

HUERFANO COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Minutes of Board Meeting July 22, 2024

Monthly meeting of the Huerfano County Water Conservancy District, which had been properly noticed and was available for public participation, was called to order by President Scott King in person at Walsenburg Housing Authority, 220 Russell St, Walsenburg on July 22, 2024 at 6:00 pm.

Directors: Scott King, Kent Mace, Lonnie Brown, and Sandy White (by zoom). Beaver Edmundson was excused with an illness.

Secretary: Carol Dunn; **Engineer:** Steve Smith (by Zoom); **Attorney:** Ryan Farr

Guests: Doug Brgoch, Roger Tinklenberg, Ed Diemer, Kristan Lowe, Gary Vezzani; and David Steffan and Christy Wyckoff (by Zoom).

Agenda: Approved on a Mace/Brown **motion**.

Minutes: The minutes for the June 17, 2024 board meeting were approved on a Mace/Brown **motion**.

Financial Reports: The financial reports were accepted as presented on a Mace/Brown **motion**.

Old Business: Thorne Ranch– King determined this would be discussed in executive session.

New Business: There were no new water cases.

DWR river reports: For the Huerfano River, Ed Diemer reported: 29.8 cfs on the upper Huerfano at Manzanares, 28 cfs at Badito, and 0.52 cfs at I-25; on the Cucharas: 18.1 cfs at Boyd Ranch, 11.3 cfs at Harrison Bridge, and 0 cfs at Highway 10.

Spring Creek Fire Mitigation Project: David Steffan reported by Zoom that the task at the Middle Creek channel restoration and around the diversion is complete. He is working with Ed Diemer to get water to sprinkle the site's seeding. David Andreatta will be installing a fence to keep out cattle; the State Land Board will be notified. Steffan will be planting some more willow cuttings at the project area. Brgoch reported that Sky Hi Engineering got the flood warning gages notification system working.

PL-566: According to Blongshia (Cha) Lindsay, the PIFR was accepted by NRCS, but no funding will be forthcoming until the next federal fiscal year (after October 1, 2024).

HUERFANO REGIONAL AUGMENTATION PLAN

Aug water application: Christy Wyckoff attended by Zoom to answer questions about the Flying Rockin' R (FRR) application. Applegate Group has a draft engineering report on the application. The estimate of aug water needed is 6 af. FRR will need a second application for Tier 2 water for an initial fill of Fuchs Pond, possibly each summer. Wyckoff is considering lining the pond. The miles-long ditch will have evaporative loss. A low level outflow will be needed or devices to shut off water to Rainbow and Wolfano ponds if water is not available, although unlikely. Based on the discussion with Wyckoff, Smith will edit and finalize his report for the August HCWCD meeting.

Augmentation water: The use of aug water by Siete Inc. has dropped off. As of this date, 38 af of Tier 1 water are available. 1.1 cfs is being diverted, with 0.5 cfs going into the recharge pond.

SCG alternate pumping schedule: The lease, amended in January, specifies SCG must report when the pumping schedule changes; Applegate needs to evaluate. This is the third schedule change SCG has submitted, but the revisions still result in staying below the contracted 5 af.

Admin fee: Board asked Dunn to amortize the pumphouse repair expense over two years and recalculate the 2025 participant administration fee to be reviewed at the August meeting.

SMAF: Kent Mace reported the reservoir level is down; Applegate will decide on adding Twin Lakes water to it. Mace Land & Water (Amos) continues to work on programming and is recalculating for installing the valve. Kent plans to purchase the valve soon. For diligence purposes, Brgoch suggested exchanging as much water as possible and documenting it for the future. Farr and Smith have been communicating with the Twin Lakes share owners about if/when to lease water this year.

SMAF liner repair (Rural Development grant) – Applegate is working on the preliminary construction report (PCR) and environmental report (ER); Smith reported they will be ready soon. The report includes explaining the alternatives of riprap and Shockcrete that were considered. Applying Shockcrete has the potential to damage the existing liner. Local or imported riprap could be used. Kent will check with a local ranch to see if they have 8” rock that we could acquire.

REPORTS

Arkansas Basin Roundtable: King and Brgoch reported on the meeting, including principles of preserving the Arkansas River. The Roundtable decided to support the Southeastern WCD in its fight against the plan by City of Aurora to move water out of the Arkansas Valley.

Water consultant: Brgoch reported the NRCS revegetation plan for Wm Craig Ranch isn’t ready yet, and nothing will be done on the ground until November 1. Dryup acres will need to be fenced. When the NRCS plan is ready, the owner’s signature will be required in addition to HCWCD. Expense for the reveg work will be added to the 2025 budget.

Public comments: None.

Break – King called a break at 7:35; meeting reconvened at 7:52 pm.

Bills: On a Brown/Mace **motion**, the board authorized the transfer of up to \$1,500 from ColoTrust savings and approved paying the following bills, which total \$65,856.99:

Mountain States Financial group: monthly bookkeeping	\$220.00
Monson, Cummins, Shoheit, Farr: mtg, aug plan, flood gages, Pryor Ditch, Thorne	\$3,777.50
Dunn Write: contract, mileage, internet, phone, office supplies, flood gage padlocks	\$2,329.67
Admin SCF Flood Mitigation grant	\$67.20
La Veta Carpentry: monthly website admin	\$200.00
Monthly water analyst contract	\$200.00
Doug Brgoch: monthly water consultant contract	\$500.00
Applegate Group: Aug plan acctg, admin, bd mtg, Ranch/Kenney, flood warn gages	\$3,562.75
David Steffan: SCF remediation coord, seeding, planting, including materials	\$2,328.32
Double M Excavating: SCF mitig project, earthwork @Middle Crk flood emerg gage	\$65,000.00
Sadie Wardell: Wm Craig water operations; ditch ripping and maintenance	\$735.00
Mace Water & Land: Operations of SMAF June 2024	\$1,862.00
Div Mining Reclamation: permit renewal	\$792.00
Sky Hi Engineering: flood warning gage management	\$9,711.25
San Isabel Electric: monthly usage at SMAF	\$172.52
Spanish Peaks Library: monthly rent	\$65.00

At 7:54, there was a **motion** by Mace/Brown and approved by the board to go into executive session, joined by HCWCD consultant Brgoch and engineer Smith to discuss purchase of Thorne Ranch water rights and any commensurate terms and conditions therewith; receive legal advice concerning HCWCD comments to the proposed decree proved by Welton Land & Water Company in water case 23CW3051. Discussion in the executive session included purchase, acquisition, lease or sale of real, personal or other property interest as in CRS 24-6-402(4)(a); conference with an attorney representing the District for the purposes of receiving legal advice on specific legal questions pursuant to CRS 24-6-402(4)(b). On a Mace/Brown **motion**, the executive session was closed at 9:22 pm, and the regular session was reconvened.

By a Brown/Mace **motion**, the attorney was advised to amend the offer to Huerfano County for the Thorne Ranch. On a Brown/Mace **motion**, HCWCD will send a response to Welton Land & Water Company.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:23 pm.

Scott King, President

Carol Dunn, Secretary