

HUERFANO COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

Minutes of Board Meeting

August 26, 2024

The 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 August 26, 2024 at 6:01 pm.

Directors: Scott King, Kent Mace, Lonnie Brown, Beaver Edmundson, and Sandy White (by zoom).

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

Guests: Doug Brgoch, Roger Tinklenberg, Kristan Lowe, Jim Alt, Dale Lyons, Lenna Rauber; and David Steffan (by Zoom).

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

Minutes: The minutes for the July 22, 2024 board meeting were approved on a Mace/Brown **motion**, with Edmundson abstaining.

Financial Reports: Financial reports were accepted as presented on an Edmundson/Brown **motion**.

Old Business: Thorne Ranch—Carl Young contacted Dunn just before the meeting to affirm Huerfano County still wants to discuss disposition of Thorne Ranch – preferably at a meeting in mid- to late-September. Farr will contact the County’s attorney to confirm and arrange it.

New Business: There were no new water cases.

DWR river reports: For the Huerfano River, Lenna Rauber reported: 32 cfs on the upper Huerfano at Manzanares, 18 cfs at Badito, and 1 cfs at I-25. On the Cucharas: 9 cfs at Boyd Ranch, 1 cfs at Harrison Bridge, and below readable pool (0) at Highway 10.

Futile Call: Rachel Zancanella sent an email to water users in the Arkansas Basin about futile call that is more consistent with statute. It seems like a more individual approach to deciding what is “futile”, considering time, place and manner of water reaching a senior water right holder. This is vague in the statute as well. There will be a collaborative effort to make sure the call truly qualifies as futile. The State and Division Engineer are determining a selected path forward.

Leased water: Farr will communicate with the Twin Lakes share owners about moving the leased water to another reservoir. Brgoch reported a lack of exchange potential on the Huerfano and Cucharas Rivers.

Spring Creek Fire Mitigation Project: David Steffan reported by Zoom that the latest rainstorms have not damaged the Middle Creek project site or the seeding. Steffan will be monitoring the project area and reseeding as needed through the rest of summer and fall. He will also be helping with the final report for CWCB. Marysville, Utah expressed interest in the HCWCD emergency warning gage project.

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

Augmentation water application: Smith reported on his engineering report for the Flying Rockin’ R (FRR) application. The amount of aug water required will be 6.3 af (rounded to 7), which includes evaporation from the 1.6 mile-long Inlet Ditch. A second application for Tier 2 water will be needed for an initial fill of Fuchs Pond. **Motion** by White, seconded by Brown, to submit the app to DWR for review. Approved. Smith reported there is water to cover obligations: 38 af Tier 1 + 7 af Tier 2 = 45 af, which is less than the dry year yield on Wm. Craig right.

Bear Bottom: The participant wants to renew the lease for water used in the SWSP for their other ponds not covered by Tier 1 water. The 4 af of excess water is called Tier 3 and there is water available for this lease. On a Brown/Edmundson **motion**, the board approved the renewal lease subject to including the admin fee set at this meeting.

Diligence: The Wm. Craig water exchange was conducted in the past month. That can now be made absolute in the next diligence filing.

Admin fee: Dunn amortized the pumphouse repair expense over two years and recalculated the recommended 2025 participant administration fee. Farr advised that Tier 2 should be weighted at 1/8 of Tier 1 for calculations. On a White/Brown **motion**, the Tier 2 rate will be 12.5% of the Tier 1 admin fee; Tier 3 (excess) will be 7% of the Tier 1 admin fee. Board approved.

There was discussion about adjusting the price of water due to **inflation**. This will be discussed further at future meetings. Farr will research and prepare a consumer price index report.

SMAF: Amos Mace, Mace Water & Land (MWL), finally resolved the discharge valve measurement problem. A factory preset by Watertronics was the issue, not the Siemens meter. MWL set a limit on gallons per minute releases to optimize the meter.

Liner repair (Rural Development grant) – Applegate will be done soon with the preliminary engineering report and environmental report for USDA Rural Development grant process. Kent is checking to see if we can get the required rock from the County pit near Gardner.

Recharge pond: The socks need to be cleaned on the infiltration structure put into place last year.

REPORTS

Arkansas Basin Roundtable (ABRT): King and Brgoch reported on the meeting, including a presentation on “climate change” by the State Climatologist. The DNR C9 Water Summit will be held October 1-2. Bill Tyner is working on a channel morphology study on the Arkansas River to the Kansas border for the Ag-Municipal committee of the ABRT.

Water consultant: Brgoch reported the NRCS revegetation plan for Wm Craig Ranch dryup acreage is still pending and expected in September; nothing will be done on the ground until after November 1. When the plan is ready, the owner’s signature will be required in addition to HCWCD. Dryup acreage will need to be fenced. Expense for the revegetation will be added to the 2025 budget. Kent Mace suggested also getting an NRCS plan developed for the SMAF site final reclamation.

Public comments: None.

Break – King called a break at 7:34; meeting reconvened at 7:44 pm.

Bills: On a Mace/Edmundson **motion**, the board authorized the transfer of up to \$37,500 from ColoTrust savings and approved paying the following bills, which total \$37,718.10:

Mountain States Financial Group: monthly bookkeeping	\$220.00
Monson, Cummins, Shohet, Farr: mtg, reservoir funding, exchange case	\$6,755.50
Dunn Write: contract, mileage, internet, phone, office supplies, audit	\$2,194.95
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, apps; bd mtg; Pryor; SCG; SMAF liner	\$22,532.50
David Steffan: SCF remediation coord, seeding, planting, final	\$644.00
Sadie Wardell: Wm Craig water operations; ditch maintenance; new battery	\$869.44
Mace Water & Land: Operations of SMAF July 2024	\$1,862.00
American Express: Aristata Communications annual IP at SMAF	\$1,079.71
IOA/Walsenburg Insurance: bonds for Edmundson, King, Brown, Dunn	\$425.00
San Isabel Electric: monthly usage at SMAF	\$170.00
Spanish Peaks Library: monthly rent	\$65.00

There was discussion about the expiring director terms.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:09 pm.

Scott King, President

Carol Dunn, Secretary