

Ark Basin Roundtable - Environmental & Recreation Committee

May Meeting Notes

Monday, May 24, 2021

10:00am – 12 noon

via Zoom

A regular meeting of the Environmental – Recreation Committee of the Arkansas Basin Roundtable convened virtually. The meeting was called to order by Bob Hamel, Ark Basin Envi-Rec Chair.

Attendees:

Roundtable Members: Bob Hamel, (Ark Basin RT Recreation Rep, AROA), Mark Shea (Ark Basin RT Chair, ARWC), Amber Shanklin (Ark Basin RT Environmental Rep, Palmer Land Trust), Greg Felt (CWCB Rep on Roundtable; Chaffee County Commissioner).

Agency Liaisons: Rena Griggs (CPW – Water Specialist – SE Region), Tom Waters (CPW – AHRA Park Manager), Misty De Salvo (USFS).

Non-Roundtable Members: Cindy Williams (Envision Chaffee County), Dwayne McFall (Fremont County), Dan Omasta (Trout Unlimited), Tyler Benton (Co Spgs Utilities), Ed Perkins (CPW Water), Julie Knudsen (Purgatoire Watershed Partnership), Ryan Bouton (PhD, Canon City), Lucy Harrington (GEI Consultants), Chris Reichard (Tri-State).

May Meeting Notes:

1. Cindy Williams presented on the newly released **Chaffee County Rec Plan** by first presenting this [6 minute video](#) and a presentation about 'Recreation In Balance' and applications to improve forest health. Greg Felt commented that this plan is transferable and scalable...similar to the wildfire protection plan. It could easily be applied in neighboring counties or areas. **Feedback on the plan is due June 4, please visit envisionchaffeeco.org.**
2. Black Hills Energy site update (Canon City): Bob shared that he met with a representative from Black Hills along with the Canon City Manager and others. An RFP will be coming out soon to improve the site, establish boat ramp access, river walk connections, nature trails, picnic areas, and camping. Work might start in summer 2022. This is an exciting development which ties into reaching out to the Oil Ditch company again on possible safety improvements to their diversion headgate and other related projects.
3. CDPHE announced \$7 Million available for upper Ark Restoration projects as part of a Natural Resource Damages claim. For details, go to the [official notice here](#). **Application deadline is June 1. Rena announced that CPW intends to apply for funding for the Mt. Shavano Low Head dam project (Maximum cost could be \$3 Million).**
4. Julie Knudsen (Purgatoire Watershed Partnership) shared that the Purgatoire received some recent rains resulting in big flows (3000+ cfs).

5. Misty (USFS) reported San Carlos Ranger District fuels treatments are planned, and the development of landscape maps to understand what's been treated and what needs treatment is desired – grant funding needed for this. **It's been recently predicted that 75% of high elevation spruce trees will be lost by 2025 due to beetle kill and other causes. USFS is also preparing for another crowded camping season (weekends are now like past holidays and weekdays are like past weekends). Wildfire prep is also underway.**
6. Bob reported that the VFMP water is still being held up high at 10,000 ac-ft (the usual amount) and it's still too soon to tell how the flows will be managed in July-August.
7. Bob asked for further updates, and with none heard, motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Mark your Calendar:

Next Ark Basin Roundtable – June 9, 12:30-3:00pm, Zoom.

Next Envi-Rec Committee Meeting, Monday, June 28, 10am – Noon. Zoom.

About us:

Arkansas Basin Roundtable – Environmental & Recreation Committee Purpose and Goals

The Environmental - Recreation Committee's purpose

- Ark Basin RT legislative directive...to propose projects or methods, structural and non-structural, to meet environmental and recreational needs.
- Constantly review Basin Implementation Plan, evaluate goals and priorities.
- Consider sustainability values (economic, social, environmental) as we evaluate environmental & recreation issues, projects, and priorities.
- Work with Needs Assessment Committee to advise on environmental and recreation priorities (but do not infringe on Needs Assessment Committee).
- Encourage environmental & recreation groups to come to this committee before approaching Needs Assessment Committee or Roundtable. This committee can aid by providing letters of support of certain projects.
- Outreach and education. Continually strive to bring awareness of past, present, and future envi & rec projects.

Environmental - Recreation Committee structure

- Bob Hamel (AROA), Ark Basin Roundtable At Large Recreation Rep, Chair
- Rena Griggs (CPW) Vice or Co-chair (non-voting RT member).
- Amber Shanklin (Palmer Land Trust) Ark Basin Roundtable At Large Environmental Rep
- Mark Shea (CSU)(ARWC) Ark Basin Roundtable Chair
- Matt Heimrich (Palmer Land Trust / Otero Farmer) and Ark Basin Roundtable Vice Chair

Difference between (Non-Consumptive) Envi-Rec Committee and the Ark River Watershed Collaborative (ARWC)?

- Discussion: ARWC is like the "operating body" or "fiscal agent" of the NC committee...
...whereas the NC committee itself is the group of experts offering advisement on projects and priorities.

Envi-Rec Committee Meeting Goals

- strive for a purpose for every meeting; provide an agenda prior to each meeting.
- set a regular schedule - last Monday of every month in Canon City (and occasional other locations).
- send out a meaningful agenda, ahead of meeting.
- emphasize all folks are welcome; grow the invite list; invite special guests for specific planned topics.
- for each month's agenda, expect agency updates from USFS, BLM, CPW, and ARWC.