uses were established as pre-compact rights, and 40% at risk if curtailment occurs in the Colorado River Basin.
 - Natural curtailment occurred in 2002. Water that flows is subject to curtailment.
 - Increases in transmountain diversion demands will not be fully satisfied if hydrology worsens, resulting in drawdown of west slope transmountain diversion storage reservoirs
 - Maintaining Powell elevation of 3500' under existing operational policy and continued aridification puts the entire burden of risks on the Upper Basin.
 - Southwest: Consumptive Use and Efficiency
 - Unique result, only basin which a Compact curtailment results in a reduced system efficiency.

- Likely caused by curtailment of water users with higher than average efficiency numbers, including water users in the Dolores project (McPhee Reservoir). Efficiency in the Southwest basins is quite high in the baseline scenario, which indicates that the Southwest basins are water stressed even absent a Compact call, and hence there is little room for efficiency improvements under curtailment.
- System Conservation Pilot Program-2024 Application Summary
 - System Conservation Pilot Program application window is closed.
 - Statewide
 - 51 total applications
 - 17,073 aF of conserved consumptive use (ccu)
 - 11,145 acres
 - Colorado River District: 13,089 AF ccu or 9,407 acres
 - Yampa-White-Green: 2,206 AF ccu or 1,806 acres
 - CO Mainstream: 5743 AF ccu or 3375 acres
 - Southwest: 1737 AF ccu or 3041 acres
 - General Updates
 - Post-2026 guideline negotiations continue with a target of March 2024 for the submission of 7-Basin States alternative.
 - The 2024 General Assembly: Colorado River Drought Task Force meets bi-weekly. Legislative updates available by email.
 - Conservation Decision Support Tool near completion.
 - The Bureau of Reclamation is asking for voluntary and compensated conservation to keep Powell above 3500 power pull. Upper Basin would need to hold 200,000 in conservation. Most of the risk is for the exporters-the Upper Basin.
- Shoshone Water Right Preservation
 - Largest and most senior non-consumptive right on the Colorado River
 - Pre-compact senior calling right (1409 cfs)
 - Up to 1.02 million acre feet/year
 - Sustains the state's billion-dollar agricultural and recreational economies.
 - Colorado River District entered a purchase and sale agreement with Public Service Company of CO (subsidiary of Xcel Energy) for \$98.5 million on 12/19/2023.
 - Conversion to Instream Flow Water Right to protect historic flow pattern in perpetuity.
 - Successful completion of water right change case.
 - Approval from Colorado's Public Utility Commission
 - Anticipated closing in 2027

8. Future Roundtable Direction

- SWBRT Survey was emailed in a PDF and will be resent in a Word Document and will also be put on the BRT website. Please submit to Ed, Ken or Wendy by mid February
- Intent is to engage Roundtable members and give them a voice that will help guide funding interests, meeting topics and format,
- Ken Curtis created the questionnaire that can be collected to create further discussion and involvement to make sure roundtable is fulfilling its mission and getting grass roots input
 - Are you satisfied with the Roundtable schedule and activities
 - prime function is to give out funding

- Elaine Chick would like to see more press releases or ads to help get the word out and promote more engagement; the general public does not know what purpose the roundtable serves
- Bruce Whitehead suggested having optional tours prior to quarterly meetings. Perhaps tours could show highlight the progress from groups that have received funding.
- Move meetings around to other locations; aside from just Durango and Cortez.
- Encourage in person attendance. Perhaps identify one meeting per year with a meal-preferably a warmer weather meeting such as July or October.. [Jeff Rodriguez](#) would like to assist with good food. Jeff maintains that it is unlikely that the meetings move away from Zoom.
- Feature other projects that are happening in the region
- There was a suggestion for bills affecting water and other legislative issues be considered. Mely Whiting acknowledged different points of view and cautioned that the roundtable is a local public organization. [Jeff Rodriguez](#) encouraged IBCC and SWCD to provide Roundtable updates. .
- Water Congress is very influential and beneficial. There was a question if PEPO could fund memberships-Jeff Rodriguez and Elaine Chick will further investigate. Per Elaine there is not a dedicated line item, but there is one for Outreach that could possibly be used.
- Peter Butler likes the quarterly meetings. He recognizes that the roundtable is not extremely busy. He liked the idea of moving meetings around.
- Ken Curtis explained that the work group was set up to reduce the length of the regular meeting and he suggested alternating work group and tours to

9. WSRF Grant Request

- Upper 42 Road Water Association-Laura Rieck
 - Local Improvement district in Montezuma County
 - Grant funding for planning was approved but soon found that funding was depleted
 - Request for domestic water lines to be installed/improved in Mancos for drinking water on 29 properties north of Road N.
 - Funding would be earmarked for final engineering study, construction documents, administrative fees, and legal fees to create intergovernmental agreement leading up to construction.
 - Bruce Whitehead suggested BRT funding be used as an alternate funding source, if grant funding was not issued in March. DOLA may also provide funds.
 - Laura's goal is to keep the project moving. Project was pushed back 9-12 months.
 - Ed Tolen was supportive of the funding request
 - The entity is eligible and was approved in 2023; CDS congressional funding impacts what the state can provide and when it can be provided.
 - Ken Curtis moved to approve funding with the condition made by Bruce Whitehead if the Upper 42 Road Water Association does not receive funding from the reserve fund of DNE's Water Power Authority and or DOLA in 2024. Brandon Johnson seconded the motion. The motion passed with unanimous consent.

10. Upcoming Events

- March 25, 2024 WSRF [Jeff mentioned Feb 1 in his presentation](#)
- March 27, 2024 SWCD Water Seminar-Ignacio

- April 25, 2024 – Roundtable Meeting & WSRF Grant Awards-Durango
- May 15, 2024-Children’s Water Festival
- July 25, 2024-Roundtable Meeting & WSRF Grant Awards-Cortez
- October 24, 2024-Roundtable Meeting & WSRF Grant Awards-Durango
- Other Announcements

11. Wrap UP and Adjournment (At or Before 6:00 PM)

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