

**Interbasin Compact Committee
Gunnison Basin Roundtable Meeting
Virtual Meeting
September 21, 2020**

Voting Members Present:

Thomas Alvey	North Fork WCD
Steve Anderson	Industrial
Bruce Bair	At-Large Member
Mike Berry	Tri-County WCD
Sonja Chavez	At-Large Member
Kathleen Curry	Saguache County
Cary Denison	Environmental
Allen Distel	Bostwick Park WCD
Joanne Fagan	Ouray Municipalities
Steve Fletcher	At-Large Member
Jay Jutten	Montrose County
Austin Keiser	Grand Mesa WCD
Dixie Luke	At-Large Member
John McClow	House and Senate Ag Committees
Chuck Mitisek	Ute WCD
Dan Murphy	Hinsdale Municipalities
Michael Murphy	Hinsdale County
Scott Murphy	Montrose Municipalities
Julie Nania	Upper Gunnison River WCD
Bill Nesbitt	Gunnison Municipalities
Mark Ritterbush	Mesa Municipalities
Mark Roeber	Delta County
Neal Schwieterman	Recreational
Ron Shaver	At-Large Member
Bill Trampe	Colorado River Water Conservation District
Adam Turner	Local Domestic Water Supplier

Voting Members Absent:

Mike Cleary	Crawford Water Conservancy District
Ray Hanson	Delta Municipalities
Jonathan Houck	Gunnison County
John Justman	Mesa County
Steve Shea	Agricultural
Martha Whitmore	Ouray County

Liaisons and Non-Voting Members Present:

Sharon Dunning (Assistant Recorder), David Kanzer (Non-Voting At-Large),
Jedd Sondergard (US BLM).

Public: Russ Sands and Sam Stein (CWCB), Paul Kehmeier (CO Dept of Ag), Jim Plumoff and Cheryl DeJulio (UVWUA), Richard Udd (Public), Martha Moore (Education Committee), Ken Curtis (Dolores Water Conservation District), Keith Caddy and Sue Hansen (Montrose BOCC), Luke Gingerich (J-U-B), Juan Roberto Madrid (Gunnison Environmental Health and Policy – Grad Student), Cindy Dozier and Nancy Fishing (COWFA), Kyle Vanderberg (Redlands Water & Power), Chris Pfenning (Delta Colorado Farmer), Matt Lindburg (Brown & Coldwell BIP), Tony LaGreca (Colorado Water Trust), Ed Millard (SW State/IBCC SWRT).

Welcome

The virtual meeting was called to order at 4:08 p.m. by Chairperson Kathleen Curry.

Roll Call/Introductions

After roll call several more members arrived and a quorum was declared to be present.

Approve Agenda

Mark Roeber moved to approve the agenda as presented. Joanne Fagan seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes from July 21, 2020 Meeting

Tom Alvey moved to approve the minutes of the July 21, 2020 meeting as presented. Neal Schwieterman seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Report from the CWCB Representative – Steve Anderson

Steve Anderson reported on the CWCB meeting, which took place September 15-17. The key takeaway was the budget. The State grant funding for March 2020/2021 will be \$492,000, which is down from an average March funding level of \$1.3 million. The Roundtable WRSF grants are similar. The refresh for the Roundtable grants is going to be \$80,000. There probably will be no refresh in fiscal years 2021/2022 or 2022/2023. The Gunnison Basin's account balance with the \$80,000 refresh will be about \$397,000. The Roundtable needs to consider how to manage these funds. At the last meeting there was some suggestion of saving money to allocate on an annual basis.

Craig Godbout has announced his retirement. Kat Westmiller will be filling in for the time being.

The CWCB approved the Cimarron Canal and Reservoir's State grant for Fish Creek #2 repair.

At the last meeting the Roundtable approved a small increase in scope to the Roundtable grant for the Leroux Creek Reservoir's systems dam outlet rehabilitation program. It appeared as a consent agenda item on the CWCB agenda and was approved.

The CWCB approved some changes to the WSRF guidelines. Much of it was housekeeping and wordsmithing. There will now be a 3-month review window, which should help the CWCB staff review of grants. Submittal of grants will now be on the first day of odd months.

The CWCB has continued to study the feasibility of a demand management program. There were several sessions in August, including a public comment session. On September 2 there was a Board and staff discussion on demand management, and the topic was also discussed in the meeting last week. The staff will come to the Board with an outline for the process going forward for the next year. They are not in any position to come forward with any demand management program at this time. They will continue the feasibility effort and will try to get some answers to questions brought up by working groups this last year.

Tom Alvey asked for more detail on timing for grant applications. If they need a 3-month window, when do submissions have to be made? Russ Sands answered December 1 will be the deadline for any WSRF grant at the March CWCB meeting. All the applications for March will need to be approved by the Roundtable at the November meeting. Russ said they will send out an All-Chairs email later this week. They are in the process of getting the new revised criteria and guidelines up on the website and these should be up by mid-week.

Kathleen Curry asked if there is going to be any public input on when the 2007 interim guidelines and negotiations kick in or is it going to be largely a legal process that is not done in public meetings? John McClow responded the State has a negotiating team and he is a member. They have not yet come up with a plan, but there will be an opportunity for public input. They are still trying to reach a consensus internally on the key issues and then will be doing some outreach to the public. Outreach efforts should start next year.

Sam Stein gave an update report. Regarding the budget, this is likely the only money WSRF will see for the next 3 years and he is urging the basin Roundtables to be conscious of it.

The current executive order extends 30 days past September 19 and is still operating on the safer at home 10-person limit and DNR travel restrictions for state personnel.

The Board had great discussions at their last meeting and the DM workshops. The Board will be discussing next steps at the November 18 and 19 Board meeting.

The CWCB is increasingly using online engagement tools with stakeholders while unable to meet in person. Right now they are conducting a virtual drought tour and would encourage those who are the most impacted by this difficult drought and wildfire season to share their story at engagecwcb.org.

Education Committee Report – Dave Kanzer

Dave Kanzer updated the Roundtable on what the committee has been doing. He gave some statistics on the social media and communication efforts. These efforts have been active and there has been an increase in followers. They are in the process of preparing a newsletter which should be hitting emails this week. They are also building a basin implementation page and Luke Gingerich will provide information. They would welcome any input.

They have been working with Neal Schwieterman and his colleague regarding the school bus issues. They got their grant, and the Roundtable has approved a matching of \$1,000. Dave Kanzer has no specifics at this time on how the money will be distributed, but when things get back to normal they will be able to send school busses to the Eureka Center. Neal added the only school district permitting field trips at this time is Delta County. Combined with a couple of other grants there is currently \$3,000 to help transport children.

Bill Nesbitt asked what ages the Eureka Center is set up for, and if anything is set up for younger kids. Neal said they target 4th graders and older. Anita is the point person. Neal will share Anita's information with Kathleen to share with the group.

IBCC Report and Survey Discussion – Joanne Fagan, Bill Trampe

Joanne Fagan and Bill Trampe both reported the IBCC has had no meetings. Bill stated he has lost interest in what the CWCB is doing as far as moving forward with demand management. The CWCB staff contacted Joanne several days ago about the survey information regarding what the GBRT wanted the IBCC to do in the future, but Joanne had turned it in a month ago. Russ Sands responded the Gunnison Basin was the only basin to hand in the report and was mistakenly included in the email. He stated it was a nice summary and thanked Joanne. The next IBCC meeting is October 21. There will be discussion around the report and demand management at that meeting.

BIP Update/Demand Management Committee Report– John McClow, Luke Gingerich

Luke Gingerich reported on the first BIP meeting of task 3 for the BIP update, which took place on Friday morning. They received good input from the BIP committee. The committee went over the modeling output from the technical update provided by the general contractor. They will be scheduling another meeting before the end of the year where they will get into development of goals, measureable outcomes, and strategies moving forward. Once those are complete they will be able to go through the projects list.

Kathleen Curry thought it was a good discussion and they ran out of time due to interest on the topic. The next meeting will be setting goals for the basin and not prioritizing. Kathleen suggested it would be a good idea to get a list. Cary Denison asked those not on the BIP Committee to contact someone on the committee if they have any input. Dixie Luke commended the committee for moving forward in this difficult time.

John McClow asked what is happening on the Dan Gibbs' high priority Tier 1 project push. Russ Sands replied the goal was a year so they hope by the end of June they will be able to meet the stretch goal of getting 500 projects in Tier 1 and Tier 2. It is underway, and they do a report every month to the Governor on progress.

Colorado Forest and Water Alliance Presentation and Discussion – Nancy Fishering, Cindy Dozier

Kathleen Curry gave an introduction to this item. She has discovered there is no basin-wide map identifying zones of concern relating watershed issues to forest health issues. She spoke with Luke Gingerich, Nancy Fishering and Cindy Dozier about having the basin do some sort of map which would identify the areas of concern and then also identify water infrastructure and connect the two. She feels the Roundtable is qualified to jump into this issue because it has all the counties and various interests represented. She asked the Roundtable members if they want to engage on this issue and provide leadership and coordination on it, and should this be added to the BIP update.

Nancy Fishering and Cindy Dozier gave their presentation on the Colorado Forest and Water Alliance (COFWA). COFWA has been in existence for a little over 2 years, and is made up of 4 members: Club20, the Colorado Timber Industry Association, Colorado Water Congress, and the Watershed Health Investment Partners. It is an informal group which meets to discuss the intersection of watershed health and forest health. COFWA was formed for mutual assistance in advocating at State and Federal levels about policies, funding and programs that support meaningful and measureable improvements in forest health and watershed resiliency benefitting Colorado. They propose to add forest health components to the BIP updates to the Colorado Water Plan.

Roundtable members discussed whether the Roundtable should pursue the mapping proposed by Kathleen. Generally members thought it might be a good idea but the Roundtable might not have the capacity to undertake the project itself, but only chip in. The following comments were made by members:

- Dixie Luke feels permittees with forest service permits are taking care of forest health and they need to be recognized and worked with.
- Neal Schwieterman said he likes the idea, but also understands it could be a huge undertaking and is trying to be conscious of capacities.
- Julie Nania stated there are other aspects of watershed health to consider like erosion, use impacts, and drought patterns, to really make good holistic decisions. The Roundtable needs to prioritize what it hopes to get out of this kind of assessment.
- Cary Denison mentioned the BIP committee has reviewed and talked about the technical tools the State has provided and is determining where those tools can be used. This information is worth knowing and worth working into the decision matrix.
- Sonja Chavez said they are doing some preliminary mapping and some interagency coordination in the upper Gunnison as part of their water management planning process.

Grant Review Committee Report and Recommendations – Tom Alvey

Tom Alvey said there are no grant applications for this meeting.

Kathleen Curry asked Tom to share his thoughts on the new grant applications schedule. Tom said it is unfortunate this change has come at this point. It requires applicants to let the Project Screening Committee know about their application by October 1 and get their plans submitted to the Screening Committee by November 1 so they can get grant money in the summer in order to do projects in the fall. He doesn't understand why the CWCB needs 3 months to wade through already well-screened applications. Anyone applying for next year needs to get their application in as soon as possible in order to get onto this new schedule.

Regarding the discussion about spreading money over 2 or 3 years, Tom said he honestly does not think it will serve the Roundtable very well. He feels they cannot erect an entire framework to screen applications that finely. If the Roundtable has any specific instructions to the Screening Committee they will be glad to hear them. Otherwise they will screen applications as they come in and make recommendations as best they can, and it will then be up to the Roundtable. Everyone should go out to their local water companies and make them aware the time window has changed and they need to get their applications in.

Public Comment

Keith Caddy posted in chat, "Steve is correct, we need to do mapping first."

Ed Millard offered comments in chat on how Roundtables can weigh in on what you would like to see on forest and water in the water plan and in your BIP. He I would like more on water yield and role of forests in declining stream flows especially as temperatures rise. Eighty percent of water in our basin is consumed by forests, not Ag. Ag is around 16%.

Paul Kehmeir posted in chat, "I think the Southwest Roundtable is quite involved with forest health. Perhaps they would have some thoughts on a Roundtable role."

Luke Gingerich posted in chat, "we have a forest health action plan identified in the IPP list now that would map zones of concern."

Other Business

Bill Nesbitt stated he has sat in on the Colorado Forest and Water Alliance breakout meetings at Colorado Water Congress. He stated it is still unclear what they are asking the Roundtable to do. Kathleen responded no one is asking us to do anything. It is something she feels is important because she thinks our watershed condition is deteriorating where we have forest health problems.

Action Items

None.

Future Meetings

Cimarron Watershed Group, Holiday Inn Express, September 30, 2020 at 4:00 p.m. This will be an in person meeting.

The next Gunnison Basin Roundtable meeting is Monday, November 16, 2020.

River District Water Week, September 21-25, 2020 every day at noon. It is a virtual seminar. Navigate to the Colorado River District website for more information.

Upper Gunnison District monthly meeting on September 28 at 5:30 p.m.

BIP Committee meeting, not yet scheduled. A Doodle poll will go out to committee members to find a date.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Roundtable, the meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m.

Mike Berry, Recorder