

MEMORANDUM

TO: UGRWCD Board Members
FROM: Taylor Local Users Group
DATE: May 7, 2020
SUBJECT: Taylor Local Users Group Meeting Minutes

A TLUG meeting was held on May 7, 2020 via teleconference. Attending the meeting were the following TLUG members:

Andy Spann, representative for irrigation users
Pete Dunda, representative for property owners
Ernie Cockrell, representative for Taylor Placer
Mark Schumacher, representative for whitewater recreation interests
Ryan Birdsey, representative for flat water recreational interests
Roark Kiklevich, representative for wade fisherman
Julie Vlier, UGRWCD Board Member, TLUG Chair

Also present: Erik Knight (BOR); Dave Kanzer (CRWCD); Ryan Unterreiner (CPW); Dustin Brown (Scenic River Tours); Jason Ullmann (CDWR); Dan Brauch (CPW); Sonja Chavez and Beverly Richards (UGRWCD).

Julie Vlier (Chair) called the meeting to order.

The meeting summary from the April 9, 2020 meeting was included in the meeting packet. Julie Vlier asked if there were any changes or comments on the summary. Ernie Cockrell provided some changes, and these were incorporated into the document. The summary was finalized with the inclusion of these changes.

Erik Knight with BOR gave the Colorado Basin River Forecast Center water supply and model forecasts. The numbers have changed with the May 1 forecast which are now projecting 73,000 acre-feet of runoff. This is down 3,000 acre-feet from April 15 which has resulted in a dry category classification for this water-year. As a result, they are projecting less than 75,000 acre-feet of storage in Taylor Park Reservoir for 2020.

In the monthly breakdown, the projections were 27,000 acre-feet of inflow for May. This could be a bit higher but would depend upon precipitation throughout the month. There will be more information with future forecasts.

Erik also provided a graph which included inflows, outflows, and reservoir content. Based upon the May 1 forecast, reservoir content is projected to be 95,000 acre-feet maximum, which is 11,000 acre-feet less than completely full or 5 ½ feet below the spillway. This could result in an end of year storage amount of 70,000 acre-feet or less.

In October the Upper Basin received a good amount of precipitation based on historical amounts. This graph showed that the average accumulation amount for November through February declined overall, 81% in November, 116% in December, 72% in January, 91% in February, and 89% in March. We rebounded a bit in April with 158% but historically there is minimal precipitation from snow at this time of year. The seasonal accumulation has peaked at 95% for the year and could drop even further.

The preliminary operation plan for Taylor Reservoir was included in the handouts. The operation plan is now based on a dry year and is projected to result in 70,139 acre-feet of end of year storage. Releases began to increase on April 15 and will continue to increase through June to 350 cfs. These will begin decreasing in July and continue through the end of the year.

Julie Vlier requested feedback from TLUG members on the preliminary 2020 forecast and water needs. Ernie Cockrell (Taylor Placer) felt that we should consider being cautious with releases and try to save water in May and June. This would involve keeping releases below 300 cfs in order to guarantee more storage at the end of the year.

Mark Schumacher (whitewater recreation) asked Erik Knight when the peak runoff may occur this year. Erik said that throughout the basin it is looking like the peak may occur a couple of weeks early, between the middle of May and the beginning of June. Mark suggested no changes at this time for boaters and that we look at plans again in June to decide if adjustments need to be made. Typically, changes are made in September to address storage issues closer to the end of the year.

Andy Spann (agriculture) indicated that water for crops is typically needed before July 15 each year. He has the same concerns as Ernie Cockrell with regard to the 70,000 acre-feet of storage in October. The runoff is coming early and operational plans should be more conservative in order to have more water for next year. Andy felt there should be additional discussion at the June TLUG meeting. Agricultural producers would rather sacrifice a second grow than a good hay crop earlier in the growing season. He does think that June 9 may be too late to make these types of decisions.

Ryan Birdsey (flatwater recreation) said those involved in the marina would prefer to err on the conservative side. Elevations in the reservoir are not going to be an issue for their operations. Although the snow has mostly melted

around the reservoir, Ryan felt that there is still a large amount up on the higher mountains and we may see a secondary runoff when the temperatures warm. He suggested the group remain cautious, particularly with high flows occurring in the next few weeks.

Pete Dunda (Taylor property owners) said that from a homeowner's perspective flows look good now. He thinks the projected releases through July and August are good, but he also thinks landowners would be willing to lower the releases in June in order to conserve storage at the end of the year.

Roark Kiklevich (wade fishing) said that the release numbers are good for river fishing, but it may be necessary to trim to the more conservative side. The group should wait until after the mid-May forecast comes out and make a decision before the June meeting.

Dam Brauch with CPW said there are no issues from fisheries with the proposed releases, so he had nothing to add in that regard. He did mention that the Kokanee releases are often based upon releases out of Taylor Reservoir. They have been watching the flows in the river to make sure there are adequate flows for these releases.

Erik Knight said the May 15 forecast numbers should be available by May 19 but may not include a lot of changes. Julie Vlier said the group should look at the forecasts when they are available and schedule another meeting around that time. At this time, she asked for input from other meeting attendees.

It was the consensus of the TLUG to hold an earlier meeting to coincide with the May 15 forecasts which will be available around May 19. Scheduling the meeting to coincide with the four parties meeting will provide TLUG with additional input for decision-making process. The next TLUG meeting will be held on May 20, 2020 beginning at 10:00 a.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:49 a.m.