

Ark Basin Roundtable - Environmental & Recreation Committee

Meeting Summary

Monday, March 25, 2019

10:00am – Noon

BLM Office, 3028 E. Main, Canon City

Attendees: Bob Hamel, (Recreation Rep, AROA), Rena Brand (CPW – Water Specialist – SE Region), Mike Weber (Needs Assessment Committee, LAWCD), John Smeins (BLM), Chelsea Nutter (ARWC Exec Director), Amber Shanklin (Envi At-Large Rep, Palmer Land Trust), Tyler Benton (CoSpgsUtil), Ryan Bouton (PhD Student), Buffy Lenth (Central Colorado Conservancy), Amber Weber (Roundtable – Public Edu, Public Outreach), Daniel Omasta (Trout Unlimited).

March Meeting Summary

Statewide Water Supply Initiative (SWSI) update & Basin Implementation Plan Update - Amber Shanklin

- At this stage, CWCB is looking for feedback on future needs vs. available water – for consumptive and non-consumptive goals.
- Hoping to develop an effective project ranking system.
- Next SWSI meeting / webinar is April 19 (see CWCB website).
- Upcoming “C9 summit” (All-Basin Meeting in Winter Park?) is opportunity to list needs, discuss priorities among all basins (Sep 22).
- BLM, USFS, and CPW keeping items on list even if not asking for funding.
- BIP List (per Mike Weber, currently held by Mark McClusky...we should coordinate with him soon).

Grape Creek / DeWeese Dye Reservoir feasibility study -update (by Chelsea and/or input from Daniel Omasta, Trout Unlimited)

- Goal is to submit a WSRF grant request by June 1 for a feasibility study to answer important questions (how much water is needed to maintain flows; evaluate increasing storage).
- Grant request amount - approx 175K.
- Long term...grant & loan combo for future analysis or work.
- For now...need to identify stakeholders.

Hayden Fire Recovery

- ARWC is gathering facts to inform the public on what's happening, what can't happen, and why.
- USFS says the burn area is categorized as “wilderness”, which means it can't be touched. Exploring what to do about this & how to educate the public about it.
- Learning from Hayden experience & using to help with Spring Creek Fire.

Oil Creek Diversion improvements - draft grant request - progress update.

- Need more time to gather info and stakeholders.

-Now looking at requesting a CWCB “watershed restoration grant” in November 2019.

Lower Ark Valley soil health and other projects

-Mike Weber gave a great presentation on projects, pollution trading, soil health, etc. Hoping he’ll give this presentation to our group and full Ark Basin RT group in the future – very informative.

-Lower Ark Valley Watershed group meeting April 12 (tentative date – Chelsea will send more info).

Pueblo Tailwater Fish Structure Maintenance Needs

-Greg Policky, Fishery Consultant, visited the site with TU folks; It was determined nothing should be done for now.

-Agency / Organization updates (BLM, USFS, ARWC, CPW, etc.)

CPW updates

-Salida Low Head Dam & Mt. Shavano Hatchery efforts: Currently conducting a feasibility study to determine best way to bring the hatchery back to pre-whirling disease production levels (now at 1/3 production due to lack of clean water) and eliminate the dam which is a boating safety hazard.

-Great Plains Reservoirs effort: CPW currently working with Amity Canal Co, Fort Lyon Canal, Tri-State Generation, etc. to see how to keep these reservoirs full for recreation and environmental purposes.

Links of interest shared by Ryan Bouton:

CWCB Drought Plan Visualization Story Map

<https://lynker.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=8b8a995c2574439cbef10088a08d12ae>

-If people would like I can give a brief overview of the map and its functionality

2) CWCB Technical Webinars

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tech-webinar-water-plan-analysis-environment-recreation-tickets-53844037967?aff=ebapi>

3) University of Arizona Water Resources Research Center annual conference and YouTube Channel

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLF6659FBB1D1BFC19>

-Next Envi-Rec Committee meeting : Monday, April 29 (BLM Canon City)

Helpful notes about this committee's mission from our July 30, 2018 meeting:

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
- Carol Ekarius (CoCo) 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.

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