**Ark Basin Roundtable - Environmental & Recreation Committee**

**MEETING SUMMARY**

**Monday, June 29, 2020**

**10:00am – Noon**

**via Zoom**

**Attendees:** Bob Hamel, (Ark Basin RT Recreation Rep, AROA), Chelsea Nutter (ARWC Exec Director),Rena Griggs (CPW – Water Specialist – SE Region), Mark Shea (ARWC / Roundtable), John Smeins (BLM), Amber Shanklin (Ark Basin RT Envi At-Large Rep, Palmer Land Trust), Tyler Benton (CoSpgsUtil), Ryan Bouton (PhD Student), Dan Omasta (TU), Lisa Walters (CoSpgsUtil), Dwayne McFall (Fremont County), Buffy Lenth (Central CO Conservancy), Kyle Horne (Canon City), Julie Knudson (Purgatoire Watershed Partnership).

**Environmental & Recreation Committee Purpose and Goals: (see end of document).**

**June Meeting Summary:**

1. Rob White, Park Manager at AHRA (CPW) retired. Tom Waters is his replacement. Rena will invite him to participate.
2. Overview of the June 11 CWCB Listening Sessions (Environmental & Forest Health) and the June 15 All-Basin Envi-Rec Committees calls. Key takeaways from these calls...
   1. Better baseline data needed of the Basins to understand the needs. Baseline river health data needed at a finer scale. With Ark Basin, we’re trying to interpret what this means and how we best approach this effort.
   2. We’ve learned Ark Basin Envi-Rec needs to prove environmental projects won’t injure water rights.
   3. Thoughts shared: In Ark Basin, best if buy-in comes from Ag/Muni; There’s often a misunderstanding of what “Stream Management Plan” means...really, it’s “Stakeholder inventory of needs & projects”. People developing SMP’s have to do a good job of “selling” the idea of developing it, otherwise, lots of skepticism. It was suggested that smaller communities evaluate their needs and feed that into the larger picture - good example is the Eagle River water plan.
   4. Note that the next Ark Basin RT (July 8) will address how to submit projects to the committees or to the Roundtable. The hired contractors are there to support us and help us put together our respective lists of projects. They’ll be reaching out to agencies or committees. They’re developing a doc that asks questions to gather info about each project. It seemed that July 31 was a deadline for project list submittals by agencies and entities but it was clarified that hired contractors will be helping with this effort all summer, and reaching out to the various groups.
3. ARWC Updates
   1. Spring Fire (Huerfano Co) continued clean-up.
   2. Decker Fire (Chaffee Co) continued EWP projects and landowner meetings ongoing.
4. VFMP 2020 Update: CPW requested a target this summer of 700 cfs at the Wellsville gauge. BOR has the 10,000 acre-foot to release and PBWW also plans releases to meet this goal. At the moment, it appears there will be enough water to sustain flows from July 1-Aug 15. CPW and others will coordinate when the flow program begins.
5. Ryan Bouton’s VFMP study update:
   1. Ryans’s study talks about the history of the VFMP, what it does, the economic benefits, future threats to it, and funding mechanisms.
   2. He’s reviewed other programs such as the Yampa River fund and similar efforts on the Rio Grande in New Mexico as a comparison.
   3. Aims to be finished by the end of July 2020.
6. Other points discussed...
   1. John (BLM) shared about his agency’s recent rehab work related to the Spring Fire (Huerfano).
   2. Mark (Ark Basin RT) reminded that Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) is always an important issue and should be part of the IPPs.
   3. Julie (Purgatoire River Partnership) shared about some water availability discussions related to improved fisheries management.
   4. Dan O. (TU) reminded that a good example of forest health efforts is the Forest to Faucets program on the Blue River.
   5. Buffy (Central CO Conservancy) shared that she’d like to see more Ark Basin IPP projects related to Beaver complexes, active floodplains, alluvial fans, and similar restorations.

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**Mark your Calendar:**

Next Ark Basin Roundtable – July 8, 12:30-noon, GoTo meeting. At this meeting, we will learn more details about how the contractors will help us develop the project lists.

Next Envi-Rec Committee Meeting, July 27, 2020, 10am, virtual or TBD.

**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 Brand (CPW) Vice-chair

-Amber Shanklin (Palmer Land Trust) Ark Basin Roundtable At Large Environmental Rep

-Mark Shea (CSU)(ARWC) Ark Basin Roundtable Chair

-Mike Weber (LAVWCD) Needs Committee Rep and Ark Basin Roundtable Vice Chair

-Chelsea Nutter Ark River Watershed Collaborative (ARWC)

**Difference between Non-Consumptive 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.

**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.

-offer folks to join the meeting by telephone or web-meeting options, if needed.