



# Arkansas Basin Roundtable

PLANNING OUR  
WATER FUTURE

## ROUNDTABLE MEETING NOTES

November 14, 2018 – Pueblo Community College, Pueblo, CO

### Roundtable Business

Mark Shea called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm. Members and visitors introduced themselves. Twenty-six (26) members were present.

### Approval of minutes of prior meeting

*The meeting notes of the October meeting were approved by consensus.*

### Public Comment – none

### Recognition of Prior Members – Mark Shea

- Alan Hamel – Alan has been involved with the Roundtable process since the beginning, in 2005. He was a legislative appointee, our first roundtable chairperson, and a long-time CWCB board member and chairman. Alan thanked everyone for their support and remarked on how far we've come since the beginning of the roundtable process. Collaboration and respect are the keys. And we have the best roundtable in the state, leading the way since the beginning.
- Gary Barber – Gary has also been involved with the Roundtable process since the beginning. Mark complimented Gary on his vision and ability to see the big picture. Gary was chairperson for several years, stepping down from that position in order to manage the creation of the Basin Implementation Plan, and then facilitating implementation activities. Gary thanked members – this thing is working.

### REPORTS:

#### Executive Committee – Mark Shea

- Alan's seat was through legislative appointment. We'll be speaking with John Stulp about how recommendations for his replacement might be made. Please let Mark know if you have ideas about Alan's replacement.
- Also discussed at the Executive Committing meeting; how we conduct business as the Executive Committee and as a Roundtable. We want to ensure that all roundtable members are aware of what is happening on the various committees, and we will look for opportunities to use the program portion of the meeting to engage the whole roundtable in the committee process. We also discussed the possibility of adding a couple of new committees, such as storage and ATMs. Reach out to Mark Shea and Mike Weber with your thoughts and suggestions.

#### IBCC Report –Jeris Danielson, Terry Scanga

##### Jeris Danielson:

- It's important that your IBCC reps are representing you. Please let them know when there are items you believe should be addressed by the IBCC.
- The IBCC met October 14<sup>th</sup> at Fort Lewis College. Governor Hickenlooper was a visitor to the meeting. He commended the IBCC on their work, and the work of the roundtables.
- State drought briefing notes that 2018 was the warmest in 124 years and the 2<sup>nd</sup> driest in 124 years.



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## Terry Scanga

- IBCC had created a funding task group regarding a stable source of funding for water in the future. The Keystone Center has been working with the Gates and Walton Family Foundations and is working on this independently.
- The goal is to fulfill the state's water demands through 2050. It aims to raise \$100 million annually.
- These are important to the IBCC:
  - Define funding categories
  - How to augment or replace Severance Tax funding in order to have a more stable funding source.
  - The state cannot be the entity that promotes a tax. Will need to hand that off to an NGO in order to put the issue in front of voters.
  - Must have stakeholder input at the front end
  - Must clarify and define the purpose. (meet the gap)
  - What part does the conceptual framework play? It was created by the IBCC to address any new transmountain diversions.
  - Must include water rights protection.
  - Aquifer storage.
  - Compact language that covers all basins, not just the Colorado River Basin.
- Categories for funding are as follows. Types of projects have been identified that would be included in these categories.
  1. Healthy Rivers and Aquifers
  2. Water Quality
  3. Conservation and Efficiency
  4. Productive Agriculture
  5. Infrastructure – tied to the Conceptual Framework
  6. Colorado Compact Compliance (added by Keystone group)
- A Water Tax is being proposed as a funding method and would be a ballot measure.

Mark has offered to draft a letter to make clear to the Keystone Center that it seems that previous IBCC comments have not been addressed. Specifically, the application of the Conceptual Framework seems to have been broadened beyond its original intent to address only NEW transmountain diversions.

Directors discussed this idea, the timeline for a possible ballot measure, and how stakeholders would be included in the process.

The Keystone Policy Center has been the facilitator of the process thus far. They have been funded by the Gates and Walton Family Foundations, and a long list of stakeholder organizations was involved in this first phase, which is wrapping up at the end of this month.

Roundtable members were in consensus that the chairman ought to draft a letter and get it sent out before the report has been published. This is an effort that we would want to participate in and support, as it is about funding the future of water in Colorado.



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## CWCB Report – Brent Newman

- CWCB is meeting today and tomorrow in Golden. Colorado Water Plan grants are being considered today.
- CWCB has not received the Keystone Center's final report. CWCB can assist the roundtable with getting a presentation made by Keystone Group here. The water tax conversation will not be included in the final draft.
- SWSI is still on track to be released in July 2019. Data and tools info will come out as they are completed.
- A SWSI working group is being put together and will meet for six months in 2019. They are looking for three participants from each roundtable, including one or two folks with prior SWSI experience, as well as a newer member. There will be an initial call in December, to include interested participants, RT chairs, and IBCC reps. The group will meet monthly by phone, from January through June.
- Ark River Compact Administration group will meet in early December. Brent Newman and Becky Mitchell will be there. Conversation will include John Martin Reservoir, and whether/how water might be purchased by CPW from the Highland Canal and stored permanently in JMR. The group is hoping to approve this concept in December.
- SWSI implementation workgroup – volunteers.
  - Terry Scanga
  - Matt Heimerich
  - Bob Hamel

## Environment/Recreation Committee – Bob Hamel

- The meeting will be held monthly, on the last Monday of each month. The next meeting will be on November 26, at 10 am, at the BLM office in Canon City.
- The group has grown to 20 at the last meeting and discussed several items and projects.
- Ditch diversion – Canon City/Oil Creek Ditches – Mannie has talked to the president of the Oil Creek Ditch and he is willing to move forward with proposed projects.
- CPW did a fishery shock at the Cottonwood Creek area and the news is extremely grim. Only 10% of the fish have survived the fire. The riverbed is completely grouted in with mud, which eliminates spawning and lowers insect population. 70 fish were found where 700 are normally found.
- Regarding sedimentation issues in the Upper Basin, a ballot initiative in Chaffee County did pass. A citizen's group will be formed that will help decide how the funds will be dispersed. One of the things we're looking at is sedimentation issues from Badger Creek moving upstream.
- Envision Chaffee County will participate in Enviro/Rec going forward.

## PEPO/ARBWF – Jean Van Pelt

- Next year's Forum will be held at the Pueblo Convention Center, on April 23-25. If you're interested in being on the planning committee, they are looking for people.
- WSRF – documentary, winding down right now. Working on getting webisodes loaded to Ark RT story map.
- Education to Action Plan Funding – the 2018/2019 SOW was approved by CWCB in September, and includes these tasks:
  - Participation, partnership building and communication between ABRT, IBCC, CWCB and the public.
  - State Water Education Action Plan
  - Update & Maintain Arkansas Basin Specific Online Resources and Communications
    - A conference call meeting will be held this Friday at 9 am, to begin planning this work.



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- The 2018 Colorado Water Plan (CWP) Engagement and Innovation Grant is being wrapped up at this time. There was a change of scope made in order to host the Rio Grande tour.
- Amber is at the CWCB meeting today, where a 2019 CWP grant is being heard for approval.

## Needs Assessment Committee – Mike Weber, Chelsey Nutter

- Arkansas Basin account stands at ~\$400,000. The Statewide account has ~\$842,000.
- A Needs Assessment committee meeting will be held on December 6<sup>th</sup>, in Canon City, at the Garden Park Building, at 5<sup>th</sup> and Macon, from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. An email reminder will be sent.
- Next round of funding will begin in December. Grant applications are due to the Needs Assessment Committee (Chelsey) by December 1. This includes anyone who wants a letter of support from the roundtable. Applications will then come before the roundtable in January. They'll go to the CWCB by February 1 for approval at the March CWCB meeting. Info is on our website, along with lots of guidance.

## Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative – Mark Shea, Carol Ekarius

### Mark

- The ARWC board met this morning and appointed directors to positions for the next year.
  - Mark Shea – Chair
  - Vice-Chairs: Chelsey Nutter and Mike Weber
  - Co-Secretaries: Chelsey Nutter and Mike Weber
  - Treasurer: Al Tucker
- Mike Weber will head up a new sub-committee that will work to redefine the director position and fill that position.
  - Per Mike, the committee hopes to meet in December, and expects to only need to meet 2-3 times.

### Carol

- Carol reiterated the need for a director.
- Hayden Fire – Work has been completed and came under budget. Remaining funds have been reallocated to the forestry steep slope project in the upper basin.
- Beulah and Junkins Fires are starting to see the return of flooding and will likely continue to have flood impacts this coming summer. The ARWC team worked closely with landowners that were willing to get the work completed and limit flooding as much as possible.
- The Spring Creek Fire will have the biggest impact due to flooding. The NRCS post-fire flood report stated flooding is possible that could have 16-foot levels in La Veta and significant flooding in Walsenburg also. This could happen anytime in the next five years, depending on winter snowfall levels. The Huerfano Conservancy District is working with Huerfano County to educate the public about downstream effects and how to prepare for flooding.
- Carol introduced two people who will be working on ARWC-related projects: Kate Spinelli, USFS; and Julie Knudson, Purgatoire Water Partnership.
- Oil Creek Diversion Project. This project was introduced by Bob Hamel during the Enviro and Rec committee, but Carol added that she volunteered to take the lead on planning and design of the project to help move it forward. Carol stated that this project has a lot of merit and she could help get the project to a construction phase.
- Lastly, Carol stated that the Science Plan was now under contract with CWCB and will be getting a lot of attention over the next year before it is completed.



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## BIP Coordinator – Gary Barber

- Thank you!

## **BREAK**

**PROGRAM** - Please check out full presentations at [www.arkansasbasin.com](http://www.arkansasbasin.com).

## Colorado River Update – Drought Contingency Planning – Brent Newman, CWCB; Lain Leoniak, Colorado AG Office

The Challenging News

The 2007 Interim Guidelines are working as planned but hydrology has been worse than predicted.

- As a result of full use and dry hydrology, Lower Basin states are facing an unprecedented shortage declaration based on reservoir levels.
- The Upper Basin has been able to rely on storage from the CRSPA Units to remain safely in compact compliance under variable hydrology.
- The Upper Basin deals with hydrologic shortages every year – administration under prior appropriation is nothing new for our water users.

Lakes Mead and Powell together hold 15 million acre-feet of water. 2018 is the 19<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of drought.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Pete Dawson is retiring from his position on the Roundtable. He expressed his appreciation to roundtable members.

The December Roundtable meeting has been cancelled.

## **NEXT STEPS/LINKS**

- Next Meeting – January 9, location tbd
- Arkansas Basin Roundtable: [www.arkansasbasin.com](http://www.arkansasbasin.com)
- PEPO: [www.pepoarkbasin.com](http://www.pepoarkbasin.com)
- Arkansas River Basin Water Forum: <http://www.arbwf.org/>
- CWCB: <http://cwcb.state.co.us/Pages/CWCBHome.aspx>
- Colorado Water Plan: <http://coloradowaterplan.com/>