

# HUERFANO COUNTY WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

## Minutes of Board Meeting November 24, 2025

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: Walsenburg Housing Authority, 220 Russell St, Walsenburg on November 24, 2025, 6:04 pm.

**Directors:** Scott King, Jacque Sikes, Kent Mace, David Steffan, Lonnie Brown.

**Secretary:** Carol Dunn; **Attorney,** Ryan Farr; **Engineer,** Steve Smith.

**Guests:** Doug Brgoch, Ed Diemer, Amos Mace, Lenna Rauber, Kristan Lowe, Blair Stutzman, Pauline Adams.

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

**Minutes:** With the addition of Steffan to the Thorne tour list, minutes of the October 20, 2025 meeting were approved on a Brown/Sikes **motion**. Minutes of the October 24 Zoom special meeting were approved on a Sikes/Brown **motion**.

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

**Budget update:** Dunn reported the final assessed valuation is \$374,362 higher, resulting in \$796.64 more in 2026 budgeted revenues. This and the resulting Treasurer's fees will be the only changes.

**OLD BUSINESS:** **Thorne Ranch** – The attorney recommended discussing the Thorne Ranch purchase and sale agreement in executive session.

Smith provided a written report on progress on Applegate Group tasks: HCU for Thorne Ranch; pond discharge to the river; ponds' capacity; exchange potential analysis. Brgoch said there should be extensive information about the Thorne ponds, including as-builts, in the Substitute Water Supply Plan that was filed by Shell Oil around 2013. Smith and Farr will try to locate that to save engineering time on the capacity calculations.

**NEW BUSINESS:** **No new water court cases.**

**DWR River Reports:** Lenna Rauber reported on Huerfano River flows: 13 cfs at Manzanares, 9 cfs at Badito, and less than 1 cfs at I-25; the call is #20. Ed Diemer reported on Cucharas flows: 6 cfs at Boyd Ranch, 1.2 cfs at Harrison Bridge, and 10 cfs (questionable) at Hwy 10; the call is still #5. Brgoch suggested asking Pueblo Board of Waterworks if the Twin Lakes exchange water can be stored there. Smith will inquire.

### HUERFANO REGIONAL AUGMENTATION PLAN

**Augmentation Participant updates** – Smith expects an application after January 1, 2026 from Flying Rockin' R for its Tier 2 (3-4 af) initial fill water for its ponds. With commitments for 2026 of Tier 1 (39) and Tier 2&3 (11), the Aug Plan is still within its 52 af of firm yield.

**SMAF** – Kent reported Amos is prepping the pumphouse for winter. The request by Mace Water & Land for emergency readiness, maintenance items, tools and supplies at SMAF was approved, not to exceed \$850, on a Sikes/Brown **motion**.

Amber Gibson, Environmental Protection Specialist with Mined Land Reclamation, has submitted her findings to MLR that we should not be required to disturb the site in order to reseed it. The contract with Horizon for seeding the SMAF property has been cancelled. The request for release of permit has been filed; it is in a public review period until December 3, then an appeal period until January 3, 2026, at which time, in the absence of appeals, it will be released.

**Dryup Seeding, Wm Craig Ranch** – Mace recommended accepting the Horizon Environmental quote of \$15,324 for harrowing and soil conditioning on the dryup acreage at Wm. Craig Ranch. After a Horizon site visit, it was determined there are weeds and dried vegetation that would impede the

seeding. The quote was accepted on a Mace/Sikes **motion**. Brgoch gave an update that the adjusted schedule for seeding the dryup acreage will be mid-December.

**SMAF ballast project:** Dunn, King, Farr, and Smith participated in a Zoom mtg with Jennifer Garcia and Pete Yribarren of USDA Rural Development (RD) to discuss the new water infrastructure improvements project. Smith explained the revised ballast repair engineering recommendation is to use all riprap for the project. The preliminary engineering report has been updated accordingly. The project total is now \$2,704,857: \$968,200 for SMAF ballast repair; \$1,736,657 for Thorne Ranch and water rights and infrastructure purchase. Budgeted match = \$114,800 Ark Basin Roundtable; \$247,557 HCWCD reserves; \$766,500 aug certificates in lieu of cash. The RD grant = \$1,576,000. RD will review the documents we send explaining the Aug Plan and value of aug water certificates and consider allowing the use of aug certificates as match for the grant.

**REPORTS – Ark Basin Roundtable** (Brown, Brgoch, King): At the recent meeting, one Water Plan grant application of the five submitted was turned down. Rachel Zancanella spoke about illegal ponds.

**Break** – King called a break at 7:00 pm; meeting reconvened at 7:14 pm.

**Bills:** On a Brown/Sikes **motion**, the board authorized the paying the following bills, which total \$21,214.24, and transfer \$5,500.00 from ColoTrust:

Mountain States Financial: Bookkeeping	\$250.00
Monson, Cummins, Shohet & Farr: mtg, Thorne Ranch, site visits	\$4,225.00
Dunn Write: contract, mileage, internet, phone, water	\$2,468.11
La Veta Carpentry: monthly website admin	\$250.00
monthly water analyst contract	\$272.40
Doug Brgoch: monthly water consultant contract	\$500.00
Mace Water & Land: Operations of SMAF Oct 2025, valve parts, mileage	\$1,681.84
Applegate Group: Aug plan acctg/projection/admin, board mtg, Thorne, travel	\$3,956.29
Sadie Wardell: Wm Craig water operations, Oct.	\$510.00
RFarmer, LLC: Financial audit of 2024 books and records	\$6,750.00
World Journal: publish 2026 budget and budget hearing message	\$105.60
San Isabel Electric: monthly usage at SMAF (EFT)	\$180.00
Spanish Peaks Library: monthly rent	\$65.00

At 7:15, there was a Steffan/Brown **motion**, approved by the board, to go into executive session, joined by attorney Farr, consultant Brgoch and engineer Smith to discuss legal ramifications regarding seeding at Wm. Craig Ranch pursuant to CRS 24-6-402(4)(b) and purchase and acquisition of land and water rights (Thorne Ranch) pursuant to CRS 24-6-402 (a).

On a Brown/Sikes **motion**, approved by the board, the executive session was closed at 8:08 pm and the regular session reconvened.

Mace/Brown **motion**, approved by the Board: Attorney to send Huerfano County the Thorne purchase agreement updated with changes decided during the executive session plus the Surviving Terms Agreement.

Mace/Brown **motion**, approved by the board: Attorney to write a letter to the owner of Wm. Craig Ranch (Jasper Kenney) requiring that cows be kept off the dryup acreage after it has been seeded.

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

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Scott King, President

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Carol Dunn, Secretary