

**WATER ACQUISITION COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY
12/21/98**



BA WTR

Mail Stop 60189

MEMORANDUM

TO: Water Acquisition Committee Members, Interested Parties

FROM: George Smith, Chairman

SUBJECT: Water Acquisition Committee Meeting Notes & Follow up Materials

DATE: December 28, 1998

I have attached draft meeting notes from the December 21, 1998, Water Acquisition Committee Meeting.

The next meeting of the Water Acquisition Committee will take place as follows:

TIME: 9:30 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

DATE: February 25, 1999

LOCATION: Fish and Wildlife Service Office

2nd Floor Conference Room

134 Union Blvd.

Lakewood, Colorado

Note: The agenda for the February meeting is being developed and will be mailed in late January. If you have comments on the meeting notes, or have items for the agenda, please contact me at (303) 236-5322, ext. 235.

Attachments: Draft Meeting notes

bcc: WR rf

RO rf

WTR:GSmith:jb:12/28/98

Draft Meeting Notes

Members in attendance: Robert Wigington, Tom Pitts, Malcolm Wilson, Brent Uilenberg, Randy Seaholm, Sue Uppendahl, Ray Tenney, Henry Maddux, Angela Kantola and George Smith.

The agenda was modified to allow the discussion of conditional water rights to take place first to accommodate a participant who had to leave early.

Conditional Water Right Discussion (Should this item be removed from the RIPRAP?)

Robert Wigington lead off with some thoughts on the relevance of conditional water rights and linkages to the flow filings throughout the basin. Robert felt that discussions of the acquisition of conditional water rights were now less important since the FWS has withdrawn support for the baseflow and recovery flow water rights for the 15-mile reach. Robert expressed an opinion that it is pointless to move ahead with retirement of conditional water rights when there appears to be no junior instream water right to bolster by acquiring and retiring senior conditional water rights.

Randy Seaholm briefed the WAC on the status of the 15-mile reach Instream flow filing. The CWCB board will be discussing the filing at their January 27 and 28, 1999 meeting. A water referee is going to review the filing in February and the water rights will likely be referred back to water right court. Without support, the water court Judge will likely vacate the filing and the 1995 filing date will be lost.

Tom Pitts mentioned that he had been talking to a number of interested parties about options for future flow protection based upon the status of the filings and the discussion relevant to the programmatic Biological Opinion. During the pursuing discussion, a number of options for flow protection were identified and discussed. Tom Pitts is going to draft a memo relevant to the options and set up a meeting to begin discussion of the options available to the Recovery Implementation Program. Tom will be setting up a conference call or meeting as soon as possible to discuss the issues and develop some options to present to the CWCB at the January meeting and will circulate the list of possible options in early January.

Review of WAC Annual Reports

Because of time constrains, review of reports was limited to reports which WAC members had questions.

The status of activities under the Grand Valley Management plan was questioned and Brent Uilenberg informed the WAC that little on the ground progress had been accomplished. Brent did point out that both the Biological Assessment and the contract with the CWCB for funding the maintenance had been completed except for signature and the project would be ready to go just as soon as the 15-mile Reach Programmatic Biological Opinion is completed.

Malcolm Wilson questioned the progress in developing the flow matrix specified in the Pitlick 15-Mile Reach Channel Monitoring study Scope of Work No. 85 and questioned why the matrix would not be completed until the final years of the study. The chairman informed the group that the scope of work for the project was renegotiated in 1997 to include the matrix that Dr. Pitlick had agreed to become a part of the coordinated reservoirs group and would report findings back to the group as the matrix was being formulated. Tom Pitts suggested that Dr. Pitlick begin filling in whatever he could of the Matrix annually.

Review of USGS Gages

The WAC reviewed a list of gages prepared by Bob Norman and Paul von Guerard of the USGS. The WAC requested that the list be limited to gages which are important to the recovery program and a breakout of the gage funding be provided. The chairman identified a need to possibly co-sponsor the installation of a new gage on the Price River near the confluence with the Green River. The Price River at Woodside gage was eliminated by USGS about 5 years ago when funding got tight.

Update on Geomorphology Peer review activities.

The chairman informed the committee that 2 scopes work had been forwarded to the panel for review. The scopes were Dr. Pitlick's work (Scope of Work # 85) in the 15 mile reach and the 1999 channel monitoring scope of work #17. Reviews were received from 2 reviewers. The 2 reviewers found the Scope of Work submitted by Dr. Pitlick to be good to excellent and did not recommend any major changes (reviews and comments are attached). The review of the 99 channel monitoring Scope of Work was less favorable and several modifications were recommended (see discussion below re.99 channel Monitoring Scope of Work). In other action, the peer review panel was asked to review the geomorphology and recommendations sections of the Flaming Gorge synthesis document. The review is to be completed by February 1, 1999.

Review of the Proposed changes to the 99 channel Monitoring Scope of Work

Based upon the peer reviewers comments and a need to include some ongoing work on embedness in the channel monitoring program, the channel monitoring Scope of Work was revised and submitted back to the peer reviewers. The peer reviewers were asked to confirm the need to continue the embedness work for another 6 years.

97 Channel Monitoring Report Review by the WAC

The chairman briefly reviewed the objectives of the 1997 channel monitoring work. Ray Tenney, who had been one of the peer reviewers, felt that the report went beyond the objectives of the Scope of Work and felt that the report should be limited to documenting the survey work called for in the Scope of Work. The chairman pointed out the these issues were addressed point by point in the peer review comments and answers by the author. The report was referred back to the WAC for further review. Additional comments will be accepted up to January 8th 1998.

Next Meeting

The next WAC meeting is scheduled for February 25, 1999 at the Fish and Wildlife Services office in Denver.

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Develop a table of gage funding.

2. Develop a list of projects for peer review.
3. Follow up with peer reviewers.

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