

Ark Basin Roundtable - Environmental & Recreation Committee

January Meeting Notes

Monday, January 30, 2023

10:00am – 11:15am

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 Envi-Rec Chair, AROA), Blake Osborne (Environmental Rep, LAVWCD), Mannie Colon (Canon City Area Farmer, Roundtable Rep).

Agency Liaisons: Rena Griggs (CPW – Water Specialist – SE Region), Tom Waters (CPW – AHRA State Park Manager – SE Region)

Stakeholders & Frequent Guests: Kyle Horne (Canon City Recreation & Park District), Lucy Harrington (GEI Consultants), Chris Lamson (TU Collegiate Peaks Chapter), Jonathan Paklaian (ARWC), Tyler Benton (Co Springs Util), Julie Knudsen (Purgatoire Watershed Partnership), Cindy Williams (Envision Chaffee County), Luke Javernick (River Science).

Special Guest: Jesse Roehm – Director, Land Conservation Operations – Mile High Youth Corps

Jan 30 Envi-Rec Committee Meeting Notes:

1. **Envi-Rec Committee Updates (Bob):** Blake Osborne is our new Environment Representative on the Roundtable. Welcome, Blake! Note: Bob Hamel is the Recreation Rep and also the Chair of this Envi-Rec Committee. **Note: Envi-Rec Committee Zoom meeting schedule for 2023 will be Jan 30, Mar 27, June 26, Aug 28, and Oct 30. Mark your calendar!**
2. **Proposed Riparian Restoration Project on Fountain Creek in Colorado Springs:** (Jesse Roehm – Director, Land Conservation Operations – Mile High Youth Corps). Tejon Street Wetland Riparian Restoration (El Paso County, Fountain Creek, south of Drake Power Plant & east of I-25) by Mile High Youth Corps. Requesting \$21,910 from CWCB Watershed Health & Recreation Grant. MHYC will partner with the City of Colorado Springs' Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services to eliminate invasive species along 14.54 acres of the Pikes Peak Greenway (PPGW) which runs along Fountain Creek. This project will increase the Fountain Creek channel capacity, decreasing flood danger and improving wildlife habitat.
3. **Baca-Picketwire Diversion Rehab on Purgatoire River - Update:** (Julie Knudsen) Design for the project (fish ladder and boat passage) now has consensus among stakeholders, particularly Ag. Now looking for funding.
4. **South Arkansas River Riparian Restoration:** (Chris Lamson) Last 1.2 miles before confluence with Ark River; Riparian restoration; seeking funding.
5. **Ark River Conservation Cooperative – Update:** (Bob Hamel & Jonathan Paklaian) ARCC is a fundraising mechanism for the recreation/boating community to provide funds to engage with the water community. These funds can be used for river restoration or water leases (in some years to boost summer flows if needed). Recently, Ark River Watershed Collaborative received \$15,000 from this fund for ARWC's ongoing restoration efforts.

6. **Canon City Recreation & Park District – Reactivate Ark River channels in John Griffin Regional Park:** (Kyle Horne & Luke Javernick) – Feasibility study ongoing regarding this proposed project. First, legal and water rights issues (investigated by Luke Javernick of River Science). This project has potential to eventually apply for Ark Basin Roundtable grants.
7. **Florence - Pathfinder Park Ark River Erosion issue:** (Kyle Horne) Erosion on river right; large trees in river – dangerous for boaters. Looking to partner with DOC (owner of left bank) to see about restoration.
8. **Proposed Project - Chaffee County – Four Mile Creek (north of Buena Vista) – Multi benefit restoration:** (Cindy Williams) CWCB grant request of \$114,610 to fund restoration treatment, monitoring, and adaptive management of the 0.7-mile, 14.2-acre reach of Fourmile Creek as a pilot project to demonstrate low-tech restoration of degraded stream-wetland beaver complexes to reestablish natural ecological processes that deliver multiple benefits.
9. **Salida Low Head Dam Removal** (Rena Griggs, CPW) – Rena explained that CPW submitted the grant application for the USFWS National Fish Passage Program in December. Application has been moved into national consideration – we’ll learn the outcome in April 2023. The total cost of the dam removal project is now at \$2.2 Million. CPW requested \$1.1 Million from NFPP to match other funding received.
10. **Proposed Project – Southmoor Drive Channel and Floodplain Restoration by Fountain Creek Watershed and Flood Control Greenway District, South of Security along I-25:** (Rena Griggs for Alli Schuch) CWCB Grant Request of \$700,000. This Project focuses on a 45-foot high cutbank along Fountain Creek which is actively eroding and undercutting Southmoor Drive, resulting in the closure of the road in 2020 This road closure has limited an underserved community’s access to retail and services. The bank contributes 55,088 tons of sediment to the Fountain Creek (Watershed Assessment of River Stability and Sediment Supply 2017) system annually, making it the second highest sediment contributing bank in the Fountain Creek system. As the channel has cut into and eroded the subject bank, the channel has become hydraulically disconnected from adjacent floodplain and overbanks. This bank has been identified and assessed in two watershed studies, linked in the Grant Details section of this application, Floodplain Management Opportunities (FMO) and the Watershed Assessment of River Stability and Sediment Supply (WARSSS) report.
11. **Black Hills Energy Property (Canon City) Update:** (Kyle Horne) Regarding rafting recreation improvements along the Ark River, expecting an RFP to be released? Possible meeting Feb 22, 2023?
12. **Ark River Basin Water Forum Update:** (Bob Hamel) The 2023 forum is set for April 25-26 at the DoubleTree Hotel in Colorado Springs. (The ARBWF moves to different locations around the basin each year...last year it was in Salida). This is a great event for networking all things water in the Ark Basin. All are welcome. Sessions and speakers are now being planned. Registration will open soon – check the website for details at <https://www.arbwf.org/>.

Mark your Calendar:

Next Ark Basin Roundtable Meeting – February 8, 12:30-3:00pm, In person & Hybrid (This meeting always held 2nd Wed of the month).

Next Envi-Rec Committee Meeting, March 27, 2023. Stay tuned for emails.

See below for more info on the Ark Basin Roundtable Environmental – Recreation Committee.

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).
- Blake Osborne (LAVWCD) 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.