

INTEGRATED WATER MANAGEMENT PLANNING FRAMEWORK PROJECT

STAKEHOLDER MEETING #1, August 16, 1:30 – 3:30 Glenwood Springs Public Library Conference Room

DRAFT NOTES

I – Welcome and Introductions

Hannah Holm, Coordinator of Colorado Mesa University’s Hutchins Water Center, introduced the project and the purpose of the meeting:

- Project purpose: lay the groundwork for creating Integrated Water Plans, which identify ways to provide water for environmental needs alongside the needs of agricultural, domestic and industrial water users.
- Project Tasks: 1) compile existing studies, 2) spatial geodatabase, 3) stakeholder consultation, 4) guidance document for creation of integrated water plans across the basin.
- Purpose of the meeting: Review progress on task 1 & provide guidance on how to make product of task 2 most useful for stakeholders.

Hannah also briefly described the handout materials, which included a screenshot of the web page for the project and a printout of the database of studies collected so far, which is available (and searchable) on the website.

Hannah then recognized members of the project steering committee that were present, Colorado Water Conservation Board staff, and members of the Water Center team working on the project:

- Ken Neubecker, American Rivers (steering committee member)
- Lane Wyatt, Northwest Colorado Council of Governments Water Quality and Quantity Committee (steering committee member)
- David Graf, Colorado Parks & Wildlife (steering committee member)
- Chris Sturm, Colorado Water Conservation Board, who runs the Watershed Restoration grant program, which funds Integrated Water Plans.
- Gigi Richard, Hutchins Water Center Director, who oversees GIS work for the project
- Ross Fischer, CMU student worker who did much of the GIS work for the project

The rest of the meeting participants then introduced themselves. This is the full attendance list:

Mike Wageck, Winter Park Water & Sanitation District	Chris Sturm, CO Water Conservation Board
Chelsea Brundage, Public Council of the Rockies	Diane Johnson, Eagle River Water & San Dist
Brendon Langenhuizen, SGM	Ken Neubecker, American Rivers
Lane Wyatt, NW CO Council of Governments	Paul Bruchez, Reeder Creek Ranch
April Long, City of Aspen	Richard VanGytenbeek, Trout Unlimited
Luke Gingerich, J-U-B Engineers	Chris Menges, City of Aspen
David Graf, CO Parks & Wildlife	Seth Mason, Lotic Hydrological
Mark Fuller, Reudi Water & Power Authority	Emily Tracy, Candidate for State Senate
Angie Fowler, SGM	Travis Porter, Porter Ranch
Steve Kirk, SGM	Rusty Lloyd, Tamarisk Coalition
Mark O’Meare, Town of Carbondale	Julie Knudson, Tamarisk Coalition
Jessica Foulis, Upper CO Private Boaters Assn	Hannah Holm, Hutchins Water Center at CMU
Morgan Hill, Garfield County	Gigi Richard, Hutchins Water Center at CMU
Karen Wolf, CO State Conservation Board	Ross Fischer, Hutchins Water Center at CMU

II – Review of work to date on the compilation of existing studies and GIS work

Hannah described how the database of studies collected so far is organized, and asked for input on how to improve it by adding more studies, improving the organization, or improving the notes. She explained that the resource guide contains two parts, organized by sub-region: an annotated bibliography and an interactive map that allows users to see GIS data that has been collected for the region.

Gigi Richard and Ross Fischer then demonstrated how to access information and maps on the Upper Colorado River Basin Resource Guide (www.UpperColoradoRiver.org , under the “Colorado Headwaters” tab). They noted that many of the data layers came from SGM, from SGM’s work on the Colorado Basin Implementation Plan, and that CMU was now hosting this information and making it publicly available. Data layers include diversions, irrigated lands, 303(d)-listed streams (meaning that they are officially considered impaired in some way), Gold Medal trout streams, stream segments identified in the Colorado Basin Roundtable’s nonconsumptive needs assessment, in-stream flow rights, planned projects, and recreational in-channel diversions (RICD’s). It was noted that the data are a clip in time from the CDSS and are not dynamically updated as the source data from the CDSS change.

There was discussion about what the objective of the spatial geodatabase is. It was suggested that the maps could be used to answer questions, such as What do we know about this area already? What can we control? What has been done already?

Participants gave the following responses when asked how useful they thought these tools were, and how they could be improved, as well as the most important things to include as the project progresses:

- It would be useful to link the studies to the map, so that if someone clicked on a feature, relevant studies would appear, with a link to click on that would take you to the study.
 - For example, the Grand County Stream management plan includes recommendations per reach. Could these reach-specific recommendations be linked to the stream reaches in the map?
- Show dates and sources of data where not already noted.
- Link out to live, regularly updated sources whenever possible, like the Colorado Decision Support System.
- Include the option to query by hydrologic unit code (HUC)
- It would be useful to be able to access summary tables with information like total withdrawals, that could give a big picture summary. It was noted that this could be accomplished within the current GIS using the attribute table and appropriate queries to summarize the data of interest, but this process is not automated.
 - It was noted that you could use the State Mod model to generate summary statistics, like water supply broken out by stream segment, total stored and total diverted. Do state model runs to get that output.
 - Also could use the GIS-based Colorado River WAS
 - Since this can be generated already, it may not be necessary to add it to this tool, and might not be a good use of resources.
- It would be good to be able to see what flows are necessary to protect an attribute and overlay that information with existing data, such as from CDSS. Adding information from the Watershed Flow Evaluation tool was discussed.
 - Could the results from the Tool be integrated into the map at a reach scale?

- Metrics that show how often instream flows are met could be pulled from the Tool. The map could illustrate if the flow conditions support the metric that you're trying to support.
- Beyond noting where there's an in-stream flow right, it would be good to be able to see how often that flow right is met.
- Being able to see what factors the client, whoever that is (both consumptive and non-consumptive), can control, is helpful.

III – Next Step: Spatial Geodatabase

Participants were asked what they would want to see in the maps that are created through this project in order to help make decisions about whether and where to pursue an integrated water management plan.

Chris Sturm noted that it's necessary that the plan be mission driven and have clearly defined objectives.

Need more information relevant to irrigators

It was noted that the information gathered so far is almost entirely related to the environment, without much agricultural information. Participants noted that the starting point for an integrated water plan could be looking at the needs of irrigators, not just the needs for water in streams. Given that irrigators control most of the water, it was noted that they need to have a reason to participate in the process. In addition, water rights holders could be made nervous by all the data about stream needs, since that implies that the water to fulfill those needs would have to come from them.

The integrated water plan under development on the North Fork of the Gunnison involves asking irrigators about how the system could work better for them, and some of those improvements could benefit the environment as well. The stream management plan in Grand County is reported to have been beneficial to irrigators, because the county places a high value on agriculture.

Suggested sources of information on agricultural water shortages included:

- Water commissioners
- Conservation districts
- Colorado River District staff
- Call histories on streams – avoiding calls could be an

NRCS has lots of information related to irrigation efficiency, but has to keep it confidential.

Information of interest to municipalities

Municipal representatives noted that their communities had an interest in keeping water in local streams, but could potentially at times sweep the stream between their diversion point and wastewater treatment plant, which could be remedied through efficiency measures. So overlaying information about stream needs with where diversion and return points could be helpful.

Municipalities also are affected by low streamflows at their sewage plant discharge points, because less water to dilute their effluent can make their discharge permits stricter. Information on impaired stream segments alongside discharge points can help reveal where these issues exist.

One caution is that making information on diversion points widely available could complicate compliance with public safety and security requirements.

Recreational information

Information relevant to boater streamflow preferences is collected by American Rivers and CO Recreational Outfitters Association.

Other information to include

Participants also suggested adding the following information:

- Floodplain shapefiles
- Groundwater information
- Data from CPW
 - Location of cutthroat trout populations and other species including additional attribute data
 - Several other CPW datasets (David Graf)
- CO Natural Heritage Program – wetland maps
- Links to other databases
- Information on water banking and other innovation possibilities.
- Information on call history from conversations with water commissioners and ag users, but beware of anecdotal information.
- Written summary for each watershed and subwatershed to flag the take home message for each watershed.
- CDPHE – permits division for NDPES permits
- Groundwater – alluvial wells

It was also suggested that CRWCD be contacted for other possible insights and data sources.

Use of information

It was noted that there's a lot of value in bringing together credible information that all stakeholders can accept in order to minimize arguments over data and move more quickly into discussions about potential actions.

Topic priorities voted on with stickers for the spatial geodatabases, + comments attached to topics

This was done at the end of the meeting; not all participated. The X's indicates stickers placed.

Water quality XX	Agricultural uses and shortages X
Fisheries X (native vs. non-native; sport fish; recreational value)	Agricultural shortages X
Macroinvertebrates X	Irrigation infrastructure
Riparian vegetation XXX	Recreational preferences XXX (access points; flow levels necessary/ proposed; State Parks that are water dependent, i.e. Sylvan Lakes, Island Acres, Joe Robb, etc.)
Channel stability	
Flow alteration	Industrial uses
Municipal vulnerabilities	Others?

IV – Next steps for project

Hannah explained that this input would be taken into account in developing a draft RFP for Task 2, development of the spatial geodatabase, which will be circulated to all participants in this meeting as well as the project steering committee, for comment. The RFP will then be issued this fall. Another stakeholder meeting will then be held sometime in the spring in order to check in on progress and make sure it is going in a productive direction.

The final step in the project will be to hire a consultant to develop a guidance document for how communities can combine the information tools with a stakeholder process to develop successful integrated water management plans.

V – Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:30.