



Arkansas Basin Roundtable

PLANNING OUR
WATER FUTURE

ROUNDTABLE MEETING NOTES

February 13, 2019 – Pueblo Community College, Pueblo, CO

www.arkansasbasin.com

Roundtable Business

Mark Shea called the meeting to order at 12:30 pm. Members and visitors introduced themselves. Thirty-one (31) members were present.

Approval of minutes of prior meeting

After a spelling correction, the meeting notes of the January meeting were approved by consensus.

Public Comment – none

REPORTS:

IBCC Report –Jeris Danielson, Terry Scanga

- The next meeting will be held on February 28, in Denver. The meeting location is tentatively the Hyatt Regency in Aurora.
- Discussion subjects are likely to include water funding initiatives, the state water plan, and drought contingency planning.

SWSI Implementation Working Group – Terry Scanga

- Kickoff meeting has been held.
- Purpose is to integrate SWSI with the Basin Implementation Plan.
- The group will meet the 4th Tuesday, monthly, including a technological webinar.
- Goals
- There will be \$3 million dollar available to update BIPs
- Discussion around metrics, definition of IPPs at the state level, Conceptual Framework

CWCB Report – Jack Goble, Ben Wade

Jack Goble

- The discussion points out the need to update the BIPs, and these items will be addressed as we approach that.
- Funding must be addressed. If we are asking the public to fund water, we will need a good list of projects.
- Schedule:
 - SWSI complete this summer
 - Statewide RT summit in September
 - BIP updates launched this fall.
 - Update to CO Water Plan begins in 2020
 - BIP updates complete in 2021
 - CO Water Plan update complete in 2022
- CWCB met last month. Our three grants were approved.
- ARCA holds a special meeting tomorrow, regarding the Highland Canal water right as a new source of water for the John Martin Reservoir permanent pool. They've come to an agreement, which will hopefully be executed tomorrow. They removed striped bass from the stilling reservoir below the dam that were 35 lbs, higher than the state record. These fish were put in the reservoir (so go fishing!).



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- Colorado River Drought Contingency Plans: The lower states have not submitted complete DCPs. The BOR extended the deadline to March 4th to finalize plans. If they do not reach agreement by then, BOR will request a letter from governors of those states as to their plans, or the federal government will be step in.
- Chief Operating Officer – Anna Mauss for CWCB procurement etc. Congratulations to Anna. The CWCB is looking for her replacement.
- Happy Birthday to Carol Ekarius!

Ben Wade

- Appreciate the feedback on the implementation working group.
- Projects Bill – will move through fairly quickly.
- Funding now: CWCB received a little over 40 CO Water Plan grant apps. Staff is going through those now. On March 1st, projects will be posted on the website. May will be CWCB meeting where apps will be heard.

Environment/Recreation Committee – Bob Hamel, Rena Brand

- The meeting will be held monthly, on the last Monday of each month. The next meeting will be on February 25, at 10 am, at the BLM office in Canon City.
- The meeting was held on January 28, Rena led, as Bob Hamel was in an accident due to the storm.
- Envision Recreation, Chaffee County – sediment control study. Submitted grant by deadline.
- Oil Creek Diversion project – still in beginning stages, developing a grant app, problem is getting stakeholders together and plan in place, due in June.
- Next meeting subjects: Hayden Pass Fire effort next meeting. Lower Ark River TMDL meeting, Feb 12 outcome. Report is in draft form. Will have recommendations as to how to get the river down to acceptable selenium levels.
- Hayden fire group did meet last Saturday, informational, about building local coalition. Standing room only at Coaldale community center. Kate Spinelli is the local coordinator of this effort. A grant has been approved by CWCB for the 2nd phase of this project, so that analysis can be expanded outside the EWP and include Hayden, Oak, Bitterbutter and additional Cottonwood Creek areas. Will continue to develop funding for this.
- Water Congress presentation: Chris Sturm, Carol Ekarius, Chelsey Nutter, Kate Spinelli. Great panel on fire restoration, with us leading the way. That panel discussion will also be at the forum and include forest service reps there.
- DCP – will be a top agenda item for the Env/Rec committee.

PEPO/ARBWF – Jean Van Pelt, Amber Weber

Arkansas River Basin Water Forum – Bob Hamel

- This year's Forum will be held at the Pueblo Convention Center, on April 23-25. The planning committee is seeking volunteers for planning and for financial sponsors.
- Dan Gibbs, new DNR director will be there for a keynote.
- Roundtable will be meeting in Pueblo on April 23rd. VIP dinner is April 23rd in the evening. Location tbd.
- Don Ament will be a keynote speaker. Percolation/runoff event will be held at the Union Depot. Agenda is being developed.

PEPO – Jean Van Pelt

- State held their PEPO statewide workshop. Most people are doing similar things. Got a good idea about a quarterly newsletter. Focused on the interested guests that attend the RT.



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- Joint meeting with CWCB Implementation Working Group. Were asked if PEPO would help CWCB with their outreach efforts about state water plan and BIP updates.
- Water Education Colorado – SWEAP (State Water Education Action Plan). Jean and Amber are helping with development and implementation of this plan.
- If you are interested in participation, call Jean for a call-in number for the above effort.
- Website/Communication Plan: Amber is in the process of moving information into the new website.
- Still trying to develop water festivals in Otero and Crowley county.
- Eagle scout Kyle Freeburg has created a project in the La Veta area; a Flood Expo to be held on March 23. Will share info package with anyone interested in using it.
- 2019 CO Water Plan grant. Putting together webisodes about Fountain Creek, Purgatoire River and others.
- This is the Forum's 25th anniversary. PEPO is supporting the forum as well.

Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative – Mark Shea, Carol Ekarius

Mark Shea

- Received a recommendation from Carol for the ARWC Coordinator position at the Exec Committee meeting.

Carol

- Working with Huerfano county as to ARWC's role there.
- Hayden Pass, supportive of the new coalition.
- COCO has served as acting executive director for the past several months.
 - Chelsey Nutter has come forward and is very interested in filling this position of ARWC Executive Director. Our consensus request is to hire Chelsey to manage ARWC.
 - CSU and Lower Ark have committed some funds this year to pay for this work, as has ARWC. Part of this vote is to figure out a payment structure through membership. You'll go back to your entities with Chelsey, to request long term funding from your agencies.
 - The ED will be employed by COCO, for services to ARWC.

The proposal of Chelsey Nutter as Executive Director of ARWC was approved by consensus.

PROGRAM - Please check out full presentations at www.arkansasbasin.com.

Las Animas County Groundwater Study – Harold Unwin, Branson-Trinchera Conservation District

County Economy

- Ranching operations make up the majority of agriculture in Las Animas County.
- Historically, this land has been transferred through the generations
- Some land previously in agricultural production has been transferred to trophy hunting properties.
- Ranching is the livelihood of many residents in Las Animas County, and provides meat to consumers around the world.

A Growing Problem

- This area has been in drought since 2000, with 8 years of severe drought.

The Conservation District's Concerns

- Is the water supply replenishing itself or is it being depleted?
- Do landowners need to be employing different practices in order to maintain this lifestyle?
- Will we be able to hand our land to the next generation?



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Action Taken

- Partnering with New Mexico State University and CWCB to study the issue
- Well and Water testing
- CoCoRaHS (Community Collaborative Rain Hail and Snow)
- UAS/Drone imagery.
- CWCB grant funding received.

Long-Term Potable Water Supply to the Zinno Subdivision – Jean Van Pelt

The Issue: 1960s – 2017

Joseph Water Corporation served the Zinno Subdivision

- Only service area
- Poorly maintained & neglected infrastructure caused numerous pump failures and water main breaks that caused interruptions in their service
- Residents complained about the poor water quality - Considered by most to be undrinkable

Residents must find a solution or continue to incur:

- Severe restrictions - 43' well
- increases in water rates - Minimum charge of \$125 +
- extended periods of interrupted service due to infrastructure breaks
- Poor Water Quality
- Declining property values

Steps to Solve

Created the Zinno Water Users Association (ZWUA)

February 2016

- ZWUA began negotiating with SCMWD to provide a reliable water supply
- If It could be accomplished for prices comparable to what they were paying for Joseph Water

Residents could not afford to pay for the project by themselves

- Tap fees would be \$11,738 per household
- Households are considered to be below the medium household income (MHI) limit

March 2016

ZWUA signed a MOU with SCMWD

- Defined the financing and construction of a new water system for the subdivision
- SCMWD agreed to pursue grant and loan funding for the construction of the new delivery system

September 2017

- ZWUA received a Court Declaratory Judgment
- stated SCMWD could LEGALLY provide water to the subdivision
- If so, it did not constitute a condemnation of Joseph Water's property or was it unlawful interference with any of their economic interests

As a result of the judgement

- ZWUA agreed to purchase Joseph Water for \$250,000
- each household is currently making a \$22 monthly payment to pay off the debt
- The debt will paid off in 9 years

October 2017

- Joseph Water system was decommissioned
- SCMWD provided a temporary emergency water supply to the subdivision
- SCMWD went through the inclusion process to include the subdivision in the District's service area

Project is complete!



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See full presentation at www.arkansasbasin.com for project costs.

NEXT STEPS/LINKS

- Next Meeting – March 13th, Pueblo Community College
- Arkansas Basin Roundtable: www.arkansasbasin.com
- PEPO: www.pepoarkbasin.com
- Arkansas River Basin Water Forum: <http://www.arbwf.org/>
- CWCB: <http://cwc.state.co.us/Pages/CWCBHome.aspx>
- Colorado Water Plan: <http://coloradowaterplan.com/>