



Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District

MEMORANDUM

TO: UGRWCD Board Members
FROM: Taylor Local Users Group (TLUG)
DATE: May 7, 2021
SUBJECT: Taylor Local Users Group Meeting Minutes

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

Ernie Cockrell, representative for Taylor Placer
Pete Dunda, representative for property owners
Roark Kiklevich, representative for wade fishing interests
Don Sabrowski, UGRWCD Board representative and TLUG Chair
Mark Schumacher, representative for whitewater recreation interests

Absent: Andy Spann, representative for irrigators

Also present: Dan Brauch (CO Parks & Wildlife); Dustin Brown (Scenic River Tours); Ryan Christianson (BOR); Tom Fowlds (BOR); David Gochis (National Center for Atmospheric Research-NCAR); Erik Knight (BOR); Ches Russell (Scenic River Tours); Jason Ullman (DWR), Sonja Chavez, Beverly Richards, Jill Steele and Sue Uerling (all UGRWCD staff)

Chair Don Sabrowski called the meeting to order and asked Bev Richards to read the names of those participating via Zoom.

Erik Knight of the Bureau of Reclamation provided an update on Taylor River Operations. According to the Colorado River Forecast Center, the Taylor Reservoir is just under 59 percent of average. Erik reported that there was a big loss of approximately 10,000 acre feet from the last forecast (April 15th). Therefore, they have reduced their prediction for maximum fill to 81,940 feet. Erik noted that this would leave the end of year storage content in the neighborhood of 56,500 feet, so the TLUG may want to consider adjustments to releases. He reported that the snowpack is

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currently at 72 percent of median for 2021 as of May 1, which will likely leave inflows well below average, close to the historical 25th percentile, among some of the lowest years for the Taylor Basin. Erik said the snowpack data shows the whole Upper Gunnison basin at 72 percent of seasonal normal. April Snow Water Equivalent was 29% of average. He said the basin has lost nearly half of the snowpack already. Reclamation predicts that peak run off will be earlier than normal (approximately May 15th) and that the soil moisture content is very dry.

David Gochis reported that NCAR's Taylor basin inflow model results for May 1 show projected inflows dropping from 60,000 to 50,000-acre feet. He also said that above Mirror Lake, he is estimating there is 25 to 30 inches of snowpack and that at the Trail Creek site, he estimates about 15 inches still on the ground, well below normal for this time of year. He offered to share the complete data with the group.

Chair Don Sabrowski asked General Manager Sonja Chavez if the Texas and Willow Creek gages were installed yet and she replied that it now looks like it will be May rather than April. She will follow-up with Steve Anders (USGS).

Erik Knight predicts that if we stay dry, model forecasts for inflow will probably continue to drop.

Chair Don Sabrowski asked if it would be prudent for the TLUG group to make any adjustments to flows at this time? Erik said it would probably be worth some discussion unless all of the TLUG members are already at the minimum flows they can live with. Mark Schumacher said that for rafting, 200 cfs would be the minimum flow needed to make it down the river and that given our poor snowpack, the rafting season may just be over by the end of August. Don said that for irrigation purposes, the need for the water would be more important during the months of June and July, so irrigators would just not be able to fall irrigate if inflows continue to drop. After further discussion, Mark Schumacher made a motion for the TLUG group to wait to make any changes to flow requests until after the next forecast model is released at the beginning of June. The motion was seconded by Ernie Cockrell and carried unanimously by the TLUG members present.

Water Resource Specialist Bev Richards reviewed the new TLUG tab on the UGRWCD website and reviewed where they can find the meeting announcements, summaries, and Taylor Park Operational updates.

General Manager Chavez reported that Jason Ullmann of the Colorado Division of Water Resources will give a presentation about the changes to the Gunnison River spreadsheet at the May UGRWCD Board Meeting on May 25, 2021 at noon. TLUG members and stakeholders are welcome to attend via Zoom. Sonja also reminded the group that the Gunnison River Festival will be June 11-13 with the Taylor River Race on June 11th. She encouraged all to attend.

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Dan Brauch of CO Parks and Wildlife reported that the Spring Creek outlet works rehabilitation project is still on target. Draining is set to commence in late May and continue through June and July. He reported that fishing tags will be removed so that the fish in the reservoir can be harvested prior to complete draw down.

Chairman Sabrowski asked if the CPW will be able to gage inflows to the lower Taylor from Spring Creek. Dan said that he did not believe they have a way to measure that other than just monitoring levels in the reservoir.

Don referenced the meeting summary from the April 8, 2021 meeting that was included in the meeting materials. There were no comments about or changes to this summary.

The consensus of the group was to meet again on **June 9th at 12 Noon** for the next TLUG Meeting.

DRAFT