
Wyoming Water Development Commission Workshop
Casper, Wyoming
November 8, 2021

1. Chairman Clinton W. Glick called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. Recognition of Members Present to Establish Quorum

Commission Attendance:

Clinton W. Glick, Chairman
Bill Yankee, Vice-Chairman
Ron Kailey, Jr., Secretary - Excused
Liisa Anselmi-Dalton
Robert Choma
Leonard A. "Lee" Craig
Mark Kot
John Lawson
Sheridan Little
Larry Suchor

Advisor Attendance:

Darren Cook, Attorney General's Office

3. Financial Status Report

Fiscal Manager David Ray provided estimated account balances available for appropriation heading into the 2022 legislative session. These balances were calculated after removing estimated non-project appropriations. Preliminary fiscal projections for each account were also provided.

4. Funding Applications – Preliminary Review

Sponsor's Contingency Fund – Account III

It was noted that the Account III Sponsor's Contingency fund can be used to address change orders and project changes to existing dam and reservoir projects, and to supplement an appropriation when a bid comes in high. This is in addition to the slight contingency already allocated for each individual project. Discussion ensued as to the appropriate level of funding in this account.

Little Wind River Storage Study, Phase II

The recommendation for additional funds for the Little Wind River Storage Study, Phase II was a late addition to the agenda. More in depth modeling and alternatives analysis, than originally anticipated, was required, consequently creating the need for

additional budget to complete field work. Discussion ensued further describing the project and the reason for the recommendation.

Account Transfer

A recommendation to transfer \$7 million from Account I to Account II to mitigate an Account II deficit was discussed. Without the transfer, the Water Development Commission would be unable to fund the following projects:

- Cottonwood Irrigation District Pipeline Replacement 2022
- Dry Creek Irrigation District Pipeline Replacement 2022
- Goshen ID 29.4 Pipeline Project Phase II 2022
- Lovell Moncur Lateral Phase II Rehabilitation
- Small Water Project Program – Rehabilitation

Senator Larry Hicks suggested utilizing general funds as an alternative to the transfer. Also discussed was the possibility of funding some of the LaPrele and Leavitt projects in a similar manner. It was noted that the bid opening for the Leavitt project would be January 11, 2022.

Goshen ID Tunnel Rehabilitation 2022

A recommendation to fund \$1,151,500 of design and pre-construction activities to rehabilitate Tunnels 1 and 2 for the Goshen Irrigation District was discussed. The recommendation calls for a 67 percent grant and 33 percent loan. \$1,151,500 is Wyoming's 49 percent share of the \$2,350,000 total project cost. The remaining 51 percent of costs would need to be funded by the Gering-Fort Laramie Irrigation District. Considerable discussion ensued to include BRIC funding denial; legislative footnotes in proposed legislation relative to Nebraska participation; USBR transferred facility issues; loan amount splits; procurement processes, etc.

Interstate Irrigation & Reservoir Irrigation District Improvements Phase II

A recommendation to withdraw the application until 2022 was discussed.

Laramie Valley Diversion Structure 2020

A recommendation to increase the existing budget of \$1,150,000 by \$700,000 to a total of \$1,850,000, available as a 67 percent grant and 33 percent loan was discussed. This is the anticipated cost of moving the diversion to a new location upstream rather than rehabilitating the existing diversion. This recommendation is based upon problems encountered during the design phase, and subsequent findings by the Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Critical Aging Irrigation Infrastructure Assessment

The Commission discussed a recommendation for an assessment of aging irrigation infrastructure around the state in order to develop an ongoing program that addresses aging irrigation infrastructure, develops prioritized projects, identifies funding needs and funding partnerships, encourages and helps entities to secure outside funding, and advances priority projects to Level III status.

The first phase of this project would entail a review of existing studies; evaluations; defining infrastructure criticality; development of comparison criteria; outreach to the owners of facilities; identification of assessment technology needs to evaluate facilities; development of a preliminary list of facilities to consider in future phases; providing a recommended scope and budget for the subsequent phases of work; and identifying potential funding partnerships. The second phase will execute what was defined in the first phase and is anticipated to begin an inventory, evaluation and documentation of critical infrastructure to include a prioritization of projects.

Cloud Seeding: Wind River and Sierra Madre Mountain Ranges 2023 (Ground-based)

A recommendation to fund \$316,000 of ground-based cloud seeding operations in the Wind River and Sierra Madre Mountain Ranges for the 2022-2023 season was discussed. This would allow the State of Wyoming to continue ground-based cloud seeding operations over the Wind River Mountains, and expand the program to include the deployment of two ground-based generators along the western slope of the Sierra Madre Mountains.

The actual winter 2022-2023 operations budget for the program, with expansion, totals \$844,580. Funding is split 37/63 between Wyoming and other Colorado River Basin funding partners, respectively. \$316,000 reflects a 37 percent contribution from Wyoming for program operations and includes an additional \$5,000 for program oversight.

Program Manager Julie Gondzar explained how additional funds from other Wyoming entities are factored into the 37/63 funding agreement between Wyoming and Lower Basin funding partners. Discussion ensued and included the need for a hydrologic assessment and economic benefits accrued, an understanding of other states' operations, continued funding split questions, the possibility of aircraft deployment for this target area, and the need for a handout on the program for outreach purposes.

Cloud Seeding: Operations Hydrological Assessment – Medicine Bow/Sierra Madres

A recommendation to appropriate \$300,000 to fund an assessment on the impacts and benefits of operational cloud seeding activities targeting Wyoming's Medicine Bow

and Sierra Madre Mountains through current and historical airborne operations was discussed. The goal of the assessment would be to quantify the impacts that operations have on precipitation, snowpack, and resulting streamflow in the North Platte and Little Snake River Basins. Additional discussion centered on the quantity of datasets available to perform the analysis, the potential to correlate with stream gaging data, and the effect the recent Mullen Fire would have on the analyses.

5. Adjourn

Commissioner Suchor made a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Anselmi-Dalton seconded; motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Kailey, Jr., Secretary