



**DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**

**Colorado River Authority of Utah  
June 23, 2022 --1:00 p.m.  
Utah State University Roosevelt Campus – Multipurpose Room  
987 E. Lagoon Street, Roosevelt, UT**

**1. Call to Order—Gene Shawcroft, Chair**

Mr. Shawcroft called the meeting to order at 1:00pm and thanked William Merkley and the Uintah Water Conservancy District for providing lunch. Mr. Schoenfeld read the names of virtual attendees on the Zoom meeting (Attachment #1 – Attendee List) and in person attendees briefly introduced themselves.

**2. Welcome – Dan Larsen, Uintah Basin Member**

Mr. Larsen welcomed everyone to Roosevelt and provided an overview of the Basin. Mr. Larsen explained that in the early 1800's French-Canadian trappers came to the Basin to make their fortune trapping beavers, and that President Lincoln created the Uintah Indian reservation in 1861 and began the relocation of many Utah and Colorado Ute Indians to the Uinta Basin. Mr. Larsen mentioned that energy extraction was a big part of the economy of the Basin, and the first oil well was drilled in Vernal in 1948. Mr. Larsen stated the Basin was home to the Uintah Mountains which supply enough water for 6 rivers and numerous streams and tributaries, all making their way to the Green River. Mr. Larsen also mentioned there are over 1,000 lakes in the Basin and that Flaming Gorge was constructed from 1958-1962 with a storage capacity of 3,788,000 acre-feet and is 91 miles long.

**3. Approval of the Minutes of the April 21, 2022, Colorado River Authority of Utah Meeting – Gene Shawcroft**

There being no comments on the April 21, 2022, minutes, a motion was made by Mr. Larsen and seconded by Mr. Renstrom to approve the minutes. The motion was unanimously approved by the Board.

**4. Public Comment Pursuant to the Public Comment Policy of the Authority (limit of 2 minutes per person) – Gene Shawcroft**

There were no public comments.

**5. Hydrology Update – Bart Leeflang, P.E., Colorado River Program Manager, Central Utah Water Conservancy District**

Mr. Leeflang displayed a PowerPoint presentation showing a net system loss of 7% between June 2021 and 2022 in Lake Powell and Lake Mead. Mr. Leeflang discussed the 6–10-day temperature and precipitation outlook for June 27 – July 1, 2022, which he explained is close to normal. Mr. Leeflang discussed the water year snowpack and precipitation as of June 13, 2022, which shows forecasted inflow of 5.61 MAF, which is 58% of average. Mr. Leeflang explained SWE peaked at 90% of the peak seasonal median on March 24, 2022. Mr. Leeflang displayed slides for the Upper Green River, Uintah and Price and San Rafael River Basins. Mr. Leeflang discussed the status of the Basin with Lake Powell 58% of average and Flaming Gorge 61% of average in unregulated inflow.

Mr. Leeflang reminded everyone that this year the Federal Government is releasing 500,000-acre feet as part of the drought response operation, which is currently happening. Mr. Leeflang displayed a chart showing Lake Powell unregulated inflow for Water Years 1964 through 2022 explaining this will be our third year of poor hydrology where the most probable unregulated inflow forecast is 5.61 maf, or 58% of average. Mr. Leeflang next displayed a graph showing the total storage of Lake Powell and Lake Mead combined, which showed a precipitous decline from the early 2000's where they were almost full to now where they are at 25% of total storage capacity. Mr. Leeflang explained that we are currently releasing water from Flaming Gorge and that as part of DROA, Reclamation has a responsibility to account for the water. Mr. Leeflang displayed graphs showing Flaming Gorge and Lake Powell operations with DROA operations and where they would be without DROA.

Mr. Leeflang discussed the end of calendar Year 2022 Lake Powell and Lake Mead elevations, stating that in addition to the 500,000 acre-feet of water Reclamation is sending to Lake Powell, there's another operational change in the basin called the Cooperative Action, which is a withholding of 480,000 acre-feet in Powell that would have otherwise been sent to Lake Mead. Mr. Leeflang explained how this factors into how Reclamation determines release values in subsequent years and that we are committed to ensuring the way water is accounted for in both the DROA and Cooperative Action and that the Department of Interior and Reclamation will work with the Basin States to determine the manner in which to operate Glen Canyon Dam to ensure the benefits of the drought actions are preserved.

**6. Approval of proposed Colorado River Management Plan FY 2023 Work Plan – Amy Haas, Executive Director & Danny Schoenfeld, Director of Administration**

Ms. Haas discussed the five-year Colorado River Management Plan that was approved by the Board in April 2022 and the commitment therein to provide specific information on the implementation of the Management Plan. stated there were discussions during the approval about providing more specific information on the Management Plan. Ms. Haas introduced the Authority's first annual Work Plan for FY 2023, which she stated was not by itself a full representation of the work of the Colorado River Authority of Utah. Ms. Haas stated the FY23 budget for the Work Plan was \$4,361,000 and the estimated FY23-27 budget was \$17,498,000 both of which are subject to change. Ms. Haas discussed the core elements of the plan: Measurement, Hydrology and Operations, and Drought Mitigation. Ms. Haas explained the Work Plan is supported by funding from several sources including annual and one-time appropriations, in-kind good and services, and appropriations supporting activities performed by the Department of Natural Resources in coordination with the Authority.

Chair Shawcroft asked for a motion to approve the FY23 Work Plan which was given by Mr. Humphrey, seconded by Ms. Hasenyager and unanimously approved by the Board. The FY23 Work Plan is attached as Attachment #2.

**7. Status of 2022 Drought Response Operations Plan and Lake Powell Cooperative Action – Amy Haas & Bart Leeflang**

Ms. Haas presented a slide showing a graph displaying the DROA Plan and Observed/Projected DROA Release and Accumulated DROA Volume for Flaming Gorge. This graph shows the 12-month release of 500,000 acre-feet from Flaming Gorge to keep Lake Powell from reaching critical elevations. Ms. Haas discussed the release, which began May 1 and will continue to April

2023, and explained three fish experiments, including two spike releases, being conducted by US Fish and Wildlife during the release.

Mr. Leeftang explained that for the DROA the first measure is adjusting releases at Lake Powell to achieve an overall balance. Mr. Leeftang discussed the Cooperative Action that was a result of discussions amongst the 7 states that led to an agreement to withhold 480,000 acre-feet in Lake Powell. Mr. Leeftang explained there were challenges with operations that Reclamation was heavily involved with and has implemented accounting measures to keep track of water. Mr. Leeftang mentioned that when recovery of the 500,000 acre-feet of DROA water is an option, the Upper Basin will be able to make recoveries of these volumes. Questions and discussion ensued.

**8. Approval of proposed FY 2023 Authority Budget – Danny Schoenfeld**

Mr. Schoenfeld presented the FY 2023 proposed budget which does not include in-kind or cash contributions the Authority might receive during FY23. Mr. Schoenfeld stated that available one-time and ongoing state funds was \$9,542,300, use of one-time and ongoing state funds was \$4,085,00, and the ending balance of funds was \$5,457,300. Mr. Renstrom moved, seconded by Mr. Larsen, and unanimously approved by the Board to approve the budget.

**9. Report of River Commissioner – Gene Shawcroft**

Mr. Shawcroft discussed the semi-annual Upper Colorado River Commission (UCRC) meeting held June 13-14 in Cheyenne, WY and mentioned a report that was given by a staff member of the Central Arizona Project on the actual cuts that are occurring in Arizona and the Lower Basin generally. Mr. Shawcroft stated that the Department of the Interior has announced that for the system to be somewhat in balance an additional 2-4 million acre-feet must be reduced in some fashion beginning in 2023. Mr. Shawcroft explained that testimony was given at a hearing in Washington and at a conference in Boulder the same information was shared. Mr. Shawcroft displayed a slide showing Basin depletion trends for 2019-2021 that depicts the amount of water used in the Upper Basin vs the Lower Basin (including Mexico). Mr. Shawcroft explained the trends show increasing Lower Basin uses despite significant conservation and contributions and significant reductions in Upper Basin reflecting impacts of drought and stated the imbalance needs to be solved in the Lower Basin states. Mr. Shawcroft stated that until we see a plan or physical action by the Lower Basin to reduce their use why should we continue to look for ways to save water as the solution is a reduction of use in the Lower Basin. Mr. Shawcroft stated that in mid-August Reclamation will issue their 24-month study that dictates how the river will be operated in the upcoming year and the August study is expected to show a significant reduction.

Mr. Shawcroft mentioned the 7-states Principals would be meeting virtually tomorrow with the focus on the current operations and the renegotiation of the interim guidelines. Mr. Shawcroft explained that we have expressed some concern to the Department of Interior about the purpose of a pre-scoping document that will be released within the next few days.

Mr. Shawcroft thanked Brian Steed for his great efforts in helping to stand up the Authority and as Co-Chair on the Board. Mr. Steed thanked everyone for the opportunity to be a part of the Authority and offered his assistance as he moves to a new position with Utah State University Land, Water & Air Institute. Questions and discussion ensued.

Mr. Shawcroft acknowledged Norm Johnson stating he was retiring this year and thanked him for his service.

**10. Report of the Executive Director – Amy Haas**

Ms. Haas decided to forego her report as all topics were covered under the agenda.

**11. Update on Advisory Councils Creation – Cody Stewart, Director of Strategic Engagement**

Mr. Stewart provided an update on the Advisory Councils stating 9 members for each the three advisory councils have been selected and the initial meetings have been scheduled. Mr. Stewart explained the Central Advisory Council will meet on June 24<sup>th</sup> in Price, the Southern Advisory Council on June 27<sup>th</sup> in Loa, and the Northern Advisory Council in Salt Lake City on June 29<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Stewart discussed the communication plan for the Advisory Councils and stated once a year the Co-Chairs of each Advisory Council will present their Council's recommendations to the Board. Mr. Stewart further explained that the Councils would be discussing and deciding how they wanted their meetings held in the future.

**12. Law of the River: Colorado River 101 – Amy Haas**

Amy Haas provided a brief overview of the genesis of the 1948 Upper Colorado River Basin Compact and some of its key provisions.

**13. Other Business**

Mr. Shawcroft suggested a tour of Lake Powell in the fall and requested feedback from the Board on the idea, who indicated support for the idea. Mr. Shawcroft stated he would look into arrangements for this half-day tour to be held during the first two weeks of September.

Mr. Shawcroft mentioned several conflicts with Board members for the September 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting and suggested it be either canceled or held virtually, stating this would be decided at the August 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

**14. Next Meeting Date:** August 23, 2022, at 1:00pm – World Trade Center, 60 E. South Temple, Main Floor Conference Room.

**15. Adjourn** - The meeting was adjourned at 3:12pm.

**Attachment #1 – June 23, 2022 Attendee List**

**April 23, 2021**

**Colorado River Authority of Utah Board Meeting**

**Attendee List**

**In Person Board Members:** Gene Shawcroft, Brian Steed, Dan Larsen, Jay Humphrey, Zach Renstrom, Candice Hasenyager

**Virtual Board Members:** Brian Steed

**In Person Attendees:**

Amy Haas, CRAU  
Danny Schoenfeld, CRAU  
Betsy Coleman, CRAU  
Cody Stewart, CRAU  
Bart Leeftang, CUWCD  
Norm Johnson, Utah Attorney General  
Jordan Nielson, Trout Unlimited  
Mike Fiorelli., Trout Unlimited  
Dex Winterton, MLWUA  
Clyde Watkins, DCWCD  
Keith Hooper, DCWCD  
William Merkley, UWCD  
Jared Manning, Water Rights  
Teresa Wilhelmsen, Water Rights

**Virtual Attendees:**

Dan Hartman  
Lexi Peery  
Megan Nelson  
Dana Van Horn  
Lisa Anderson  
Bryan Dixon  
Todd Adams  
McKenna Murray  
Karry Rathje  
Holly McCall  
Scott McGettigan