**Ark Basin Roundtable - Environmental & Recreation Committee**

**Monthly MEETING SUMMARY**

**Monday, Jan 21, 2021**

**10:00am – 12 noon**

**via Zoom**

**Attendees:** Bob Hamel, (Ark Basin RT Recreation Rep, AROA),Rena Griggs (CPW – Water Specialist – SE Region), Amber Shanklin (Ark Basin Envi Rep, Palmer Land Trust), Mark Shea (ARWC / Roundtable), Carol Ekarius, ARWC), Tyler Benton (CoSpgsUtil), Misty DeSalvo (USFS), John Smeins (BLM), Chris Reichard (Tri-State), Lisa Walters (Co Springs Util), Dan Omasta (Trout Unlimited), Steve Wolfe (Trout Unlimited), Natalie Allio (Upper Ark Watershed Partnership), Ryan Bouton (PhD Student), Will Koger (Forsgren).

**Environmental & Recreation Committee Purpose and Goals: (see end of document).**

**January Meeting Summary:**

1. Voluntary Flow Management Program Update (Bob & Rena) – Parties review the Agreement every 5 years, had a meeting on Jan 6 (SECWCD, AROA, CPW, TU, Chaffee County, with BOR present). No changes to the agreement, VFMP is working well. We only had discussions on details like April/May flows for fish and ramp-down flows for fish, which we will watch carefully for the next 5 years.
2. Use of Tennessee Rail Line through Browns Canyon (Bob) – concerns of what is being transported and how frequently, as spills into the Ark river are possible. Comments due Jan 28; Discussed role of E-R Committee & Ark Basin RT to write letter expressing to conduct a thorough environmental review prior to decision-making.
3. BIP update (Mark) – team is reviewing objectives and drafts should be coming in early Feb. We discussed the importance of understanding the value of west-slope imported water.
4. Great Plains Reservoirs – lakes in Kiowa county (north of Lamar, CO) are popular with fishing and recreation when full, but hard to keep these Ag storage vessels full. Rena is attending monthly meetings hosted by Kiowa Co Economic Development team. It was agreed, 2021 will be a phase of learning about water storage, movement, costs, etc.
5. ARWC update (Carol): Monarch pass tree removal now on hold. 186 of 320 acres complete in 2020. Contractor to finish in 2021. Forest Service may add acres. If you received a doodle poll from Carol for an ARWC meeting, please take the poll. Meeting purpose is to discuss ARWC strategic leadership.
6. Upper Ark Watershed Partnership update )Dan Omasta & Steve Wolfe (Trout Unlimited) & Natalie Allio: CWCB watershed restoration grant request has (almost) been approved. Natalie stated they’re currently working on stakeholder outreach.
7. Pueblo Tailwater Erosion Project (Trout Unlimited): TU is currently doing informal monitoring of erosion at sites downstream of the dam…specifically 4 spots north of Valco Bridge.
8. Ryan Bouton got his PhD! Congratulations! Ryan did a study on the Economic Impacts of the Voluntary Flow Management Program. He’ll send a link to his paper for anyone interested.

**Mark your Calendar:**

**Next Ark Basin Roundtable – Feb 10, 12:30-3:00pm, GoTo meeting.**

**Next Envi-Rec Committee Meeting, Monday, Feb 22, 10am – Noon.**

**About us:**

**Arkansas Basin Roundtable – Environmental & Recreation Committee Purpose and Goals**

**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 Griggs (CPW) Vice-chair

-Amber Shanklin (Palmer Land Trust) Ark Basin Roundtable At Large Environmental Rep

-Mark Shea (CSU)(ARWC) Ark Basin Roundtable Chair

-Matt Heimrich (Palmer Land Trust / Otero Farmer) and Ark Basin Roundtable Vice Chair

**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.

**Envi-Rec 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.