

ARKANSAS BASIN ROUNDTABLE

Website: www.arkansasbsin.com

Email: arkbasinrt@gmail.com

Wednesday January 13, 2021

Start Time: 12:30 pm

Virtual Meeting using the following link:

GoToMeeting Link: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/631824957>

- 12:30-12:45** **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – Mark Shea [15 min]**
Introductions
Approval of agenda
Approval of minutes – December 2020
Public Comment
- 12:45 – 1:30** **Reports [45 min]**
Executive Committee – Mark Shea (10 min)
CWCB Report – Sam Stein, Russ Sands, and Greg Felt (5 min)
IBCC Report – Jeris Danielson and Terry Scanga (5 min)
Needs Assessment Committee – Abby Ortega (5 min)
Enviro/Rec – Bob Hamel, Amber Shanklin, and Rena Griggs (5 min)
Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative (ARWC) – Carol Ekarius (5 min)
BIP Update – Brett Gracely, Will Koger (10 min)
- 1:30 – 1:35** **Break**
- 1:35 – 2:15** **Program [40 min]**

Administration of Undecreed Ponds – Bill Tyner, Division 2 Engineer

ADJOURNMENT

Upcoming Meetings

Arkansas Basin Roundtable – February 10, 2021

Subcommittees

- PEPO Workgroup – January 13, 3:30 pm
- Enviro/Rec Comm. – January 25, 2:00 pm

CWCB – Board meeting: January 25 & 26

January 27: A Riverside Chat: 10-12 am, ISF Workshop: 1-3 pm

Statewide PEPO Meeting – February 22, 1-3 pm

IBCC Meeting – February 23, 8-12 pm

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ROUNDTABLE MEETING NOTES

January 13, 2021

GoToMeeting Link: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/631824957>

More information and presentations may be found at: www.arkansasbasin.com

Roundtable Business

Mark Shea called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm. Mark read off attendees. Mark asked for changes to the agenda, and none were suggested. Twenty-five (25) members were present.

Approval of Prior Meeting Notes

December meeting notes have been circulated for review. *Meeting notes were approved by consensus.*

Public Comment - none

REPORTS:

Executive Committee – Mark Shea

The executive committee met this morning. Mark has had follow-up conversations with the BIP General Contractor team as they complete Volume 1 of the BIP Update. Volume 1 is meant to be a concise part of the BIP that identifies strategies and objectives of the roundtables. There are some significant issues for us to address as a roundtable based on the output of the technical update. For instance, a sizable agricultural water gap resulted from the findings of the technical update. We reviewed the 2015 BIP and provided input re: revising objectives stated in 2015. Same with Enviro/Rec Committee – reviewed and revised objectives for non-consumptive uses that were identified in the 2015 BIP. Mark also facilitated a conversation re: transmountain diversions and what they look like in the BIP update. Issues get to the limitations that the technical committee reached when planning out to 2050. This conversation included SEWCD and Pueblo Board of Water Works as well as northern water providers.

The exec committee continued to have discussions with the PEPO Workgroup, and that group will meet this afternoon after the conclusion of the roundtable meeting.

They also discussed a policy proposal brought by Terry Scanga to address water rights issues that might arise with certain types of project (stream management, for example) that are brought forward as grant applications or letters of support. This is an ongoing conversation, as it is a complex issue to address.

CWCB Report – Sam Stein, Russ Sands & Greg Felt

CWCB is holding a riverside chat on January 27th, updating folks on the Colorado Water Plan. Becky Mitchell will be attending the April meeting of the Arkansas Roundtable.

The Governor's proposed budget contains \$6 million this year for state forest fire grants plus an additional \$4 million for CWCB's watershed restoration program. This funding is in response to the horrific drought and fire season that we've just been through.

The CWCB Board has approved the Demand Management Step 2 work plan. Demand management process continues to be iterative, with open discussion.

The next CWCB board meeting will be held January 25 and 26.

Three IBCC meetings have been scheduled for next year, with February 23rd as the first meeting date. PEPO Statewide will meet the day before each of the IBCC meetings.



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Greg Felt – feel free to reach out to him, in order to familiarize him with your issues. Several groups have reached out, thank you. Please feel free to reach out to him at gfelt@chaffeecounty.org. 719-530-1118.

Covid really took hold just as we were winding up for the Arkansas River Water Forum, which was then cancelled. The Bob Appel award was never given. This year's recipient was Terry Scanga. Congratulations Terry, and thank you! Terry said a few words of thanks.

IBCC Report – Jeris Danielson & Terry Scanga

Scheduled to meet February 23rd. Jeris let us know that Nick Koch passed away from Covid last week. Nick has been an active roundtable member since March 2016. Mark will send our appreciation and respects to Nick's family.

Needs Assessment Committee – Abby Ortega

The applications that were approved last month will go in front of the CWCB in March.

Enviro/Rec – Bob Hamel, Amber Shanklin & Rena Griggs

Met with the signatories of the Voluntary Flow Management Agreement regarding the renewal of the plan for the next five years.

There is a new issue that has come forward. There is potential for the movement of crude oil train cars over Tennessee Pass and through the Arkansas Valley. We've just learned that there is a lease to do this. There has been some attempt to gain community input. A lot of locals have been writing letters to the Surface Transfer Board. The tracks are in incredible disrepair, and there have been estimates of over \$250 billion dollars to repair them. Lake, Chaffee and Eagle Counties are all meeting together and asking the Surface Transportation Board to not waive the environmental review for reinitiating rail service of any type. It would be shale oil that is being considered being moved in this way from the Uintah Basin. A new railway would be required on that end of the project. The communities in our area have been 25 years without rail traffic coming through town, so this would be a huge adaptation on many levels. Below Salida, there would be hurdles as to how rail cars would even find the ability to pass the Parkdale area and through the Royal Gorge. These rails are already busy with tourist traffic during the day, and Martin Marietta moves rock through the gorge at night. Whatever the outcome, this will be a long process.

Rena: recently attended a meeting for Great Plains Reservoirs effort, hosted by Kiowa County economic development folks. They are excited to learn as much as they can about water and how they can try to get the right amount of water into one or more of the Great Plains Reservoirs with an eye on recreation interests. This group is meeting monthly first Tuesday of the month at 10 am.

ARWC – Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative – Carol Ekarius

ARWC will meet in February to discuss board structure and the future of ARWC. Anyone on the roundtable is welcome to attend.

- We are still doing work on the Spring Fire in Huerfano County. Put in a proposal to the non-point source program.
- Monarch Pass Steep Slope Mitigation – about half of the area was covered in 2020. Monarch Ski Area is putting up interpretive signs about the project and forest health. Monarch will play a short version of the webisode on their TV monitors around the ski area.
- Will be ramping up forest work in Lake County area, including a modification of their existing wildfire protection plan, to look more strategically at water supply and bring that into their plan.



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- We finished the final scope revision for ARWC watershed health funding and will send that in to Chris Sturm this week.

BIP Tiering Process – Will Koger, Brett Gracely

The Tiering Matrix is:

- A tool for Roundtables
 - To characterize/track projects
 - To identify projects for funding
- A tool for CWCB
 - To assess overall funding needs
 - To understand project readiness
- A standard framework for gathering project data
- A tool for considering all projects on equal footing

The Tiering Matrix is not:

- A project ranking mechanism
 - Tiers are like “buckets” of projects and not an A to Z ranking
- A guarantee of funding from CWCB or a determinant of project advancement
 - Proponents can advance projects regardless of tiering.
- Limited with respect to the number of Tier 1, 2, 3 or 4 Projects.
- A means for pitting one project against another.

BREAK

Administration of Un-Decreed Ponds – Bill Tyner (see website for full presentation)

Pond Management Program Described

- *A process to review ponds within the Arkansas River Basin to more-accurately manage the water supply and to meet our legal water obligations to Colorado water rights and Kansas.*
 - Utilizing multiple sources of available data the Division Engineer’s Office has worked cooperatively with the State Engineer’s Office to identify a target set of ponds that don’t appear to fall within administration by having a senior decreed water right or by being included in a plan for augmentation or replacement plan.
 - The Arkansas River Basin is one of the most over-appropriated water basins in the state and has experienced frequent and severe drought conditions, (we use more water than is naturally supplied).
 - Addressing ponds may potentially help relieve some pressure on demand gaps by restoring water to agricultural and municipal users with senior rights.

Pond Management Program Strategy

- Organized to begin first near the mainstem of the Arkansas River and key tributaries in each water district where addressing pond losses will provide a direct contribution to senior water rights and will positively impact our ability to maintain compliance with our Compact.
- Includes an extensive effort to build educational material helpful in providing options to pond owners and providing initial notification of the problem to each owner.
- Anticipates follow-up field visits by each Water Commissioner to answer questions and help determine best options for compliance.



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Options for Compliance

- Vary by Location
- Include Pond in an Augmentation Plan/Exchange Plan
- Breach/Drain Pond
- Backfill Pond (If Ground Water Exposed by Pond)
- If Pond qualifies for a statutory exemption, obtain required permit and/or demonstrate with documentation
 - May require updating such as installation of low level outlets

Q&A:

Jeris commended their efforts.

Estimate of volumes involved in the Arkansas Basin: solving this problem is on the magnitude of tens of thousands of acre feet, likely less than 30,000 acre feet total, but a large issue and time to address it.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:22 pm, but continued through remaining questions for Bill Tyner.

Admin Email: ARKBASINRT@GMAIL.COM

MEETINGS/LINKS: (all meetings in 2020 will be virtual)

- Arkansas Basin Roundtable Meeting: February 10, 12:30 pm www.arkansasbasin.com
- PEPO Workgroup: This afternoon www.pepoarkbasin.com
- Enviro/Rec: January 25
- CWCB: Jan 25, 26 <http://cwcb.state.co.us/Pages/CWCBHome.aspx>
- IBCC: Feb 23
- PEPO Statewide Mtg: Feb 22
- Arkansas River Basin Water Forum: <http://www.arbwf.org/>
- Colorado Water Plan: <http://coloradowaterplan.com/>
- Colorado Flood Threat Bulletin: www.coloradofloodthreat.com
- Stream Management Plan Resource Library: <https://coloradosmp.org/>
- In-Stream Flow Rule Revisions: <https://cwcb.colorado.gov/instream-flow-rules-revisions-hb-20-1157>
- DARCA - <https://www.darca.org/>

ARKANSAS BASIN ROUNDTABLE

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Agenda

Wednesday January 13, 2021

Start Time: 10:30 am

GoToMeeting Link: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/631824957>

Greetings and necessary introductions

Minutes/Notes of the previous meeting

ARWC Board Meeting

- Executive Director Update

Reoccurring matters

- Chair Comments – Mark Shea
- Outstanding Reports – Executive Committee Members

ABRT BIP Update/Local Expert

- Project tiering process

Roundtable Business

- Draft policy re Letters of Support for Stream Restoration Projects

Upcoming Meetings

- Arkansas Basin Roundtable – February 10, 2021
- Subcommittees
 - Enviro/Rec Comm. – January 25, 2021
- CWCB Board Meeting – January 25 & 26
- Statewide PEPO – February 22
- IBCC – February 23

Adjourn

Committee membership: Mark Shea (Ch), Bob Hamel (VCh-NonC), Matt Heimerich (VCh-Cons), Mike Fink (Rec), Sandy White (Past-Ch), Greg Felt (CWCB), Jeris Danielson (IBCC), Terry Scanga (IBCC), Tim Canterbury (IBCC Alternate), Abby Ortega (Needs Assessment), Paul Fanning (Legislative Rep), Amber Shanklin (ARWC Board Member), Sarah Mudge (ARWC Board Member)

Additional distribution: Sam Stein (CWCB Staff), Elise Bergsten (Secretary), Carol Ekarius (ARWC Director)

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Additional distribution: Sam Stein (CWCB Staff), Elise Bergsten (Secretary), Carol Ekarius (ARWC Director)



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Executive Committee Meeting Notes

February 10, 2021 – GoToMeeting

www.arkansasbasin.com

Executive Committee Present: Mark Shea – Chair; Mike Fink – Secretary; Paul Fanning, Jeris Danielson - IBCC, Sandy White- Past Chair; Russ Sands, Sam Stein-CWCB; Kara Sobieski, Bob Hamel – Vice Chair (Recreational and Environmental Committee); Brett Gracely and Wil Koger - Consultant; Kat Weismiller - CWCB Representative; Richard Kienitz, Mike Weber, Jim Broderick, Chris Woodka, Kevin Lusk, Steve Kastner, Bill Tyner, Amber Shanklin, Matt Lindburg, Greg Felt, Alli Schuch

Call to order:

Chairman Mark Shea called the meeting to order at 10:35 AM. Greetings and introductions were performed.

Minutes:

Consensus approval for January 13, 2020 Meeting Minutes

ARWC Board Meeting:

- Executive Director Update- (postponed to March)

Reoccurring Matters:

- Chair Comments- Mark Shea briefed the Executive Committee regarding the follow-up conversation on the M&I Goals for the Basin Implementation Plan; it's the same conversation on Agricultural Goals and Environmental/Recreation Non-Consumptive Goals.
- Outstanding Reports- Executive Committee Members- No outstanding report.

ABRT BIP Update/ Local Expert:

- Project tiering process (Roundtable presentation)

Roundtable Business:

- Draft policy re letters of support for Stream Restoration Projects (postponed to March)
- PEPO Coordinator Recommendation- Paul Fanning stated the PEPO workgroup met a couple different times, there was a lot of passion and a lot of opinions. There was a wide range of conversation on different communication issues for the Roundtable. The workgroup took a broad range of issues and boiled it down to the realities that PEPO are



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dealing with; in terms of time and budget. The workgroup defined some bullet point tasks that are critical to the Basin outreach and feasible to achieve with the resources PEPO has on hand. The website is one of the primary things used so, it's important it's updated. Next thing to do is work on a revised Education Action Plan. The Roundtable is required to have an EAP (education action plan). PEPO has been through several of them throughout the years, and it's time to revise the EAP document and submit that for the Fiscal Year 2022. Next, PEPO will research funding opportunities that will help prepare grant applications.

- Mark states that PEPO needs to have their EAP (education action plan) submitted to the state by March 2021.
- Alli Schuch introduced herself to the Executive Committee; she has been doing a wide variety of Environmental Education in the Pikes Peak Region for over 20+ years. She has worked with Colorado Springs Utilities along with Colorado Springs Storm Water Division. Alli has put together some award-winning programs such as the Creek Week Cleanup.
- Paul Fanning noted he has worked with Alli in the past and he has found her to be super interested, extremely responsive, and great to work with.
- Amber Shanklin has seen and felt Alli's enthusiasm for all things water and education. Amber thinks Alli is a fantastic fit, but likes the idea of a trial run and re-evaluation in June 2021.

Q: Amber would like to know if Alli has a plan for attacking the website and if she has some website examples she can provide to the Executive Committee?

A: Alli provided some website addresses:

Fountaincreekweek.com and Fountain-crk.org

- Mike Fink echoed Amber and Paul's thoughts about Alli; Mike doesn't know anyone with a higher level of energy that attacks all things water. He mentioned that Alli attended the Housing Building Association in Colorado Springs and made a successful pitch to the HBA to participate as a sponsor for Creek Week.

Q: Jeris would like to know if it's possible PEPO can get additional funding from the state in this fiscal year?

A: Mark thinks we have enough but finds it very important that Alli represents the Roundtable and the state wide PEPO work that is picking up. Mark would like for Alli to attend meetings, spend time on the website and updating the EAP. We have just over \$4,000 dollars for this year's EAP. Mark states the funding is an annual amount that is budgeted for each Basin Roundtable EAP (education action plan) so PEPO will work through the fiscal year 2021 with the allowance given, PEPO will then have that allowance replenished on July 1, 2021.

- Consensus approval to hire Alli Schuch as the PEPO coordinator through June 30, 2021
- Basin Implementation Plan Storage Goals discussion- BIP Update GC Team- Matt Lindburg shared a presentation with the Executive Committee which gives them the



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opportunity to review some goals that were in the 2015 BIP update. There are four (4) different category goals in the BIP update:

- M&I Goals
 - Agricultural
 - Environmental Recreation
 - Storage
- Matt states based on the input received from Brown and Caldwell they were able to make revised goals that they will be sending out to groups who helped brain storm on those tools, and then Brown and Caldwell will gather some feedback on that and bring it to the full Roundtable.
 - Mark Shea sent out the overview of current storage goals prior to the presentation: (see presentation for more details on each storage goal)
 - Increase surface storage available within the Basin by 70,000 AF by the year 2020.
 - Develop alluvial and designated basin storage in gap areas within the Basin.
 - Support multiple uses at existing and new storage facilities.
 - Identify storage facilities that can be renovated, restored, or enhanced for additional storage.

Q: Matt would like to know if there is a desire to have some of these goals incorporated into other sectors. Storage is a really important aspect of the Arkansas Basin Implementation Plan, so Matt thinks there are good reasons to have storage goals standalone.

Q: Mike Fink states last month the Roundtable received a presentation with Bill Tyner regarding the project and goals that the Division 2 Engineer's office is undertaking on the undecreed storage; is it worth acknowledging that this project is currently going on when updating the BIP?

A: Kat Weismiller believes there are new challenges in terms of storage in the Basin compared too years ago. If these four (4) goals are not necessarily important now as they were 2015, and we have some more recent challenges, we need to consider that as we move forward with the BIP update.

- Matt opens for discussion on the first storage goal, Increase surface storage available within the Basin by 70,000 AF by the year 2020:

Q: Matt would like to know if any committee member know where the 70,000 AF came from.

A: Jim states the 70,000 AF had to deal with preferred storage option plan; specifically, to Pueblo Reservoir and the enlargement of the reservoir. Preferred Storage Option Plan (PSOP) was a three (3) part plan to enlarge Pueblo Reservoir to 65,000 - 70,000 AF with the low range of 50,000 AF. Second part of that was to enlarge Turquoise Reservoir by 25,000 AF. Third part was to use the Pueblo Reservoir at excess capacity.

- Jim questions what do you mean by storage. Do you mean better use of storage? Better efficiency of storage? New storage and if so, is new storage made available to everyone? Etc. Jim suggests that each goal needs some classification or actions.



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- Mark questions if it makes sense to generalize this goal to be all-encompassing. Storage and usable return flows, new storage, recovery of storage, and we haven't even talked about storage outside of the Basin that's part of our Trans mountain diversion projects that are so important to our water supplies. Mark doesn't want to miss things because we are so focused on a narrow definition it needs to be broaden out and recognized.
 - Sandy remembers sitting in Jim's conference room and hashing out this issue 6-7 years ago and he thought the conclusion than was not to get to specific in the fear that we would miss something. The goals you see in the table that Mark sent out are very squishy; the idea was to make sure that storage didn't get pigeon-holed for one particular use. Sandy finds real value at keeping it as its own area, gap, or goal within that. There isn't no harm breaking it up, but we have to make sure the breakup includes all the potential storage needs.
 - Kevin Lusk agrees with Jim's statement regarding taking a fresh look at storage. Kevin believes that this points out an extreme challenge of doing a statewide plan effort with a bunch of different Basins doing their own, and that's going to have to push us to let these projects and storage projects live within the areas they intend to serve and then if there are additional gaps we can identify that; lumping it all into one bucket makes it a meaningless effort.
 - Brett Gracely summarized the projects referenced. There are twelve (12) projects in the database referencing storage, thirty-three (33) referencing reservoir, sixteen (16) referencing dam, and five (5) referencing aquifer. Early on in this process, the Executive Committee and the Coordinated Committee elected not to make a deep dive into sustainable agricultural economics in 2015.
 - Matt mentions in the Arkansas Basin Implementation Plan there is an acknowledgement that there's an attractiveness for underground storage because of saving on evaporative losses there are also concerns about policy-related issues of viewing underground storage.
 - Matt moves on to the second goal, develop alluvial and designated basin storage in gap areas within the Basin:
- Q:** Matt would like to know whether alluvial and designated Basin storage in gap areas something the Roundtable would still like to have specifically called out. If not, is this goal an action that could be attached to a more generalized version of the first goal, and instead of having this goal the Basin focuses on the pond issue or the contract exchange?
- A:** Terry thinks the underground storage should be addressed separately. There are issues that the Roundtable hasn't even thought about yet surrounding the underground storage.
- Bill Tyner wonders if adding exclusion of recharge operations to this topic would be helpful, it's a little different from alluvial storage.

Q: Jim would like to know when you talk about recharge storage for ponds; are those facilities really operational holding facility for the water that allow opportunity to operate the water for the water year, verses holding the water for long-term?
Is the return value 6-7 years?



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A: Bill stated that a properly working recharged operating pond won't have water that remains above ground for very long. The delivery into those ponds will get into that aquifer and travel to the river pretty quickly. The return value is correct.

- Jeris agrees that the underground storage should have a stand-alone section in the Basin plan. The only problem the Basin has ever encountered was dominion and control.
- Mark states if we are going to put together a laundry list it should make sense; because there are a lot of specific and important aspects of storage in the Arkansas Basin. If we are really trying to list out each individual aspects of storage value, we are going to miss something. Mark agrees it makes sense to have something more general support for new storage to recover storage and then maybe having actions or measurable outcomes because location, surface vs. aquifer storage is huge. The Roundtable will receive some draft goals before the final document is released; giving everyone a chance to discuss any changes.

➤ Matt moves on to the third goal, support multiple uses for existing and new storage facilities, and opens the floor for discussion on this topic:

- Jim states that the upper basin does a fantastic job at reviewing and evaluating how this category of goals gets set-up. Jim feels this goal is needed and would like to hear if anyone else feels otherwise.
- Greg Felt feels calling this goal out as a significant topic to the BIP update is important, but he also feels it should be embedded concept of the BIP, because those components of non-consumptive use who are under-funded and rely on the goodwill of the bigger players. It's incumbent on those who are pushing those non-consumptive uses to figure out what might work or throw out ideas for consideration. The only two ways for that to be successful is through education and the other is having a centralized repository of projects, so they can see how the pieces might fit together.
- Bob Hamel made the Roundtable aware that AROA (Arkansas River Outfitters Association) has been involved in forming a new entity that has been called the Arkansas River Conservation Cooperative, and has been launched as its own division, but it's a funding mechanism of an interest that the outfitters have potentially engage in our community in a financial way and be able to contribute funds in the partnership.

➤ Matt transitioned onto the final goal, Identify storage facilities that can be renovated, restored, or enhanced for additional storage:

Q: Matt wants to know if anyone on the Roundtable knows if the first measurable outcome was pursued; complete an inventory of prospective facilities with an estimate of recoverable storage volume by Dec, 2015.

A: Bill thinks we did a significant part of that measurable outcome. It would be good to compile a list of projects that have already been accomplished and or started as an example to get things done; in addition to the ones that already remain that could make a huge difference for the Basin.

Q: Jim would like to know how Forest Health and Forest Fires fit into the categories. Where do we put the rehab of impact of fires mitigation coming from rivers, or the



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needing to establish those facilities that are already in place that are no longer being able to use.

A: Mark thinks that would be appropriate to reference loss of storage capacity to existing or increased erosion and sediment transport that could be related to wildfire and post fire conditions or dispersed recreation and development.

Upcoming Meetings:

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- Subcommittees
 - Enviro/Rec Comm.- February 22, 2021
- IBCC- February 23, 2021
- Statewide PEPO- February 22, 2021
- CWCB Board Meeting – February 10 and 11, 2021

Adjourn:

Mark Shea adjourned the Executive Committee Meeting at 12:25 PM.