

**Interbasin Compact Committee
Gunnison Basin Roundtable Meeting
Virtual and In-Person Meeting
Montrose County Event Center
March 20, 2023**

Voting Members Present:

Thomas Alvey	North Fork WCD
Bruce Bair	At-Large Member
Mike Berry	Tri-County WCD
Justin Blair	At-Large Member
Sonja Chavez	Upper Gunnison River WCD
Mike Cleary	Crawford Water Conservancy District
Bobbie Daniel	Mesa County
Allen Distel	Bostwick Park WCD
Joanne Fagan	Ouray Municipalities
Nancy Fishing	Montrose County
Steve Fletcher	At-Large Member
Jonathan Houck	Gunnison County
Austin Keiser	Grand Mesa WCD
Wendell Koontz	At-Large Member
John McClow	House and Senate Ag Committees
Michael Murphy	Hinsdale County
Scott Murphy	Montrose Municipalities
Jim Plumhoff	Industrial
Steve Pope	At-Large Member
Mark Roeber	Delta County
Adam Turner	Local Domestic Water Supplier
Richard Udd	Delta Municipalities
Martha Whitmore	Ouray County

Voting Members Excused/Absent:

Steve Anderson	Agricultural
Kathleen Curry	Saguache County
Cary Denison	Environmental
Chuck Mitisek	Ute WCD
Dan Murphy	Hinsdale Municipalities
Bill Nesbitt	Gunnison Municipalities
Mark Ritterbush	Mesa Municipalities
Neal Schwieterman	Recreational
Vacant	Colorado River Water Conservation District

Liaisons and Non-Voting Members Present:

Sharon Dunning (Assistant Recorder), Raquel Flinker (CRWCD), Jeff Rodriguez (CWCB), Bob Hurford (DWR), Jedd Sondergard (USBLM).

Public:

Al VandenBrink (YWG Basin RT and Rio Blanco BRT), Ashley Garrison (CWCB), Beverly Richards (UGRWCD), Brad Piehl (Consultant JW Associates), Carolyn DeGroot (Crested Butte Town Engineer), Cheryl Cwelich (UGRWCD), Cindy Dozier & Savannah Nelson (PEPO), Craig Ullmann (Applegate Group), Devan Udall / Kyle Vanderberg (RW&P), Evan Jones (DWR), Hannah Holm (American Rivers), Heather Sackett (Aspen Journalism), Hilary Henry (Office of Senator Michael Bennett), Jeff Meyers (YWG Basin RT), Jeff Rodriguez (CWCB), Katie Jagt (Watershed Science & Design UGRWCD), Ken Brenner (YGWRT), Lee Traynham (BOR), Nick Emmendorfer (J-U-B Engineers), Robert Sakata (SP Basin and Sakata Farms), Russ Sands (CWCB), Savannah Nelson (PEPO), Sean Chambers (SP Basin Chair), Steve Anders (USGS), Suzie Bilberry (Delta CD), Tim and Kathy Heavers (Otter Pond), Todd King (Otter Pond)

Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 3:15 p.m. by Chairperson Wendell Koontz.

Roll Call/Introductions

After roll call a quorum was declared to be present.

Agenda Approval

Tom Alvey moved to approve the agenda as presented. Jim Plumoff seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Minutes from the January 16, 2023 Meeting

John McClow requested a correction to the misspelling of Dolores.

Allen Distel moved to approve the minutes of the January 16, 2023 meeting as corrected. Sonja Chavez seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Education Committee Report (Savannah Nelson)

Wendell Koontz welcomed our new PEPO coordinator Savannah Nelson. Savannah is currently coordinating the water education grant. All applicants were awarded grants. Next, she will be working with newspapers and adding content to the website.

Tom Alvey commented on posting of changes to meeting locations. Jeff Rodriguez stated he puts the agenda on CWCB calendar page but will call it out when changing locations.

Grant Review Committee Report (Tom Alvey)

Tom Alvey introduced two grant requests.

a. Coal Creek Dam (Lake Irwin)

This project was formerly known as the Lake Irwin Valve and Piping Project. The Town of Crested Butte is asking for \$150,000 from Basin funds and \$350,000 from State funds. This project has a previous grant from the Roundtable. The project has had delays and new hurdles and the new project calls for removal and replacement of all existing outfall infrastructure. This has significantly increased the design and construction costs of the project.

The Town of Crested Butte has applied for a FEMA grant to cover most of the project cost. In addition, the Town will be contributing cash and in-kind toward the project. This project is listed in the BIP as a high priority. The Screening Committee is recommending full funding.

Carolyn De Groot was present representing the applicant. She discussed the degradation of the tunnel that comes into the valve structure. The structure is very old and will be replaced with the update. The price increased when it was changed to a high-hazard dam.

Allen Distel moved to approve the grant request for the full amount of \$150,000 from Basin funds and \$350,000 from State funds. John McClow seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

b. Otter Pond Dam – Otter Pond HOA

This project and grant request was postponed at the last meeting to get clarity on legal status of the dam. Tom said the Division 4 Water Engineer indicated the DWR does not have a problem with this dam. It does not interfere with any downstream users. The Screening Committee is still split, and by a slim margin recommends approval.

The Roundtable members discussed the private use of the dam, setting precedence for funding this type of request, and the City of Montrose's reason for the relatively small funding contribution is due to it being privately owned property. A representative from the HOA said the reason behind the no trespassing signs were due to liability with the current dangerous conditions around the dam.

Sonja Chavez moved to deny the request from the Otter Pond HOA. Allen Distel seconded and the motion passed. Scott Murphy, City of Montrose, recused from the vote due to City financial interest.

CWCB Updates (Jeff Rodriguez)

Jeff Rodriguez discussed the following dates and topics:

- Drought Summit, May 31 and June 1
- WSRF Grants for April 1 deadline is June 1 (FY Cap)
- All Chairs Meeting, April 3
- PEPO Statewide Initiatives
- PEPO Coordinator Meeting, March 17
- Roundtable Summit, November 14 in Denver
 - C-9 Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/K9DXHTV>
- Turf Replacement Program, deadline March 31
 - Turf Program details: <https://engagecwcb.org/>

Jeff updated the Roundtable on the Basin account funds. There is \$798,500 in the account currently, which does not include a \$30,000 grant approved by the Roundtable and to go before the CWCB for approval at the May meeting and the grant request approved today for approval at the July CWCB meeting.

Basin funding will automatically be refilled. If the Basin account gets below \$750,000 it will get refilled back up to \$750,000 (maximum allocation amount is \$300,000).

Interbasin Compact Committee Report (Joann Fagan, Mark Roeber)

Joanne Fagan sent out her meeting notes to the Roundtable members before the meeting. She gave some highlights of the meeting, including updates from Director Mitchell and the State Ag's office, the Upper Basin is working to implement their 5-point plan, 6 of 7 States along the Colorado River reached a consensus on the BOR framework model, and some other funding opportunities. John McCLOW discussed a draft supplemental EIS to determine a new set of operating guidelines so they can release less water from Lake Powell. Mark Roeber had nothing to add to Joanne's report.

Yampa-White-Green Basin Roundtable Presentation (Alden Vanden Brink, Rio Blanco Water Conservancy District)

Alden Vanden Brink, Jeff Meyers and Ken Brenner with the Yampa-White-Green Basin Roundtable gave a presentation in support of their position paper about the Colorado River Crisis and Short-Term/Drought Relief. They suggested the Yampa-White-Green and the Gunnison Basin Roundtables work together for a more effective message.

Tom Alvey requested the Gunnison Basin Roundtable put the topic on the next meeting agenda to discuss members' opinion on the paper and steps to work together with the Yampa-White-Green Basin Roundtable.

Big Blue Ditch Piping and Diversion Rehabilitation (N. Emmendorfer, J-U-B Engineers)

Nick Emmendorfer, J-U-B Engineers, on behalf of Big Blue Ditch and the Cimarron Valley and River Watershed Coalition, is requesting a letter of support for their WaterSMART Grant application for the Big Blue Ditch Piping and Diversion Rehabilitation project.

Tom Alvey moved to supply a letter of support for the Big Blue Ditch Piping and Diversion Rehabilitation project. Mark Roeber seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Upper Gunnison Basin Wildfire & Zones of Concern Assessment (Brad Piehl, JW Associates)

Brad Piehl, JW Associates, gave a presentation on the Upper Gunnison Watershed Wildfire Assessment. Topics discussed were watershed wildfire hazard analysis and ranking, climate change vulnerability, zones of concern, and opportunities and constraints. They are doing wildfire modeling and then post-fire impacts on a watershed scale. There is an online mapping tool available.

Upper Gunnison Basin Geo-fluvial Assessment & Project Planning (Katie Jagt, Watershed Science & Design)

Katie Jagt is an engineer and a fluvial geomorphologist with Watershed Science & Design. She studies how water changes landscapes over time. Katie gave a presentation on the Upper Gunnison Basin Geo-fluvial Assessment and Project Planning. The main objectives of the assessment are to understand where in the watersheds the landscape itself mitigates post-fire impacts to water, infrastructure, and safety. And in areas where it does not, identify locations where pre-emptively projects can be done to reduce post-fire impacts to water, infrastructure, and safety.

Public Comment

Hilary Henry, with Senator Bennett's office, discussed the Senator's increasing focus on water issues in Colorado and drought impacts.

Other Business

Raquel Flinker announced the State of the River Meeting will start right after this meeting. There will be a presentation on big river issues by Andy Mueller at the meeting.

Future Meetings

The next regular Roundtable meeting is May 15, 2023, 3:00 pm, Roubideaux Room, Delta.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Roundtable, the meeting adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

Mike Berry, Recorder

Action Items

Supply a letter of support for the Big Blue Ditch Piping and Diversion Rehabilitation project.