



Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District

210 West Spencer Avenue, Suite B • Gunnison,
Colorado 81230 Telephone (970) 641-6065 •
www.ugrwcd.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

AGENDA – ANNUAL MEETING

Monday, June 27, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

UGRWCD Offices, 210 W. Spencer Ave, Suite B, Gunnison, CO 81230

ZOOM LINK:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/9tZwpc-6gpzliHdVW3E9OJ9M3L6ubgAlf8MD>

MISSION STATEMENT

To be an active leader in all issues affecting the water resources of the Upper Gunnison River Basin.

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|------------------|---|
| 5:30 p.m. | 1. Call to Order |
| 5:31 p.m. | 2. Agenda Approval |
| 5:33 p.m. | 3. Administration of Oath of Office for Sara Bergstrom, Stacy McPhail, John Perusek and Andy Spann by Judge Ashley Burgemeister |
| 5:40 p.m. | 4. Consent Agenda Items: Any of the following items may be removed for discussion from the consent agenda at the request of any Board member or citizen. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approval of May 24, 2022 Minutes• Monthly Budget Summary• Consideration of Expenses |
| 5:45 p.m. | 5. Election of Officers |
| 5:50 p.m. | 6. Consideration of Resolution Appointing Financial Officers |
| 5:55 p.m. | 7. Re-authorization of Standing Committees |
| 5:58 p.m. | 8. Legal and Legislative Matters |

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|------------------|---|
| 6:15 p.m. | 9. Presentation by Brad Piehl, Forest Hydrologist, J W Associates, Inc. |
| 6:40 p.m. | 10. BREAK |
| 7:00 p.m. | 11. USGS Harmful Algal Blooms Presentation |
| 7:20 p.m. | 12. Basin Water Supply Update |
| 7:30 p.m. | 13. General Manager and Committee Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Treasurer's Report• GM Miscellaneous Updates• Watershed Management Planning Committee• Grant Program Update• Wet Meadows Program Update• Taylor Local User's Group Update<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ June 7th Meeting Summary• Scientific Endeavors• Gunnison River Festival |
| 7:45 p.m. | 14. Miscellaneous Matters <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gunnison Energy Production - Solar Panels• Current Gunnison River Spreadsheet• Newspapers and Other Water Articles |
| 7:50 p.m. | 15. Citizens Comments |
| 7:55 p.m. | 16. Future Meetings |
| 8:00 p.m. | 17. Summary of Meeting Action Items |
| 8:05 p.m. | 18. Adjournment |

Note: This agenda is subject to change, including the addition of items or the deletion of items at any time. All times are approximate. Regular meetings, public hearings, and special meetings are recorded, and action can be taken on any item. The Board may address individual agenda items at any time or in any order to accommodate the needs of the Board and the audience. Persons with special needs due to a disability are requested to call the District at (970) 641-6065 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 3

Administration of Oath

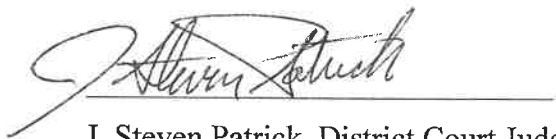
District Court, Gunnison County, State of Colorado 200 E. Virginia Ave Gunnison, CO 81230	Filed in the Combined Court Gunnison County, Colorado JUN 03 2022 Clerenda Fry Clerk of the Court
In Re the Matter of: UPPER GUNNISON RIVER WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT	
	▲ COURT USE ONLY ▲ Case No: C-6518 Div.: 2
ORDER OF APPOINTMENT	

Pending before the Court are four appointments to the Board. The appointments are for Division 6, 7, and 8. The terms of Stacy McPhail- Division 6 (Ohio Creek), Andy Spann- Division 7 (Gunnison River) and two terms, Sara Bergstrom and John Perusek in Division 8 (City of Gunnison). These Board Members have all timely applied for reappointment. There were no other applications submitted. All four are thanked for their past service and willingness to server another term.

After conferring with Chief Judge Michael Gonzales of the 12th Judicial District and others in the community, the Court reappoints Sara Bergstrom, Stacy McPhail, John Perusek, and Andy Spann.

Dated this 3rd day of June 2022.

BY THE COURT:



J. Steven Patrick, District Court Judge

Xc: UGRWCD, Bergstrom, McPhail, Perusek, Spann, Gunnison Country Times, Crested Butte News, Hon. Michael Gonzales- Vial mail & email

STATE OF COLORADO

)

) s.s.

OATH OF OFFICE

COUNTY OF GUNNISON

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I, **Sara Bergstrom**, do affirm that I will support the constitution of the United States, the constitution of the state of Colorado, and the laws of the state of Colorado, and will faithfully perform the duties of the office of Director of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District upon which I am about to enter to the best of my ability.

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I do further swear and affirm that I am a citizen of the United States and a qualified elector of the State of Colorado and reside within the confines of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District.

Sara Bergstrom

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 27th day of June, 2022 by

Ashley Burgemeister
District Judge

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OATH OF OFFICE

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Stacy McPhail

Ashley Burgemeister
District Judge

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OATH OF OFFICE

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John Perusek

Ashley Burgemeister
District Judge

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OATH OF OFFICE

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Andy Spann

Ashley Burgemeister
District Judge

AGENDA ITEM 4

Consent Agenda Items

**Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Regular Board Meeting Minutes
Lake City Fire Station
Tuesday May 24, 2022**

The Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District (UGRWCD) conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, May 24, 2022, at 1:00 p.m. at the Lake City Fire Station, 131 North Henson Street, Lake City, CO, 81235 and via Zoom video/teleconferencing.

Board members present: Sara Bergstrom (via Zoom), Joellen Fonken (via Zoom), Rebie Hazard (via Zoom), Stacy McPhail, Julie Nania (via Zoom), Bill Nesbitt, John Perusek, Michelle Pierce, and Andy Spann (via Zoom).

Board members not present: Rosemary Carroll and Don Sabrowski.

Others Present:

Cindy Dozier

Robert Hurd, Lake San Cristobal Water Activity Enterprise

Sonja Chavez, UGRWCD General Manager

John McClow, UGRWCD General Counsel (via Zoom)

Beverly Richards, UGRWCD Water Resource Specialist

Jill Steele, UGRWCD Accountant

Sue Uerling, UGRWCD Administrative Assistant/Communications Specialist (via Zoom)

1. Call to Order

Board President Michelle Pierce called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. Agenda Approval

Bill Nesbitt moved and Stacy McPhail seconded approval of the agenda as circulated. The motion carried.

3. Consent Agenda Items

Stacy McPhail moved and Bill Nesbitt seconded approval of the consent agenda items. The motion carried.

4. Legal and Legislative Matters

John McClow asked if there were questions on the final, legislative report he provided to the board. There were no questions.

Before the board for consideration and adoption is a proposed policy regarding endorsements by directors. It reads: “Unless a director has been appointed by the Board of Directors to represent the District in another organization, a Director may not identify in any way as a representative of the District without prior approval from the Board.

Bill Nesbitt moved and John Perusek seconded adoption of the Policy Regarding Endorsements by Directors. The motion carried.

Bill Nesbitt said sometimes things move fast, and it would be good if a director has something come up it is good to have the advance time to give the board, or at least staff, a heads-up.

5. Colorado Dust on Snow Program (San Juan Basin), Jeff Derry

Jeff Derry, of the Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies, gave a presentation on dust on snow.

Jeff said that from 2006 to 2022, the daily average melt has gotten 20 days earlier. 2009 was a record dust on snow year. Northern Colorado is currently a lot wetter than the southern part of the state.

When he went out to do sampling this month, Mr. Derry reported that there was no snow to be found in many places that usually have snow in May.

The Rio Grande basin has much more severe dust, going back to early April.

Jeff encouraged the board and public to check out the spreadsheet they have on their website that gives snow and dust information. Also, drought.gov has images and information.

The Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies is about 15 miles from Hinsdale County, as the crow flies, so some of their data could be useful for Hinsdale County.

Joellen Fonken asked if atmospheric thirst describes only air, or soils as well. Mr. Derry said that the evaporative demand in the atmosphere can steal water from plant and soils, especially those exposed to the atmosphere, as opposed to covered by snow.

6. Basin Water Supply Update

Bev Richards gave a brief update to her May 13, 2022 Basin Water Supply Information report.

Hinsdale County, Ouray County, and Mineral County are all now in severe drought. Saguache County is half in severe drought and half in extreme drought.

Sixty-four percent of the state is in severe to exceptional drought, up from 48%.

All streamflow gage sites show they have peaked and are all below the historical average. The exception is the Gunnison River at Whitewater Park gage, which does not have a long period of record.

Taylor Park Reservoir inflows are now projected to be 87,000 acre-feet, down 3,000 acre-feet from the May 4, 2022 projection.

7. General Manager, Staff and Committee Updates

Treasurer's Report: Bill Nesbitt said there is not much to report on. The District is in good shape. The stock market is not good, but it was up this afternoon. He went to Community First Bank in Lake City to look into interest rates, which were at about .5%. A certificate of deposit at the Bank of the West will mature at the end of the year.

Jamie Morgan and Jim Lamenthal are saying that the numbers indicate a correction, not a recession. Most larger cities are at full employment.

The 10-year bond is at 2.724%. The 2-year bond is at 2.464%, which is odd because it is only 30 basis points lower.

General Manager's Update: Prehearing Conference Regulation #35: Sonja Chavez said she recused herself from the recent meeting because she was new and the District had already submitted a prehearing statement with her name on it. The Homestake Mine has agreed to a new, temporary modification. The EPA is not supportive and wants a plan of what they will do to address mine remediation.

Mt. Emmons Mining Company: Coal Creek is attaining the acute aquatic life standard and the Keystone Mine no longer has predicted compliance issues due to on-site improvements and recent reclamation work.

Grant Applications Pending & Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) Requests: Sonja reported that the U.S. FWS Sagebrush Ecosystem Grant has been awarded at \$273,350.

Board action was sought on a bid for roof repair at 210 West Spencer Avenue. John McClow advised that it is not necessary to go out for a public bid. The bid can be sent directly to roofers, preferably three of them.

Stacy McPhail authorized the General Manager to contract with the most qualified, reliable, and financially feasible company. Bill Nesbitt seconded. The motion carried.

Water Roundup 2022 Conference Planning Update: Sonja Chavez said that the conference will take place on Thursday, June 9 from noon – 9:00 p.m. at the IBar Ranch. She asked Michelle Pierce if she would open the conference, speak about the UGRWCD, and introduce George Sibley. Michelle agreed.

Watershed Management Planning: Sonja said that a complication with the wetlands assessment is that the State is doing a wetlands mapping update. We are going back and forth on whether we can do something in advance of the wetlands assessment or perhaps at a higher level to complement the process. Or do we just put it on a lists of action items in the basin. We have lost 52% of wetlands.

Bill Nesbitt asked if there is data available that takes that 52% and calculate the effect on water availability. Sonja said that there are people doing work on that.

Wet Meadows: Bill Nesbitt asked if Cheryl Cwelich can give an approximation of acreage that has been affected. Sonja said she will be able to very soon.

“Water Roundup” 2022 Conference: The first annual Water Roundup will take place Thursday, June 9, from 12:00 – 9:00 p.m. Michelle Pierce will open the conference, make some brief remarks, and introduce George Sibley. Stacy McPhail will discuss the role of conservation easements in the preservation of agriculture and protection of water resources. Becky Mitchell, CWCB Executive Director, will be in attendance, possibly presenting over the noon hour. There will be a bonfire and fireside chat. The CRWCD is a conference sponsor and they will give a “state of the river” update as part of it. Newspaper ads are running this week. Conference registration is \$50 per person including all meals. Just the evening barbecue can be purchased for \$10 for each additional guest.

Taylor Local User’s Group Update - May 5, 2022 meeting summary: Sonja said that the Four Parties meeting took place in May. The recommended schedule of releases by the Taylor Local Users Group was approved at the meeting. Conversations have been getting tougher as we get into drought years. Ernie Cockerel and the UGRWCD do not agree on interpretation of the stipulation. Taylor is not going to be used as a storage vessel in dry years. We were hoping to have some extra water in September, but that most likely will not happen.

Education & Outreach Committee - May 6, 2022 meeting summary: Bill Nesbitt said he had nothing to add to the report in the packets. Approximately half the education and outreach budget has been spent so far this year.

Stacy McPhail said that the Gunnison Cattlewomen put on Ag Venture Day for Gunnison and Crested Butte students from grades K through 5. Bev Richards and Sue Uerling kindly volunteered to come to assist, using the Conservation District's water trailer as a teaching tool 16 times in 1 day. The UGRWCD paid for new tires, tarp, chock blocks, and cover for the tires. The Education Committee decided to put money into Rocky Mountain Biological Laboratory's science education day for grades 3-5 grades. The cost is \$1250 for the event and \$750 to the school to transport the children.

Stacy said the Cattlewomen have been trying to figure out how to best reach out to Lake City children. She said she could bring the water trailer to Lake City to do a demonstration for the school children. Michelle will give Stacy a contact number to call.

Scientific Endeavors: Rosemary Carroll was not in attendance. Bev Richards said that ASO flights were scheduled for May 18 and 19 in the East and Taylor Rivers. They may have been grounded on the 19th, due to weather.

Sonja Chavez said that \$200,000 in funding to study harmful algal blooms was obtained from Gunnison County. Additional funding is being sought, including from the CRWCD's grant program.

Gunnison Basin Roundtable Update:

Bill Nesbitt moved and Stacy McPhail seconded to appoint General Manager Sonja Chavez as the Upper Gunnison representative to the Gunnison Basin Roundtable. The motion carried.

Gunnison River Festival Update: Joellen Fonken said that this year, there will be 4 hours of Gunnison River Festival activities at Lake San Cristobal on Sunday, June 12, in conjunction with the Lake Fork Valley Conservancy.

8. Miscellaneous Matters

Sonja Chavez said that the Executive Committee was not able to meet in April. Due to the Water Roundup, the Gunnison River Festival, and vacations, it would make sense to push that out until July. The board agreed.

Board members with expiring terms need to submit letters of interest to the judge by this Friday, May 27, 2022.

9. Citizens Comments

Grant Houston, of Silver World Newspaper, said he is glad to attend the meeting and to see the board here in Lake City.

10. Future Meetings

The Colorado Water Congress conference will take place in Steamboat Springs later this year.

The District's annual audit site visit will take place May 31 – June 3, 2022.

TLUG meeting: June 7 at 9:30 a.m.

UGRWCD Water Roundup at IBar Ranch: June 9 – 10, 2022.

20th Anniversary of the Gunnison River Festival: June 10 - 12, 2022.

Watershed Management Planning Committee: July 12 at 1:30 p.m.

11. Summary of Meeting Action Items

Follow up with Rebecca Hall at the school.

Schedule Executive Committee meeting in July.

Add policy regarding endorsements by directors board policies.

Michelle and Sonja: Letter regarding Sonja's appointment to the GBRT.

12. Adjournment

Board president Michelle Pierce adjourned the May 24, 2022 meeting at 2:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Perusek, Secretary

APPROVED:

Michelle Pierce, President

Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District - 2022 Budget Summary

	May 22	Jan - May 22	2022 Budget	% of Budget
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
Asp Water Sales	1,914.05	19,421.69	22,510.00	86.28%
Cloud Seeding Income	0.00	23,750.00	92,750.00	25.61%
Interest Income	17.04	2,621.36	20,000.00	13.11%
Property Tax Income	339,196.65	1,146,158.60	1,609,542.00	71.21%
Reimbursed Exp Income				
GRF Reimbursed Income	-416.97	-613.84		
LSC Reimbursed Income	0.00	0.00		
Misc Income	46.69	124.19	1,000.00	12.42%
UGRAWE 4.46% OpX Reimbursed Inc	0.00	18,134.00	33,297.00	54.46%
Reimbursed Exp Income - Other	0.00	0.00		
Total Reimbursed Exp Income	-370.28	17,644.35	34,297.00	51.45%
Taylor-CWRPDA Hydro Income	0.00	0.00		
Unspent Funds from Previous Yr	0.00	0.00	9,379.00	0.0%
Watershed Mgmt Income				
CRWCD CFP2021-15 Grant Inc	0.00	35,430.75		
CWCB 2019-2891 \$150,000	0.00	52,697.97	40,000.00	131.75%
CWCB 2020-2113 \$31,507	0.00	0.00	16,000.00	0.0%
CWCB 2022-2085 \$180,000	0.00	8,100.00		
NPS 2021-4821 Grant Inc	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
TU Restore Grant Inc	0.00	8,000.00	40,000.00	20.0%
Watershed Restore Program Inc	0.00	0.00	135,500.00	0.0%
WMP CWCB PO TBD Inc	0.00	0.00	150,000.00	0.0%
Watershed Mgmt Income - Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Total Watershed Mgmt Income	0.00	104,228.72	381,500.00	27.32%
Wet Meadows Income				
BLM L17AC00255	0.00	0.00	134,666.00	0.0%
BLM L19AC00207 Silt	0.00	0.00	46,000.00	0.0%
NFWF Landscape	0.00	149,637.00		
NFWF Phase II Grant Income	0.00	0.00	107,400.00	0.0%
NRCS Grant Income	0.00	0.00		
Wet Meadows BLM Grant Inc	0.00	0.00		
WM USFS PA 18 Inc	0.00	0.00		
Wet Meadows Income - Other	0.00	0.00		
Total Wet Meadows Income	0.00	149,637.00	288,066.00	51.95%
WQ Monitoring Inc	0.00	27,402.00	35,570.00	77.04%
Total Income	340,757.46	1,490,863.72	2,493,614.00	59.79%
Cost of Goods Sold				
Cloud Seeding COST	34.95	68,618.79	0.00	100.0%
COST Grants	0.00	0.00		
Cost of Goods Sold	0.00	0.00		
CWCB PEPO GBRT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
NPS PO 2021-4821 COST	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%

	May 22	Jan - May 22	2022 Budget	% of Budget
UGR&D CRWCD CFP2021-15 COST	0.00	0.00		
Watershed COST				
2021-15 UG Restoration COST	0.00	0.00		
2022-2085 Watershed Restoration	0.00	0.00		
CWCB 2022-2085 (Restore) COST	0.00	33,165.75		
CWCB 2019-2891 COST	0.00	6,266.25	0.00	100.0%
CWCB 2020-2113 COST	0.00	5,000.00	0.00	100.0%
CWCB PO 2019 2891 COST	0.00	0.00		
CWCB WtrShed Restore Grant COST	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
TU Restore Grant COST	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
UGR&D CRWCD CFP202 COST	0.00	0.00		
Watershed COST - Other	0.00	0.00		
Total Watershed COST	0.00	44,432.00	0.00	100.0%
Wet Meadows COST				
BLM Coop L17AC00255 COST	0.00	1,363.59	0.00	100.0%
BLM L19AC00207 COST	0.00	0.00		
BLM L19AC00207 Silt COST	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
CPW HPP COST	0.00	0.00		
CPW Wetlands Grant COST	0.00	0.00		
NFWF Phase II COST	3,836.15	21,503.07	0.00	100.0%
NRCS Grant Exp COST	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
USFS PA-2 17-PA COST	0.00	489.03	0.00	100.0%
USFS SPA 2018 COST	1,681.83	1,914.71	0.00	100.0%
Wet Meadows COST - Other	0.00	0.00		
Total Wet Meadows COST	5,517.98	25,270.40	0.00	100.0%
WQ Monitoring COST	0.00	28,942.00		
Total COGS	5,552.93	167,263.19	0.00	100.0%
Gross Profit	335,204.53	1,323,600.53	2,493,614.00	53.08%
Expense				
1 Op X				
Audit and Accounting	703.75	3,655.25	7,500.00	48.74%
Bad Debts	0.00	0.00		
Board Expenses	0.00	3,317.03	15,000.00	22.11%
Board Mtg Fees	980.00	5,860.00	13,360.00	43.86%
BOD Mileage	96.54	674.20	2,200.00	30.65%
Bonding and Insurance	13,103.90	13,504.90	12,003.00	112.51%
Building Rep/Maint	0.00	-12,343.57	10,000.00	-123.44%
Computer Exp	0.00	1,919.98		
Computer, Internet, Lexis	1,143.80	3,529.64		
Contribution-Endangered Fish	0.00	0.00		
Copier Expenses	176.44	403.27		
County Treasurers' Fees	10,282.31	33,311.69	46,237.00	72.05%
Donation RMBL Weather	0.00	0.00		
Donation Selenium Program	0.00	0.00		
Dues, Memberships&Subscriptions	0.00	1,847.49	5,222.00	35.38%

	May 22	Jan - May 22	2022 Budget	% of Budget
Election Expenses	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Legal Publication	115.02	6,058.78	6,000.00	100.98%
Manager's Discretionary	43.96	721.49	3,000.00	24.05%
Meeting Expenses	254.36	1,161.91	3,500.00	33.2%
Office Equipment Exp	526.44	4,718.44	21,500.00	21.95%
Office Supplies & Misc Expenses	2,094.43	16,031.77	21,250.00	75.44%
Payroll Exp				
Admin.Travel & Exp.	1,798.43	9,979.14	19,000.00	52.52%
CRA Retirement Plan	2,721.55	13,607.75	32,659.00	41.67%
Medical Insurance	5,019.97	25,340.48	34,425.00	73.61%
Payroll Taxes	3,541.82	17,930.10	39,092.00	45.87%
Salaries - Admin	28,250.00	141,250.00	339,000.00	41.67%
Salaries - Staff	17,889.92	89,027.68	164,117.00	54.25%
Staff Development	0.00	326.00	9,000.00	3.62%
Work Comp Ins	1,331.00	3,485.00	3,700.00	94.19%
Payroll Exp - Other	0.00	0.00		
Total Payroll Exp	60,552.69	300,946.15	640,993.00	46.95%
Postage	0.00	874.84	1,500.00	58.32%
Public Outreach				
Donation GRF	-416.97	10,083.03	10,500.00	96.03%
Internship	175.84	1,067.60	800.00	133.45%
Mini-Grants	0.00	0.00	2,500.00	0.0%
Public Ed./Advertising	2,203.65	18,387.98	28,140.00	65.35%
Youth Conservation Corps	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Public Outreach - Other	0.00	0.00		
Total Public Outreach	1,962.52	29,538.61	41,940.00	70.43%
Publications	150.29	274.90		
RICD Exp	0.00	0.00		
Software Exp	120.00	832.29		
Telephone	582.56	3,859.00	7,110.00	54.28%
Utilities, Clean, Condo Dues	2,505.69	7,325.44	15,516.00	47.21%
Vehicle Expenses - Toyota Highl	86.00	348.36	4,525.00	7.7%
1 Op X - Other	0.00	0.00		
Total 1 Op X	95,480.70	428,371.86	878,356.00	48.77%
2 Non-Op X				
Asp Subordination Report	0.00	4,392.50	5,000.00	87.85%
Aspinall Contract Costs	0.00	18,845.65	18,550.00	101.59%
Consulting/Engineering	470.00	3,883.39	15,000.00	25.89%
Contribution to Reserve Fund	0.00	0.00		
Donation Dust on Snowpack	0.00	0.00		
Endanger Fish Recovery Program	0.00	0.00	3,000.00	0.0%
Legal Fees/Projects	0.00	0.00		
LSC Expenses	0.00	0.00	13,464.00	0.0%
RMBL (Basinwide Planning X)	0.00	0.00	421,500.00	0.0%
RWSI Expense	28.99	35,621.54	729,566.00	4.88%

	May 22	Jan - May 22	2022 Budget	% of Budget
RWSI Grant Program	42,837.12	96,487.12		
Spencer Ave Res Exp	0.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.0%
Taylor Park Projects Exp	0.00	7,436.00	7,436.00	100.0%
Taylor River Modeling Exp	0.00	13,369.57		
Watershed Mgmt X	4,427.00	38,779.25		
Wet Meadow X	0.00	38.08		
WQ Monitoring	0.00	10,000.00	149,691.00	6.68%
2 Non-Op X - Other	0.00	0.00		
Total 2 Non-Op X	47,763.11	228,853.10	1,373,207.00	16.67%
SUSPENSE	0.00	0.00		
Total Expense	143,243.81	657,224.96	2,251,563.00	29.19%
Net Ordinary Income	191,960.72	666,375.57	242,051.00	275.3%
Other Income/Expense				
Other Income	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.0%
Other Expense				
Contingency	0.00	0.00	24,000.00	0.0%
Depreciation Expenses	0.00	0.00		
Total Other Expense	0.00	0.00	24,000.00	0.0%
Net Other Income	0.00	0.00	-24,000.00	0.0%
Net Income	191,960.72	666,375.57	218,051.00	

BANK AND BOND BALANCES - UGRWCD and UGRWAE

UGRWCD	Instrument	Balance	Cost	Interest	Maturity	Date
Account Name	Type	5/31/2022	Basis	Rate	Date	Callable
LPL Bond 27 CUSIP 91282CDR9 Treasury Note	BOND	\$ 389,937.20	\$ 394,661.19	0.750%	12/31/2023	
LPL Bond 17 (FHLB) CUSIP 91282CDH1 Treasury Note	BOND	195,742.81	204,335.35	0.750%	11/15/2024	
LPL 19 Pac. Western CD thru LPL CUSIP 69506 YRJ O	CD	243,635.10	245,000.00	1.200%	4/17/2023	
LPL Bond 20 (FHLB) CUSIP 3130 AJLA 5	BOND	518,254.55	550,000.00	0.750%	5/19/2025	
LPL Bond 21 (Fed Farm) CUSIP 3133 EL3P7	BOND	320,982.82	345,000.00	0.530%	8/12/2025	8/12/2022
LPL 22 Merrick Bank CD thru LPL CUSIP 59013KLR5	CD	232,680.78	249,000.00	0.350%	12/30/2024	
LPL Bond 23 (FEDL) CUSIP 3130ALLD4	BOND	232,006.00	250,000.00	0.875%	3/17/2026	9/17/2021
LPL Money Market Account	M.M.	23,239.51	-	0.010%	N/A	
LPL Bond 24 CUSIP 3130AMDY5 Fedl Home Loan Bank	BOND	464,543.50	500,000.00	1.000%	5/20/2026	5/20/2022
LPL CD 25 Sallie Mae Bank CUSIP 795451 AA1	CD	233,137.83	245,000.00	0.550%	7/22/2024	
LPL 26 (Fed. Home Loan Banks) CUSIP 3130 APBE4	BOND	146,405.60	160,000.00	1.000%	9/30/2026	9/30/2022
LPL 28 Freddie Mac CUSIP 3134 GXQP2	BOND	199,866.40	200,000.00	3.030%	4/28/2025	7/18/2022
Mountain View Bank Money Market	M.M.	106,454.02			3/27/2023	
Bank of the West Checking	CHKG	1,447.57		0.010%	N/A	
Bank of the West CD 046907721	CD	105,411.54		0.350%	12/22/2022	
Community Banks of Colo. CD 0420	CD	51,564.17		0.400%	9/26/2022	
Community Banks of Colo. Lake City CD # 7668	CD	104,170.48		0.500%	5/20/2023	
Community Banks of Colo. CD 6106	CD	91,718.12		0.950%	6/20/2022	
10520 Gunnison Bank & Trust CD 6637	CD	200,000.00		1.900%	2/26/2025	
10540 Gunnison Bank & Trust - Spencer Ave. Res. 3589	CHKG	50,110.71		0.150%	N/A	
101140 Gunnison Savings & Loan CD 5011	CD	110,320.21		1.750%	8/10/2022	
101149 Gunnison Savings & Loan CD 9413	CD	152,474.84		2.050%	10/18/2024	
10295 COLOTRUST PLUS+	COLO.	956,031.57		0.9099%	N/A	
10290 COLOTRUST PRIME	COLO.	168,267.01		0.6490%	N/A	
10200 Petty Cash	PETTY	100.00		N/A	N/A	
TOTAL UGRWCD		\$ 5,298,502.34				

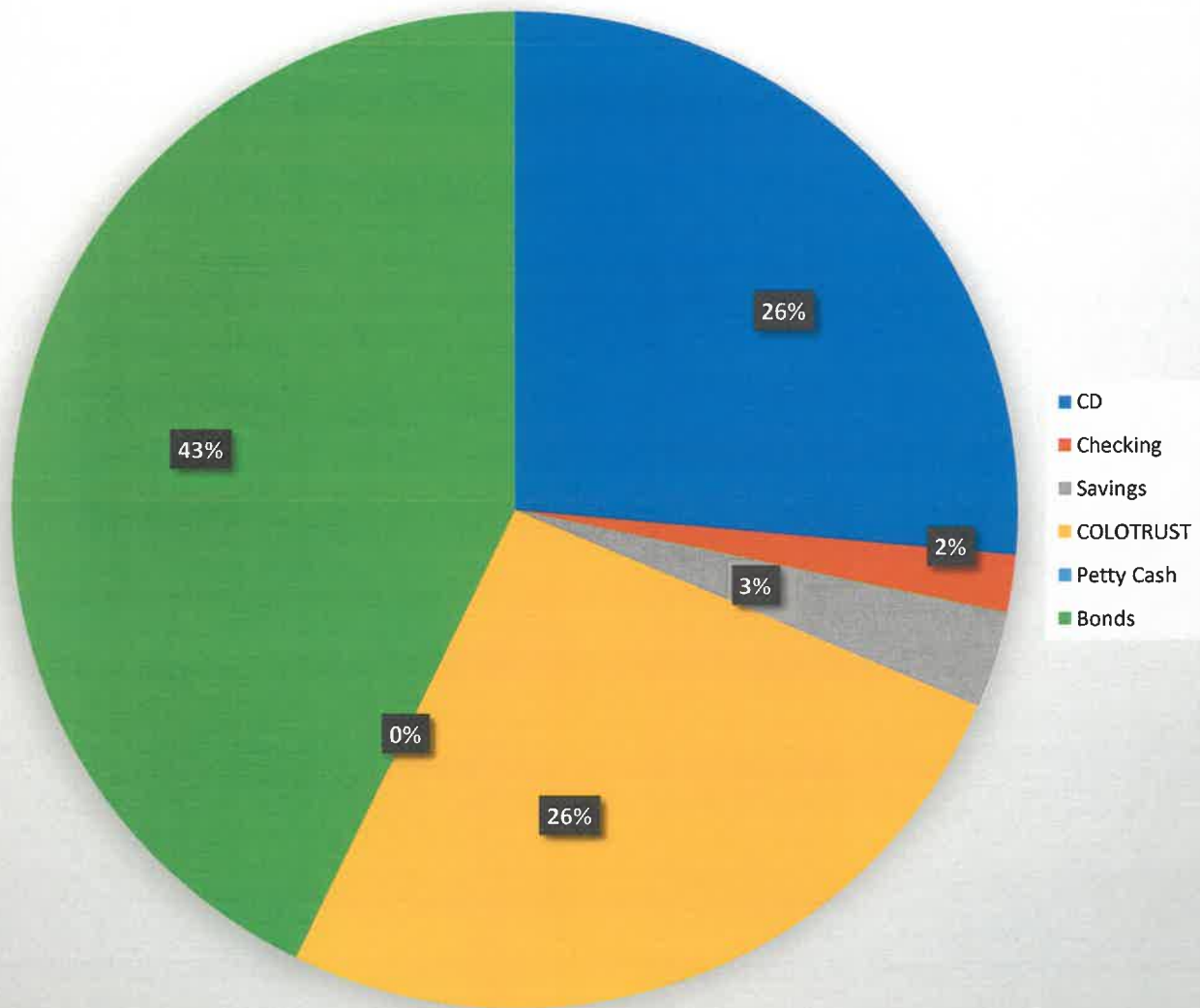
UGRWAE	Balance	Interest	Maturity
Account Name	5/31/2022	Rate	Date
Bank of the West Checking	\$ 106,314.69	N/A	N/A
COLOTRUST PLUS+	365,076.44	0.9099%	N/A
TOTAL UGRWAE	\$ 471,391.13		
TOTAL UGRWCD + UGRWAE	\$ 5,769,893.47		

Total UGRWCD and UGRWAE by Bank			Total UGRWCD & UGRWAE by Investment Type		
LPL Financial (Was Sigma)	\$ 3,200,432.10	55%	CD	26%	\$ 1,525,113.07
Mountain View Bank	106,454.02	2%	Checking	2%	107,762.26
Bank of the West	213,173.80	4%	Savings	3%	179,804.24
Community Banks of Colo.	247,452.77	4%	COLOTRUST	26%	1,489,375.02
Gunnison Bank & Trust	250,110.71	4%	Petty Cash	0%	100.00
Gunnison Savings & Loan	262,795.05	5%	Bonds	43%	\$ 2,467,738.88
COLOTRUST	1,489,375.02	26%	Total	100%	\$ 5,769,893.47
Petty Cash	100.00	0%			
TOTAL ALL BANKS	\$ 5,769,893.47	100%			

UGRWCD & UGRWAE INVESTMENTS BY TYPE

CD	26%	\$ 1,525,113.07
Checking	2%	107,762.26
Savings	3%	179,804.24
COLOTRUST	26%	1,489,375.02
Petty Cash	0%	100.00
Bonds	43%	\$ 2,467,738.88
Total	100%	\$5,769,893.47

UGRWCD + UGRWAE INVESTMENTS BY TYPE



3:17 PM
06/17/22
Accrual Basis

Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
Expenses For Approval (Paid & Payable)
May 25 through June 27, 2022

Date	Name	Account	Amount
May 25 - Jun 27, 22			
05/31/2022	Alan Wartes Media LLC	Public Ed./Advertising	44.00
05/31/2022	Alan Wartes Media LLC	Legal Publication	26.40
05/31/2022	Alan Wartes Media LLC	Public Ed./Advertising	273.60
06/02/2022	Alexander C. Baca	Internship	918.00
06/16/2022	Atmos Energy	Utilities, Clean, Condo Dues	352.04
06/16/2022	Atmos Energy	Utilities, Clean, Condo Dues	67.83
05/31/2022	BIO-Logic Inc	NFWF Phase II COST	2,341.90
05/31/2022	BIO-Logic Inc	USFS SPA 2018 COST	1,681.83
05/31/2022	City of Gunnison Finance Dept.	Utilities, Clean, Condo Dues	152.93
05/31/2022	City of Gunnison Finance Dept.	Utilities, Clean, Condo Dues	78.91
05/31/2022	Crested Butte News	Public Ed./Advertising	50.00
05/31/2022	Crested Butte News	Public Ed./Advertising	291.52
05/31/2022	Crested Butte News	Legal Publication	11.62
06/01/2022	GL Computer Service, Inc.	Computer, Internet, Lexis	400.00
05/31/2022	Glatfelter Public Practice	Bonding and Insurance	11,393.00
05/31/2022	Hartman Brothers, Inc.	RWSI Expense	28.99
05/25/2022	Jill Steele	Medical Insurance	615.90
06/16/2022	Jill Steele	Medical Insurance	615.90
05/31/2022	John McClow	Admin.Travel & Exp.	231.66
06/16/2022	John McClow	Medical Insurance	250.50
05/31/2022	KEJJ Radio	Public Ed./Advertising	185.00
05/31/2022	Kim Antonucci	Audit and Accounting	543.75
05/31/2022	KVLE FM	Public Ed./Advertising	150.00
06/16/2022	Midnight Marketing Solutions LLC	Public Outreach	225.00
06/17/2022	QuickBooks Payroll Service	Payroll Taxes	1.75
06/16/2022	Renee Rondeau	USFS SPA 2018 COST	5,943.00
05/31/2022	RigNet Inc	Cloud Seeding COST	34.95
05/31/2022	Silver World Publishing	Public Ed./Advertising	80.00
05/31/2022	Silver World Publishing	Legal Publication	52.80
06/16/2022	Spencer Avenue Business Park Condo Assoc	Utilities, Clean, Condo Dues	550.00
05/31/2022	The Paper Clip	Office Supplies & Misc Expenses	134.52
05/31/2022	Trout Unlimited - WMP	Watershed Mgmt X	2,762.00
05/31/2022	Verizon Wireless	Telephone	310.04
May 25 - Jun 27, 22			<u>30,799.34</u>

Upper Gunnison District: Wet Meadows Consultant Monthly Project Progress Report

Report Date: 4-30-22

Consultant/Contract Number: UG2021-027

Invoice Number: 4130

Invoice Amount: \$ 4,023.73

Project Performance Period: 04-04-22 thru 04-30-22

Report Prepared by: Shawn Conner, BIO-Logic, Inc.

Invoice Approved C. Cwelich

Contract: UG2021-027

Budget Line Item #46

Apply to Grants:

USFS: \$1,681.83

NFWF: \$2,341.90

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS (THIS REPORTING PERIOD):

- Task 1 – USFS Horn Gulch and Flat Top field reviews.
- Task 2 – Conducted site visit of Kezar Basin site; and conducted design visit to Cerro de Orme project site in Cerro-Simms subpopulation to design priority work for 2022, mapped access and material staging possibilities, took design data and transmitted plans to project team.
- Task 3 – None this reporting period
- Task 4 – Participated in planning and overall vision meeting with UGRWCD; USFS, CPW, BLM and project partners. Also held meeting with Cheryl to discuss long term planning and media potential outreach.


Difficulties Encountered / Corrective Action / Etc.:

Problem(s) / Changes:

- None

Resolution / Corrective Action Plan & Schedule:

- None

Date Rec. 4-3-22 Adm. Ckd. 
Mgr. Appr. _____ Amt. Appr. _____
Bd. Appr. Date _____ Bd. Initials _____
Pd. Date _____ Ckd. _____
Account(s) Wet Meadows

ACTIVITY ANTICIPATED (NEXT REPORTING PERIOD): (May 2022)


- Task 1 - Pinyon Mesa and Bohr Flats Planning and Layout; USFS South Cottonwood
- Task 2 – BLM Upper Willow; CPW Miller Ranch, USFS Flat Top Planning and review.
- Task 3 – Plug and Spread Contractor field review
- Task 4 – Scheduled planning meetings with partners to discuss data collection standards

BUDGET SUMMARY (Example only, please incorporate project specific tasks):

Task	Description	Budget	Current Expenditures	Previous Expenditures	Contract Balance	Projected Completion Date
1	Field review to identify sites	\$ 32,609	\$ 1,681.83	\$ 2,333.84	\$28,593.33	
2	Develop Plans and Designs	\$ 53,120	\$ 1,689.85	\$ 6,932.98	\$ 44,497.17	
3	Supervise work crews, volunteers, and contractors	\$ 59,357	\$ 0	\$ 15,314.23	\$ 44,042.77	
4	Overall planning meetings	\$ 8,718	\$652.05	\$3592.46	\$ 4,473.49	
	Totals	153,804	\$ 4,023.73	\$ 28,173.51	\$ 121,606.76	

Requested Budget Amendments & Rationale: None

Requested Contract Amendment & Rationale: None

Shawn Conner (BIO-Logic, Inc), Signature & Date: 

04-30-22

Wet Meadows Supervising Coordinator, Signature of Approval & Date: _____

INVOICE

DATE

March 24, 2022

INVOICE NO**YOUR COMPANY**

Renee Rondeau
404 Adobe Dr.
Hesperus, CO 81326
970-217-9041
Renee.rondeau12@gmail

INVOICE TO

Upper Gunnison River Water
Conservancy District
210 West Spencer, Suite 2B
970-641-6065
ccwilich@ugrwch.org

SALESPERSON	JOB	PAYMENT TERMS	DUE DATE
-------------	-----	---------------	----------

Due on Receipt

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	UNIT PRICE	LINE TOTAL
----------	-------------	------------	------------

6	Hobo MX2203 Tidbit Loggers	\$143.31	\$859.90
1	Flat Top Vegetation Analysis	\$5,800	\$5800

Date Rec. 3/31/22 Adm. Ckd. [Signature]
Mgr. Appr. _____ Amt. Appr. _____
Bd. Appr. Date _____ Bd. Initials _____
Pd. Date _____ Ck# _____
Account(s) _____

Subtotal	5943.00
Sales Tax	
Total	5943.00

Approved for Payment by CC

Budget Line Item: 46 Regional Water Supply
Improvement Program (Wet Meadows Program)

Funding Source:
USFS Funding Agreement: 18-PA-11020407-021



Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy
District
210 W. Spencer Ave
Suite B
Gunnison, CO 81230
United States

Invoice 202205_472
Date 31 May, 2022
Account C201008

Remittance should be mailed to:
RigNet, Inc.
P. O. BOX 941629
Houston, TX 77094
Phone: +1 281 674 0683
Email: ar@rig.net

Airtime Period 1 May - 31 May 2022

Summary

Total Airtime and Fees this Period	USD	34.95
Total Amount This Invoice	USD	34.95

Terms: Net 30

Please include Invoice Number and Account Number with your payment

For Wire Transfers, please remit to:

Bank Name: Bank of America
Acct Name: RigNet, Inc.
Account No: 488025116355
SWIFT # BOFAUS3NABA
Routing # 026009593ABA
ACH# 111000025

Pay Online:

<https://www.rig.net/payment-center>

Date Rec. 6-3-22 Adm. Ckd. [Signature]
Mgr. Appr. _____ Amt. Appr. _____
Bd. Appr. Date _____ Bd. Initials _____
Pd. Date _____ Ck# _____
Account(s) paid sending
- Irwin Remark.

Summary per Product

Product	Charge Type	Amount (USD)
OrbCommIDP	Subscription Fee	33.00

OrbCommIDP	Other	1.95
Total for OrbCommIDP		34.95
Total charges (excl tax) for this invoice		34.95

TROUT UNLIMITED

Jesse Kruthaupt
604 Elsa CT
970-209-0976
jkruthaupt@tu.org

INVOICE

INVOICE #: 11

DATE OF INVOICE: MAY 30, 2021

TO:

Sonja Chavez
Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District
210 West Spencer
Gunnison, CO 81230

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT PLANNING PHASE II
PERIOD 2/25/22 – 6/1/2022

2070-002

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	Rate \$45/hr	In-kind	Paid
Task 4 (Ohio): Lone Pine site visits and landowner coordination, Gleason/Otis Moore coordination	16	45	\$450	\$270
Task 1 (Ohio): Stakeholder call/emails	10	45	\$450	\$0
Task 2 (Taylor):Stakeholder outreach doc review AMG	10	45	\$450	0
Task 1: (Tomichi): Issues ID/Watershed health, Cochetopa, Fire Hazard/Geo Fluvial assessment	12	45	\$270	\$270
Task 2: (Tomichi): Lost Miner/Tomichi Meadows (McCanne No 2 & 3) Middle Tomichi wetland/flood irrigation improvements with PFW, Hannah Winters Diversion, Quartz Creek Bosshart, Quartz Creek Mike Field Chitterdon Ditch, Hot Springs Reservoir Gate design coordination,	25	45	\$270	\$1125
Task (2) Gunnison – Home Ditch, Marshal 1 Slone/Cranor City of Gunnison, WSC,	17	45	\$0	\$765
Task 7 Admin: (Gunnison) WMP meetings, invoicing	1	45	\$0	\$45
Task 7 Admin: (Ohio) WMP meetings, invoicing reporting.	2	45	\$0	\$45
Task 7 Admin: (Tomichi) WMP Meeting, reporting	2	45	\$0	\$45
Travel Ohio	2	45	\$90	\$0
Travel Taylor	0	45	\$0	\$0
Travel Tomichi	3	45	\$0	\$135
Travel Gunnison	0	45	\$0	\$0
Travel Cebolla	0	45	\$0	\$0
Milage	504	.575	\$228	\$62
Total			\$2,208	\$2762

Thank you, please make Checks payable to Trout Unlimited

Date Rec. 6-16-22 Adm. Chd. R
Mgr. Appr. _____ Amt. Appr. _____
Bd. Appr. Date _____ Bd. Initials _____
Pd. Date _____ Clk _____
Account(s) WMP

AGENDA ITEM 5

Election of Officers

AGENDA ITEM 6

Appointment of Financial Officers

Resolution 2022-02

I HEREBY CERTIFY that I am the duly elected and qualified Secretary of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District and the keeper of the records and seal of said District and the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted at a regular meeting of the Board of Directors of said District held in accordance with the By-Laws of said District on the 27th day of June 2022.

“Whereas, on July 12, 1993, the Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District (The Board) designated Community Banks of Colorado – Gunnison, Community Banks of Colorado – Crested Butte, Gunnison Savings and Loan, Community First Banks (now Bank of the West), First National Bank of Lake City, now known as Community Banks of Colorado, and First National Banks of Colorado depositories of the District and that funds so deposited may be withdrawn upon a check, draft, note or order of the District; and

“Whereas, on August 23, 2004, the Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District (The Board) designated Gunnison Bank and Trust a depository of the District and that funds so deposited may be withdrawn upon a check, draft, note or order of the District; and

“Whereas, on May 22, 2006, the Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District (The Board) designated Colotrust a depository of the District and that funds so deposited may be withdrawn upon a check, draft, note or order of the District; and

“Whereas, on January 26, 2009, the Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District (The Board) designated Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. a depository of the District and that funds so deposited may be withdrawn upon a check, draft, note or order of the District; and

“Whereas, on May 18, 2009, the Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District (The Board) designated First National Bank of Paonia, Alpine Bank, Montrose Bank, First Southwest Bank, and First Colorado National Bank depositories of the District and that funds so deposited may be withdrawn upon a check, draft, note or order of the District; and

“Whereas, on October 27, 2014, the Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District (The Board) designated NuVista Federal Credit Union of Gunnison, Colorado a depository of the District and that funds so deposited may be withdrawn upon a check, draft, note or order of the District; and

“Whereas, on January 19, 2015, the Board of Directors of the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District (The Board) designated Sigma Financial Corporation (now LPL Financial) a depository of the District and that funds so deposited may be withdrawn upon a check, draft, note or order of the District; and

“Whereas, on July 12, 1993, the Board designated those persons authorized to sign and countersign checks, drafts, notes or orders for the payment of money in the same name of the District, and on subsequent dates has amended the list of designated persons; and

“Whereas, the Board desires to further amend the list of persons authorized to sign and countersign checks, drafts, notes or orders for the payment of money in the name of the District.

“Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved, that all the checks, drafts, notes, or orders drawn against the District’s accounts with said Bank be signed by any two of the following:

NAME	TITLE
	Board President
	Board Vice-President
	Board Secretary
	Board Treasurer
Sonja Chavez	General Manager

whose signatures shall be duly certified to said Bank, and that no checks, drafts, notes or orders drawn against said Bank shall be valid unless so signed.

“Be It Further Resolved, that said Bank is hereby authorized to honor and pay any checks, drafts, notes or orders so drawn, whether such checks, drafts, notes or orders be payable to the order of any such person signing and/or countersigning said checks, drafts, notes or orders, or any of such persons in their individual capacities or not, and whether such checks, drafts, notes or orders are deposited to the individual credit of the person so signing and/or countersigning said checks, drafts, notes or orders, or to the individual credit of any other officers or not. This resolution shall take effect June 27, 2022, and will continue in force until further written notification to said Bank.

In witness Whereof, the undersigned President and Secretary have caused the seal of said District to be hereto affixed this 27th day of June, 2022.

, Secretary

, President

AGENDA ITEM 7

Re-authorization of Standing Committees

UPPER GUNNISON RIVER WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT

STANDING COMMITTEES

2021-2022

Revised January 6, 2022

Education Committee: Chair – Bill Nesbitt, Rosemary Carroll, Joellen Fonken, Stacy McPhail, Sonja Chavez, Beverly Richards

Executive Committee: Chair – Michelle Pierce – President; Stacy McPhail – Vice President; Bill Nesbitt – Treasurer; John Perusek – Secretary

Finance Committee: Chair - Bill Nesbitt, Rebie Hazard, Michelle Pierce, John Perusek, Sonja Chavez, Jill Steele

Grant Committee: Chair – Joellen Fonken, Rebie Hazard, Andy Spann, Rosemary Carroll, Julie Nania, Sonja Chavez, Beverly Richards, Cheryl Cwelich

Legislative Committee: Chair – Michelle Pierce, Rebie Hazard, Julie Nania, Andy Spann, John McClow, Sonja Chavez

Projects Committee: Bill Nesbitt, Sara Bergstrom, Rosemary Carroll, John Perusek, Don Sabrowski, John McClow, Sonja Chavez, Beverly Richards

Water Administration Committee: Joellen Fonken, Rebie Hazard, Andy Spann, Michelle Pierce, John McClow, Sonja Chavez

Watershed Management Planning Committee - Chair – Stacy McPhail, Sara Bergstrom, Rosemary Carroll, Julie Nania, John McClow, Sonja Chavez, Beverly Richards, Cheryl Cwelich

AGENDA ITEM 8

Legal and Legislative Matters

Basin Depletion Trends 2019 - 2021

- Depletions:

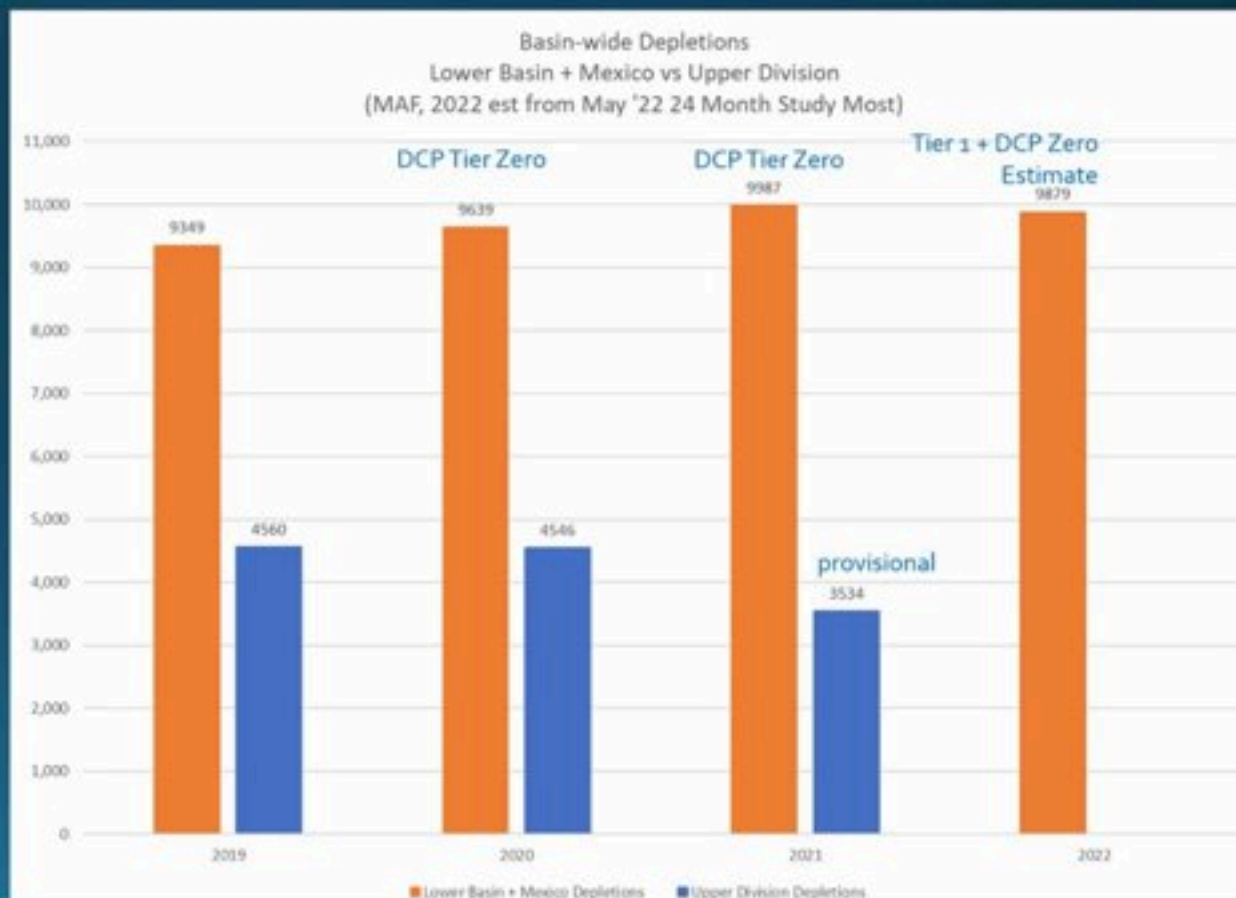
- Mainstem Lower Basin + Mexico Depletions = Mead CU + Mead Evaporation + Mead Releases (releases serve mainstem CU, evaporation and losses)
- Upper Basin Depletions = Uses + CRSPA evaporation, reported in CU&L and UCRC Natural Flow

- Trends:

- Increasing Lower Basin uses 2019 – 2021, despite significant conservation and contributions
- Lower Basin uses out of synch with hydrology, relying on storage and Lake Powell releases
- Significant reductions in Upper Basin reflecting impacts of drought

- Sources:

- BOR Lower Basin Water Accounting Reports
- BOR CU&L including provisional Data
- '22 May 24 Month Study Most Probable



AGENDA ITEM 9

**Presentation by Brad Piehl,
Forest Hydrologist , JW Associates**

AGENDA ITEM 10

BREAK

AGENDA ITEM 11

USGS Presentation

AGENDA ITEM 12

Basin Water Supply Report

MEMORANDUM

TO: UGRWCD Board Members

FROM: Beverly Richards, Water Resource Specialist

DATE: June 17, 2022

SUBJECT: Basin Water Supply Information

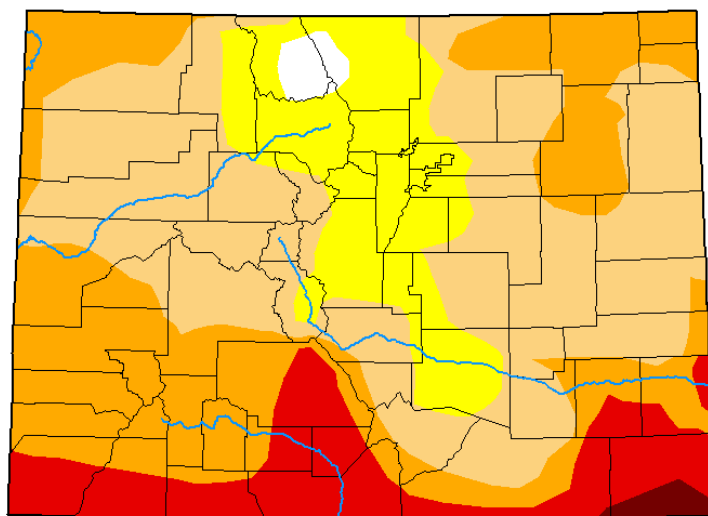
The information supplied as part of this memorandum is a monthly feature and includes information about drought conditions in the basin, reservoir storage, reservoir operations, dust on snow events, and the Upper Gunnison Cloudseeding Program.

Drought Conditions:

According to the *Drought Monitor* at drought.gov as of June 7, 2022, drought conditions have eased slightly in Colorado with a total of 42% of the state in Severe (D2) to Exceptional (D4) conditions which is a reduction from the May report. Based on current conditions, Extreme and Exceptional drought conditions have increased in severity, particularly in the southern part of the State.

U.S. Drought Monitor **Colorado**

June 7, 2022
(Released Thursday, Jun. 9, 2022)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT



Intensity:

- None
- D0 Abnormally Dry
- D1 Moderate Drought
- D2 Severe Drought
- D3 Extreme Drought
- D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

Brad Pugh
CPC/NOAA



droughtmonitor.unl.edu

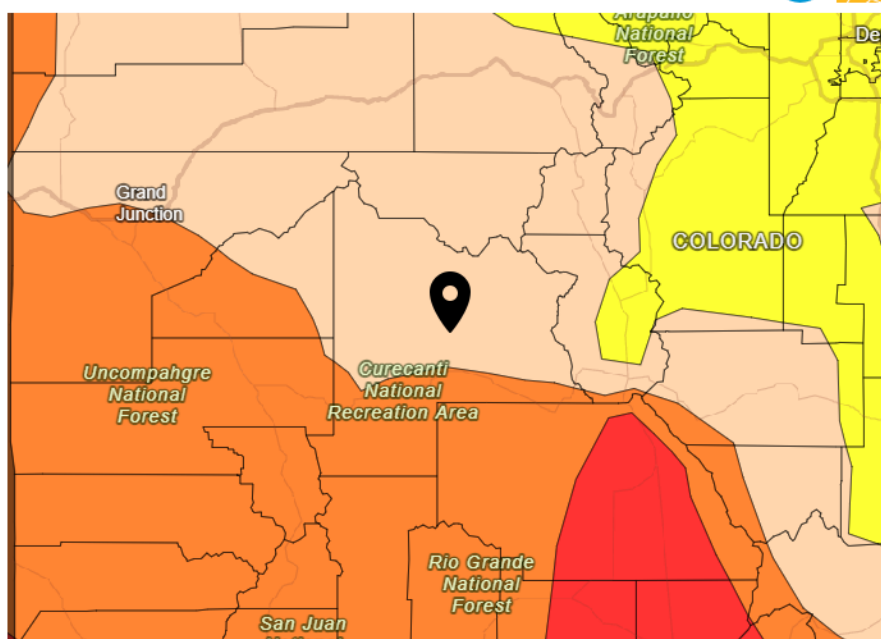
Drought Conditions – Gunnison County

Drought conditions in Gunnison County have remained basically the same since the middle of May. As of June 7, 2022, 69% of the county is experiencing Moderate (D1) and 31% is experiencing Severe (D2) drought conditions, which is a slight increase in the Severe category. At this time last year (2021), 73% of Gunnison County was experiencing Severe (D2) and 24% of the county was experiencing Extreme drought conditions. The difference in one year is shown in the table below. *Drought.gov* indicates that this is the 40th driest May and the 13th driest year-to-date in Gunnison County in the 128-year records.

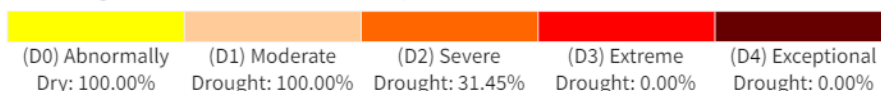
Drought Conditions – Gunnison County percentage (June 7, 2022 vs June 8, 2021)

Date	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
June 7, 2022	0	0	68.55	31.45	0	0
June 8, 2021	0	0	2.47	73.35	24.18	0
Difference	0	0	+66.08	-41.90	-24.18	0

U.S. Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor for Gunnison County

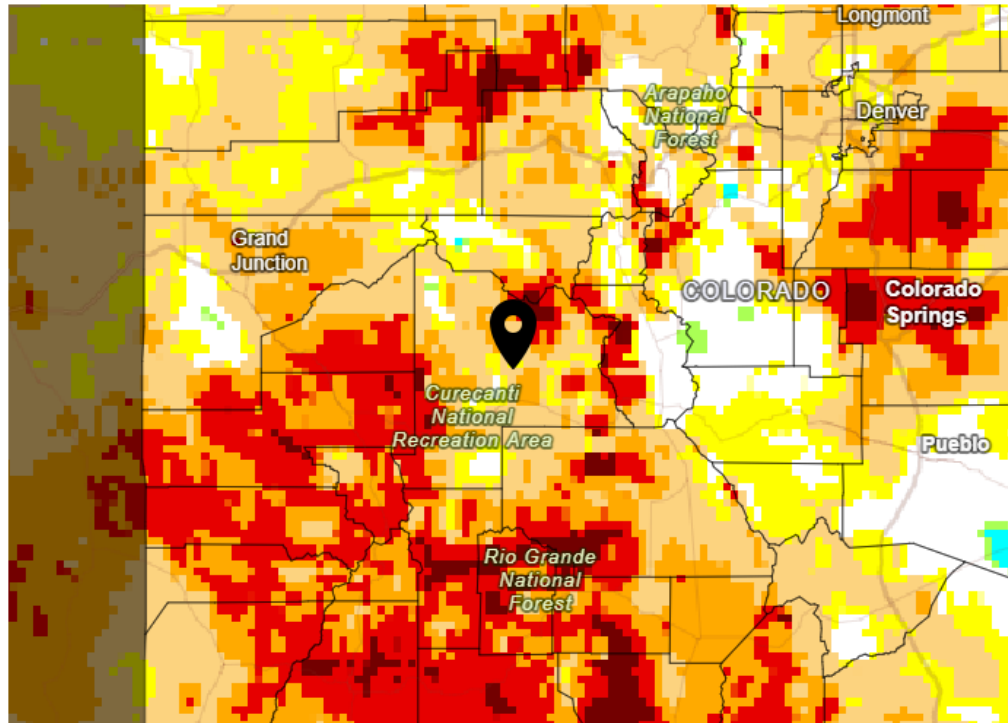


Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA
Updates Weekly - 06/07/22

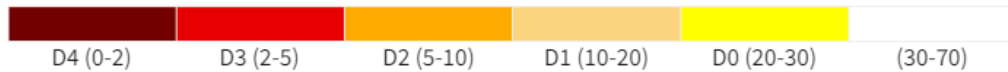
Drought.gov

The long term drought indicator for Gunnison County shows that conditions could deteriorate with areas in the county returning to Extreme (D3) and Exceptional (D4) conditions. This is shown in the figure provided below.

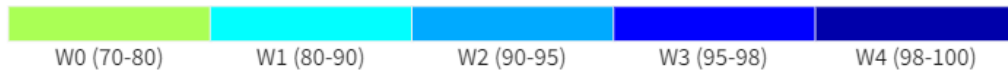
Long-Term Drought Indicator Blend



Dry Conditions (Percentile Categories)



Wet Conditions (Percentile Categories)



Source(s): UC Merced, Climate Engine
Last Updated - 06/09/22

Drought.gov

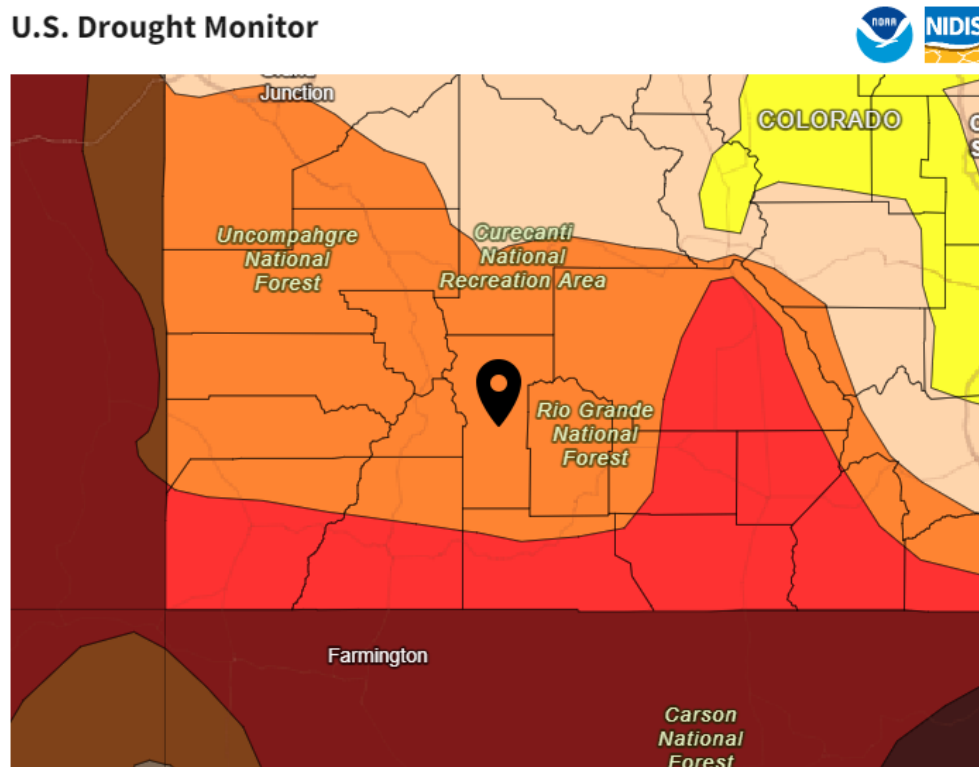
Drought Conditions – Hinsdale County

Drought conditions in Hinsdale County have also remained basically unchanged since the middle of May, but the entire the county has now moved into the Severe (D2) drought category. As of June 7, 2022, 100% of the county is experiencing Severe drought conditions. At this time last year (2021), 53% of Hinsdale County was experiencing Moderate (D1) conditions and 47% of the county was experiencing Severe (D2) to Extreme (D3) drought conditions. The difference in one year is shown in the table below. *Drought.gov* indicates that this is the 15th driest May and the 5th driest year-to-date in Hinsdale County in the 128-year records.

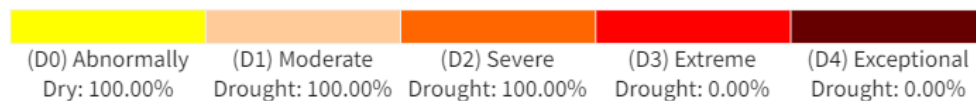
Drought Conditions – Hinsdale County percentage (June 7, 2022 vs June 8, 2021)

Date	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
June 7, 2022	0	0	0	100	0	0
June 8, 2021	0	0	53.52	45.24	1.24	0
Difference	0	0	-53.52	+54.76	-1.24	0

U.S. Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor for Hinsdale County

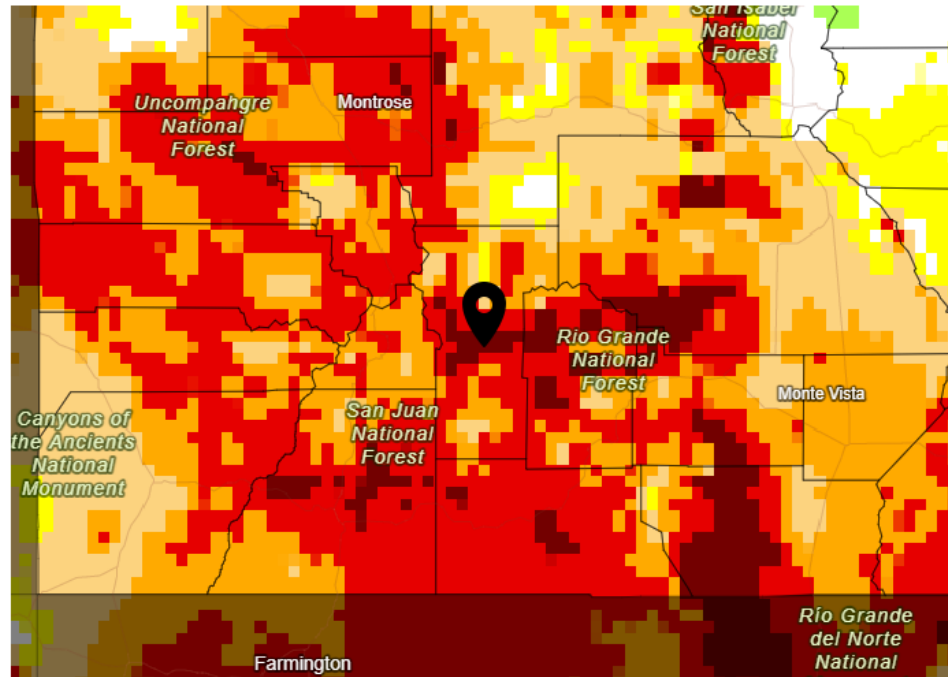


Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA
Updates Weekly - 06/07/22

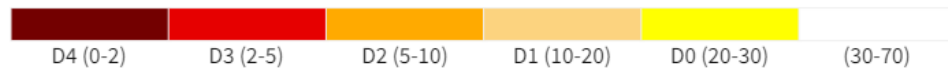
Drought.gov

The long term drought indicator for Hinsdale County shows that the drought conditions in a good portion of the county could deteriorate with substantial areas in the county returning to Extreme (D3) and Exceptional (D4) conditions. This is shown in the figure provided below.

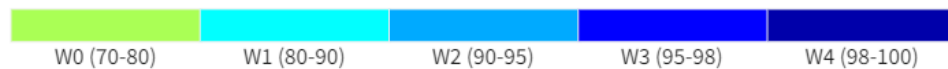
Long-Term Drought Indicator Blend



Dry Conditions (Percentile Categories)



Wet Conditions (Percentile Categories)



Source(s): UC Merced, Climate Engine
Last Updated - 06/09/22

Drought.gov

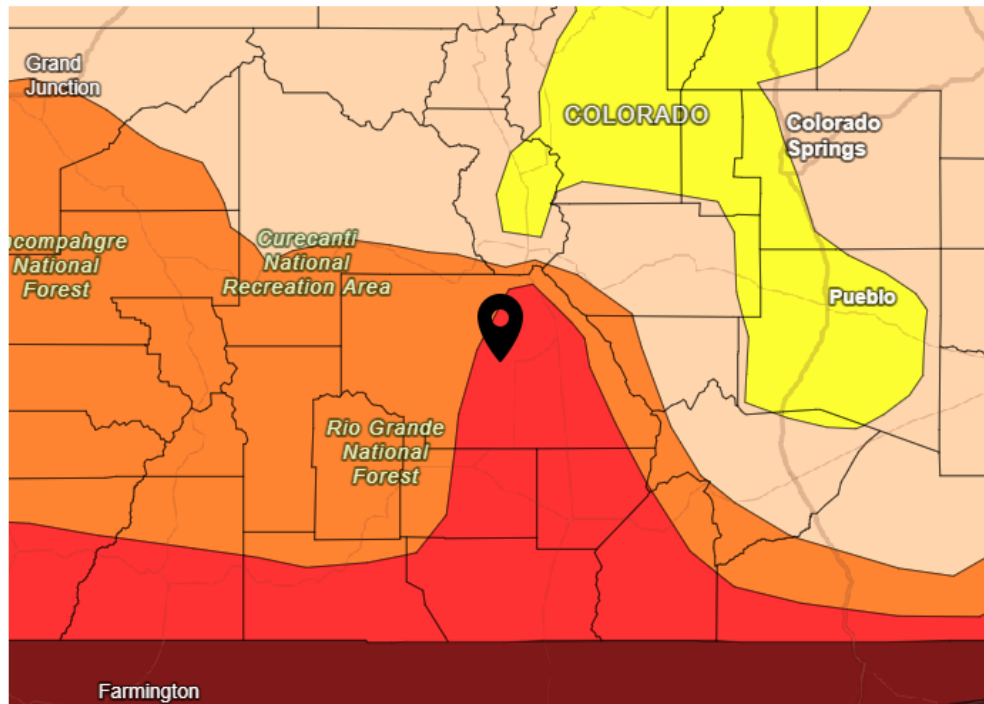
Drought Conditions – Saguache County

Though conditions in Saguache County have not changed much since the beginning of May, this is the county that has experienced the biggest change since this time last year. As of June 9, 2022, 100% of the county is now in Severe (D2) to Extreme (D3) drought conditions, with nearly half of the county in Extreme (D3) conditions. At this time last year (2021), a third of the county was experiencing no drought conditions at all and this is reflected in the table below. *Drought.gov* indicates that this is the 51st driest May and the 32nd driest year-to-date in Saguache County in the 128-year records.

Drought Conditions – Saguache County percentage (June 7, 2022 vs June 8, 2021)

Date	None	D0	D1	D2	D3	D4
June 7, 2022	0	0	0	58.04	41.96	0
June 8, 2021	33.13	27.82	25.45	13.60	0	0
Difference	-33.13	-27.82	-25.45	+44.44	+41.96	0

U.S. Drought Monitor



U.S. Drought Monitor for Saguache County

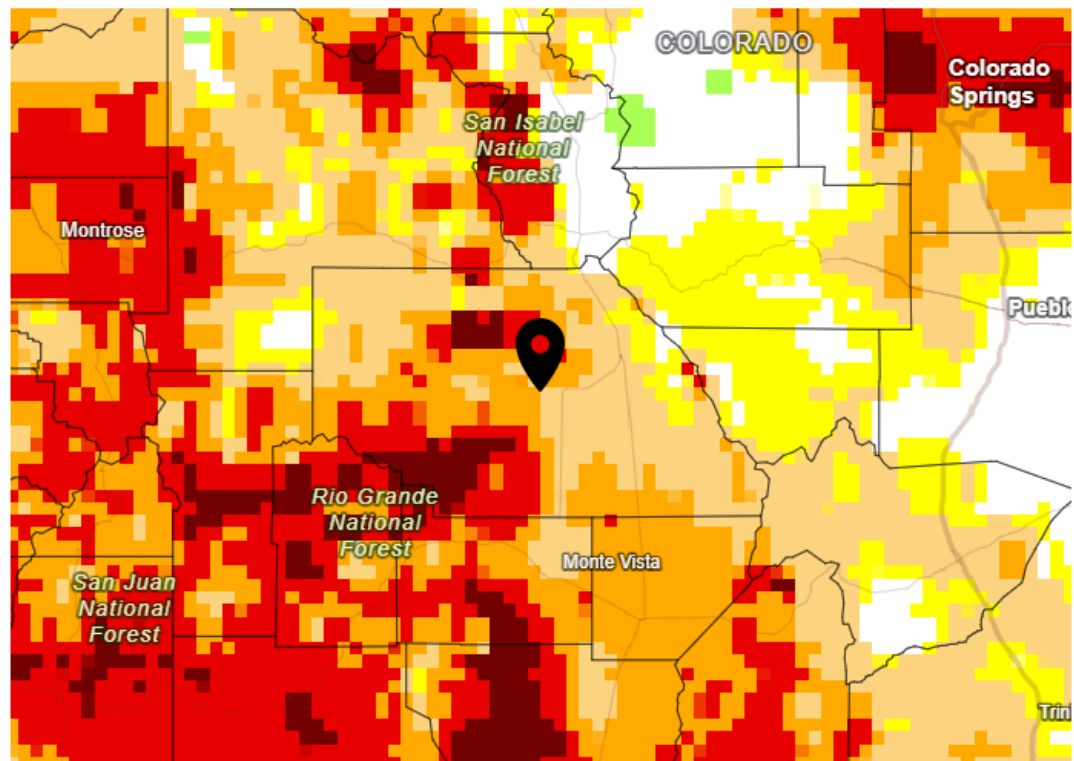


Source(s): NDMC, NOAA, USDA
Updates Weekly - 06/07/22

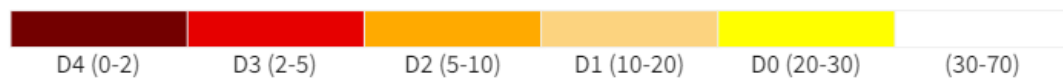
Drought.gov

The long term drought indicator for Saguache County shows that the drought conditions in the county could deteriorate with some areas in the county returning to Exceptional (D4) conditions. However, the drought indicator also shows that conditions in some parts of the county could improve into the Moderate (D1) and Abnormally Dry (D0) drought conditions. This is shown in the figure provided below.

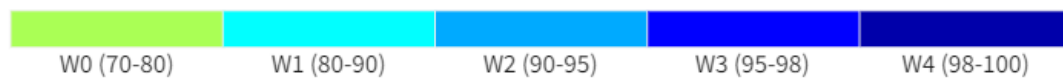
Long-Term Drought Indicator Blend



Dry Conditions (Percentile Categories)



Wet Conditions (Percentile Categories)



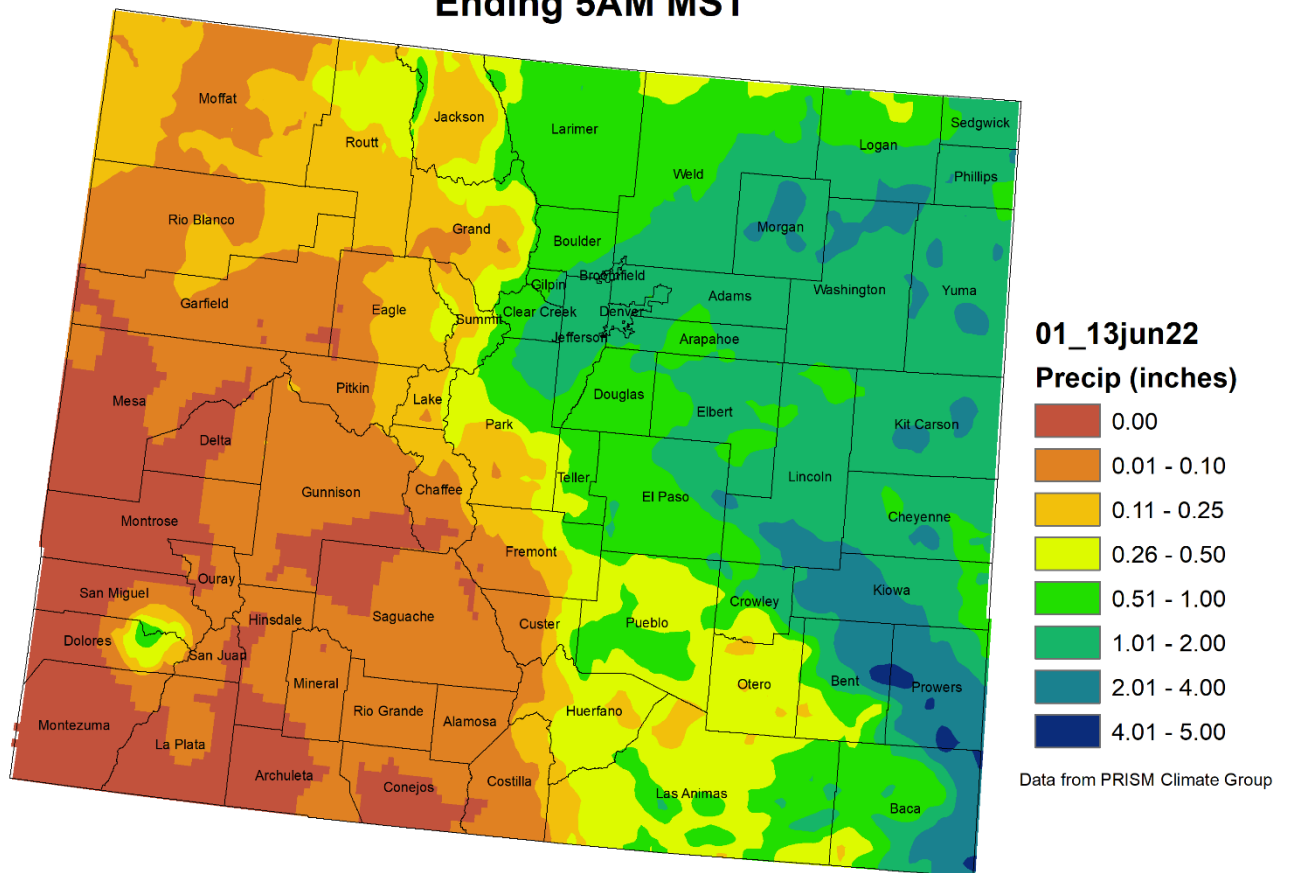
Source(s): UC Merced, Climate Engine
Last Updated - 06/09/22

Drought.gov

Precipitation

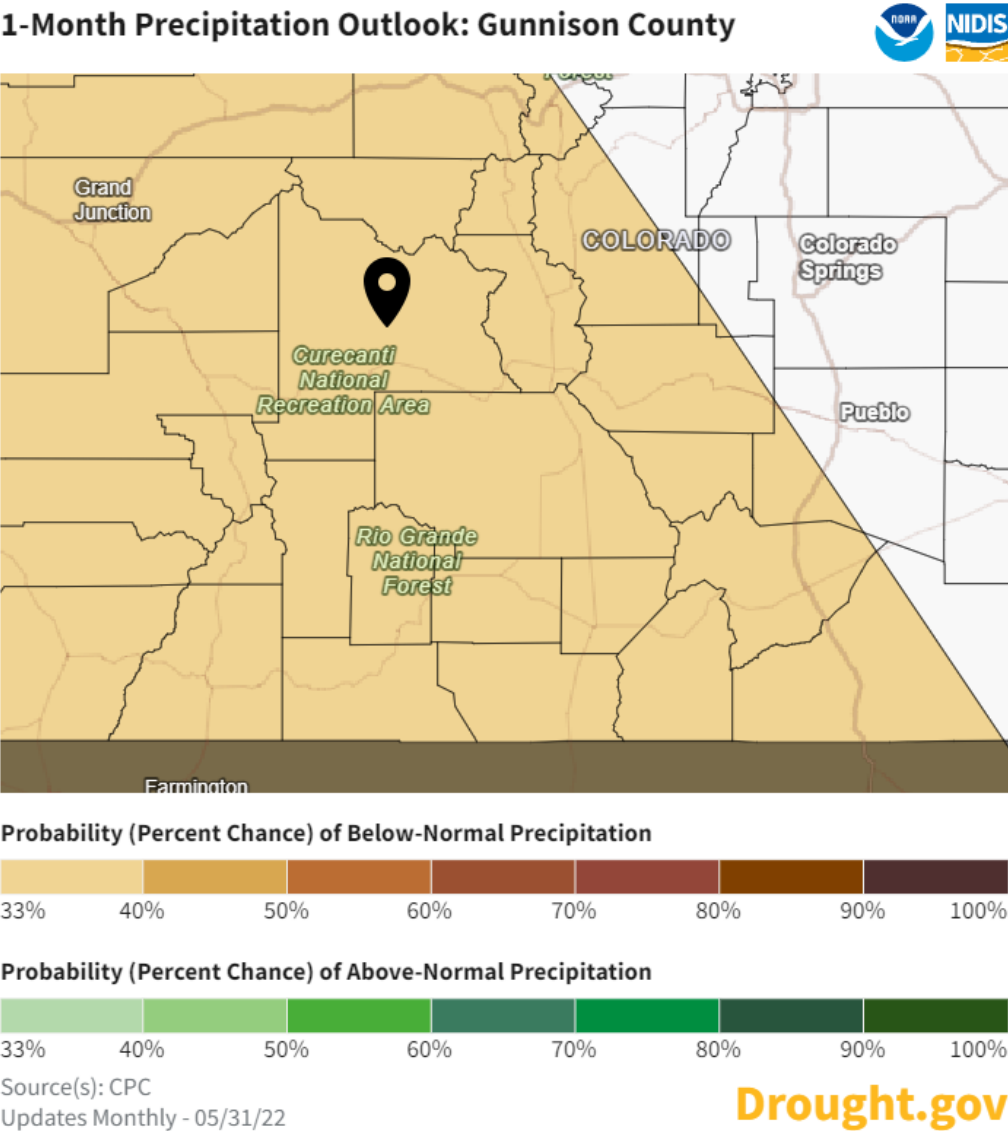
According to the *Colorado Climate Center Drought Update, June 15, 2022*, the month to date precipitation shows that all three counties (Gunnison, Hinsdale, and Saguache) have received very little to no precipitation since the beginning of the month.

Colorado Month to Date Precipitation 1 - 13 June 2022 Ending 5AM MST



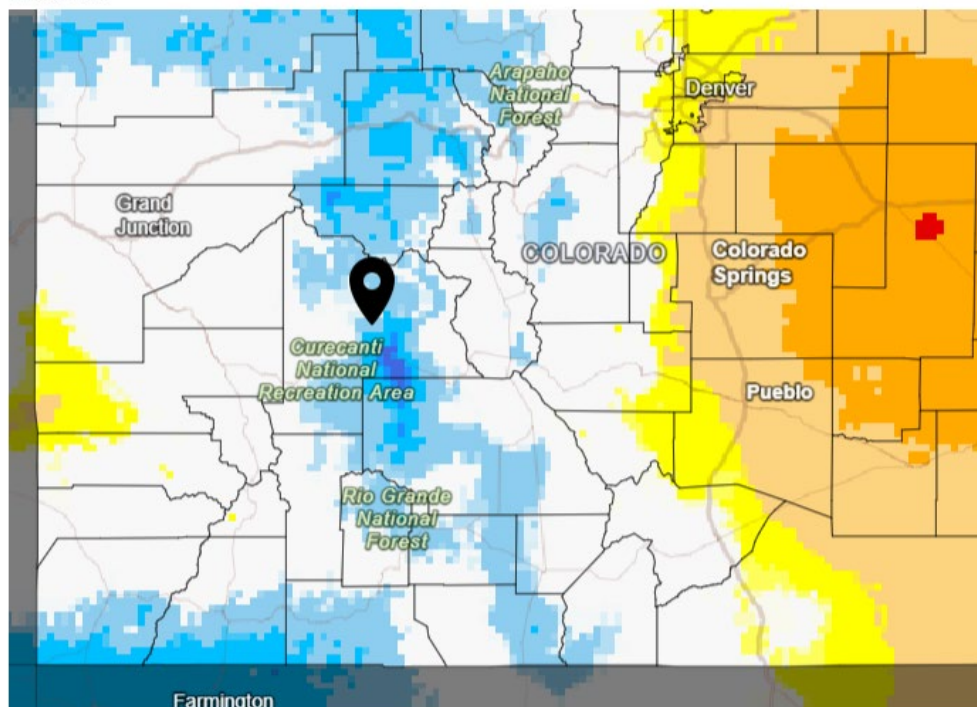
The 1-month precipitation outlook from *Drought.gov* shows that there is a 33% chance that precipitation in the area will be below normal. This is shown in the figure below. Many of the forecast centers are still

stating that the monsoon season is approaching which should help conditions but many of them are not optimistic about that this year.



The figure below incorporates the monsoon season into the 4-week forecast for evaporative demand (EDDI) which shows that wetter conditions could occur in areas of all three counties. This is what is projected and the next status update will incorporate the actual conditions as we move into July.

Evaporative Demand Drought Index (EDDI) Forecast: 4 Weeks



Dry Conditions



Wet Conditions



Source(s): UC Merced

Updates Daily - 06/15/22

Drought.gov

Dust on Snow (Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies)

According to the *Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies* as of May 27, the snow season is nearly over with the bulk of the snowpack melting over a month early in some regions. Streamflows have peaked particularly in Southern Colorado and in many cases this occurred a month early.

The Center and Colorado Dust on Snow Program (CODOS) will be drafting a summary report for this unique dusty winter season. The preliminary analyses shows record snow melt rates in April at numerous SNOTEL sites. For example, at Slumgullion the top three years of average daily loss were 2022, 2018, and 2017 (.23", .20", and .16" per day respectively). More information will be provided once the summary report is complete.

Streamflow

As stated above, streamflows in the Upper Gunnison Basin have peaked and this occurred early for the year. Streamflows continue to decline as all have decreased since the May status report and all stations are well below the historical average for this date.

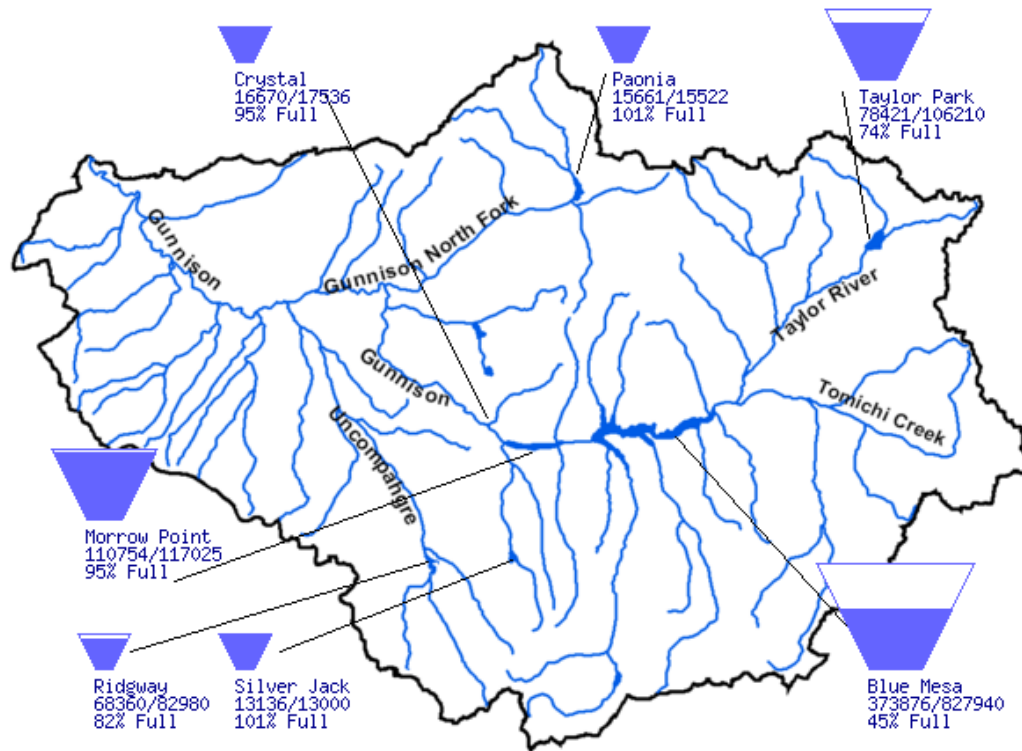
Station Name	May 12 (cfs)	June 15 (cfs)	Historical Average June 15(cfs)
Gunnison River near Gunnison	2,080	1,530	2,578
Gunnison River at Gunnison Whitewater Park	1,970	1,520	2,136
Tomichi Creek at Sargent's	229	57	200
Tomichi Creek at Gunnison	286	87	486
Taylor River at Taylor Park	278	278	401
Taylor River blw Taylor Park	140	297	352
Slate River abv Baxter Gulch	836	438	558
East River blw Cement Creek	1,470	1,010	1,217
East River at Almont	1,360	974	1,420
Lake Fork blw Lake San Cristobal	309	140	560
Henson Creek at Lake City	312	222	501
Lake Fork at Gateview	632	330	989

Reservoir Storage

As of June 13, current reservoir storage in the entire Gunnison Basin is at 84% of full. The reservoirs in the Upper Gunnison Basin, Taylor and Blue Mesa, are at 74% and 45% respectively, which is a considerable increase from May 12th update due to runoff. This is reflected in the tea-cup diagram below.

Data Current as of:
06/13/2022

Gunnison River Basin, CO



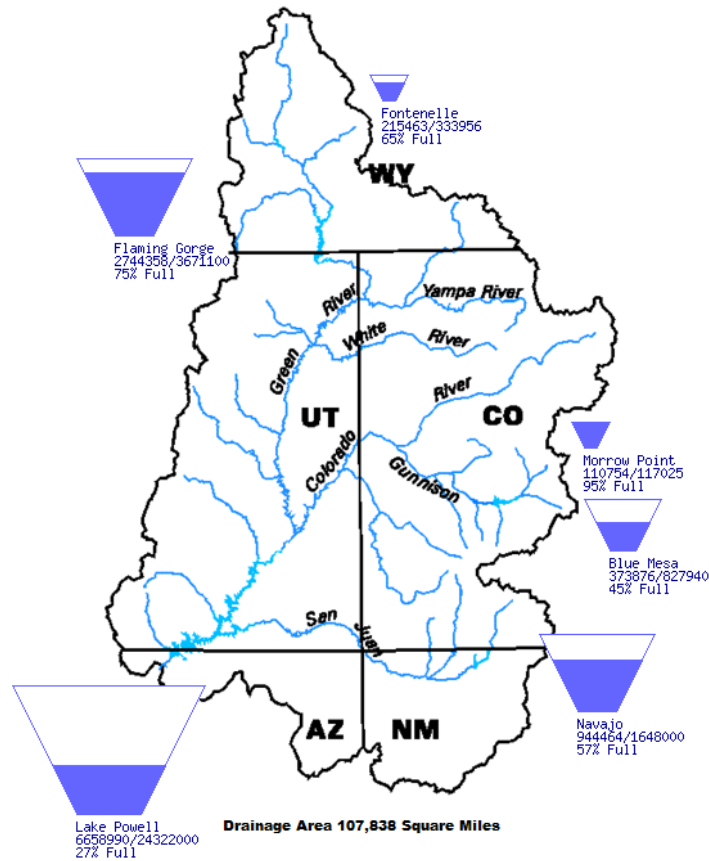
Reservoir storage for the Upper Colorado River Basin is currently at 60% of full and is broken down below:

- Flaming Gorge – 75% full
- Fontenelle – 57% full
- Morrow Point – 95% full
- Blue Mesa – 44% full
- Navajo – 58% full
- **Lake Powell – 27% full**

This is also reflected in the tea-cup diagram provided below. With the anticipated 500,000 acre-feet release from Flaming Gorge, this could result in a reduction in storage amount for that reservoir to 2,244,358 acre-feet or 61% of full.

Data Current as of:
06/13/2022

Upper Colorado River Drainage Basin



Aspinall Unit Operations

This update was provided by the *Bureau of Reclamation* and is dated June 9, 2022.

The unregulated inflow volume for May into Blue Mesa was 176,837 acre-feet which is 87% of average for the month. The forecasts are projecting that inflow into Blue Mesa for June-August could be 229,000 acre-feet which is 56% of average unregulated inflow. The total forecasted inflow for WY22 is projected to be a total of 637,200 acre-feet which is 70% of average based on the rolling average.

Levels in Blue Mesa are gradually increasing, as reflected in the tea-cup diagram above, and is currently at a 45% of capacity. At the end of the water year, the content is projected to be 295,000 acre-feet of storage or 35% of capacity. It is also being forecasted that the end of calendar year content will be 247,000 acre-feet or 29% of full.

As per the update, releases from Crystal Dam are approximately 1,350 cfs. Gunnison Tunnel diversions are in process and are approximately 1,030 cfs. Flows in the Gunnison River in the Blask Canyon are currently being maintained at about 320 cfs while the flows in the Whitewater Reach of the Gunnison are approximately 2,200.

Taylor Park Reservoir Operations:

The Bureau of Reclamation provided an update on Taylor Park Reservoir operations using the June 1 forecast from the CBRFC. This forecast indicated that there will be 80,000 acre-feet of runoff flowing into the reservoir which is 85% of average.

Based upon the forecast, the BOR provided suggested releases for Taylor Park Reservoir. Discussions with the Taylor Local Users Group resulted in the following preliminary operations plan.

RELEASE CHANGES		
	<u>4 Parties</u>	<u>June 1</u>
Apr-16	125	125
May-01	140	140
May-16	200	200
May-17	250	250
Jun-01	350	350
Jun-02	445	445
Jun-07	400	400
Jun-08	350	350
Jun-09		300
Jun-16	350	275
Jul-01	350	275
Jul-16	350	275
Jul-24	300	
Aug-01	300	250
Aug-16	250	250
Sep-01	250	250
Sep-06		225
Sep-07		200
Sep-16	225	
Sep-17	200	
Sep-27		175
Sep-28		150
Sep-29		125
Sep-30		100
Oct-01	175	
Oct-02	150	
Oct-03	125	
Oct-04	100	
Oct-16	91	85
Nov-01	91	85
Max Fill	84,175	85,850

Based on this proposed operations plan, the end of October storage in the reservoir is projected to be 70,000 acre-feet which is approximately 66% of full.

The next TLUG meeting is scheduled for July 8, 2022, at 9:00 a.m.

Meridian Lake Reservoir Update:

Sonja Chavez performed a site visit on June 1 to Meridian Lake Reservoir in order to provide an elevation measurement. Based on the visit, the reservoir is currently at 9,607 feet elevation which corresponds to 442.04 storage content. This indicates that the reservoir is full as shown in the picture below where the water is overtopping evidenced by flow coming out of the overflow pipe.



Lake Level



Overflow Pipe



Seepage

Lake San Cristobal Update:

The current elevation (June 14) for Lake San Cristobal is 8995.39 feet which is up slightly from the May reading of 8,994.88. The flows out of the reservoir are currently at 153 cfs and the current flows at the Lake Fork at Gateview are 363 cfs.

Lake Powell Update:

The current update was provided on May 4, 2022, on the *Glen Canyon Dam Operations* page provided by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR).

The BOR announced two separate urgent drought response actions that may help Lake Powell over the next 12 months (May 2022-April 2023). This could mean up to 1 million acre-feet (maf) of water in Lake Powell due to increased releases into the lake from upstream reservoirs and less releases from the lake to downstream. These are outline below:

- Under a Drought Contingency Plan adopted in 2019, approximately 500,000 acre-feet (kaf) of water will come from Flaming Gorge Reservoir, located approximately 455 river miles upstream of Lake Powell.
- Another 480 kaf will be left in Lake Powell by reducing Glen Canyon Dam's annual release volume from 7.48 maf to 7.0 maf, as outlined in the 2007 Interim Guidelines.

The forecast for WY22 projects that the most probable unregulated inflow volume will be 5.98 maf which is 62% of average. Based upon this forecast there is a 10% chance that inflows could be either higher or lower than that forecasted amount. Also based upon this forecast, it is projected that Lake Powell will end the WY22 near 3,528.27 elevation with approximately 6.15 maf which is 25% of capacity. The annual release volume from Lake Powell during WY22 will be 7.0 maf as determined under Section 6.C.1 and 7.D of the Interim Guidelines as determined by the Department of the Interior.

At the beginning of WY22 the total system storage in the Colorado River Basin was 22.80 maf which is 38% of capacity. This is a decrease of 5.97 maf over the total storage at the beginning of WY21 when total system storage was 28.77 maf or 48% of capacity. Since the beginning of WY00, total Colorado Basin

storage has experienced year to year increases and decreases in response to wet and dry hydrology, ranging from a high of 94% of capacity at the beginning of 2000 to the now current level of 38% of capacity at the beginning of WY22. Based on current inflow forecasts, the current projected end of WY22 total Colorado Basin reservoir storage is approximately 20.13 maf or 34% of total system capacity. The actual end of WY22 system storage may vary from this projection, primarily due to uncertainty regarding this season's runoff and reservoir inflow.

ASO Flights – East and Taylor River Basins

As per the *ASO/CASM Measurements* meeting held on June 15, 2022, all the snow on flights have been completed with the East River flights flown on April 21 and May 18, and the Taylor River flights flown on April 21 and May 25 due to turbulence issues. The data assimilated into WRF-Hydro for forecasting purposes is provided below:

Basin	Flight Date Forecast Date	WRF-Hydro SWE (AF) With ASO Data	NRCS (AF)	Difference in SWE Amount (AF)
East River	4/21/2022	191,000	177,000	14,000
	5/25/2022	163,000	162,000	1,000
	6/1/2022	161,000	159,000	2,000
Taylor River	4/21/2022	72,000	87,000	15,000
	5/18/2022	81,000	83,000	2,000
	6/1/2022	79,500	79,000	500

As you can see, these flights have added an additional layer to forecasting tools in both basins as the numbers converge with NRCS modeling data as more information/flights are provided. The Taylor River data is more important and forecast modeling has been ongoing in the basin for the longest period of any of the other basins involved in the ASO flight program.

Do your Rain Dance!

AGENDA ITEM 13

**General Manager, Committee
and Staff Updates**

AGENDA ITEM 13

Treasurer's Report

MEMORANDUM



TO: UGRWCD Board Members
FROM: Sonja Chavez, General Manager
DATE: June 17, 2022
SUBJECT: General Manager, Committee, and Staff Updates

I. Treasurer's Report (Director Nesbitt)

II. General Manager's Report

A. Miscellaneous Updates

- 1. 2021 Audit:** The current audit report is being reviewed by the General Manager, General Counsel, and Treasurer. At this time, the interview between our Treasurer and the auditor has not taken place as is historical practice. We anticipate having the final audit report available for publication at the July 2022 Board meeting.
- 2. Regulation #35 WQCC Rulemaking Hearing Outcomes**

Background: The Upper Gunnison Parties filed a Responsive Prehearing Statement to the Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) related to two proposals being brought forth by:

- *Homestake Mining Company* related to the Pitch Uranium Mine's proposal for extension of their uranium temporary modification standard on Marshall Creek; and
- *Mt. Emmons Mining Company (MEMC)* for extension of their temporary modification to extend the chronic cadmium temporary modification applied to Coal Creek (April, May, and June) until 12/31/27, to delete the seasonal temporary modification for copper, and protect the assimilative capacity in Coal Creek by renewing the Colorado Discharge Permit System (CDPS) for Keystone Mine.

The WQCC voted in support of the Water Quality Control Division's (WQCDs) staff recommendation to extend the temporary modification for uranium on Marshall Creek for three years during which time a remedial action plan and site-specific standard would be developed by Homestake Mine in consultation and collaboration with stakeholders including the Upper Gunnison Parties.

The WQCC voted in support of the WQCD staff recommendation to delete the seasonal temporary modification for copper and extend the temporary modifications for acute and chronic cadmium on Coal Creek.

The WQCC voted in support of 25 out of 26 Outstanding Water (OW) designation recommendations. There were two designations within the Upper Gunnison District watershed boundary:

- *Soap Creek* (Segment 3. Mainstem Soap Creek, including all tributaries and wetlands, from West Elk Wilderness boundary to Blue Mesa Reservoir. Note: This new segment was previously part of Segment 26; Also applied Recreation Class E to segment); and
- *Upper Taylor River* (Segment 3. Mainstem of Taylor River including all tributaries and wetlands, from the source to point immediately below confluence with Illinois Creek, except for listings in Segment 1. Note: Taylor River previously identified as Segment 4).

3. Outside Grant Applications

The District has submitted multiple grant applications since the March regular board meeting and has written several letters in support of Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) requests. Following is a summary of those funding requests and current status:

Summary of **submitted** grant applications in support of District activities. Most recent awards are in **red**:

- **GOCO Grant Application in support of Wet Meadows (\$158,100) – Awarded**
- Congressionally Directed Spending in support of Wet Meadows (\$1M) - **TBD**
- U.S. FWS Sagebrush Ecosystem Grant (\$955,158 \$273,350) – Awarded
- WaterSMART Drought Contingency Planning (DCP) Grant (\$140,480) – **TBD**
- Community Funding Partnership Program 2022 – *Blue Mesa Reservoir HABs High Frequency Sampling Study* (Amount). Submitted 6/16/22 – **TBD**
- **UCAR East River Basin Cloud Seeding Research (\$14,998) - Awarded**

TOTAL REQUESTS 2022: \$1.58M / TOTAL AWARDED: \$446,558

Summary of grant applications **in progress**:

- Community Funding Partnership Program 2022 – *Upper Gunnison Basin 2022 Bundled Grant Application Request* (Final Amount: TBD)
- Colorado Water Conservation Board – Upper Gunnison Stream Management Planning Grant in support of WMP (Final P.O. \$150,000)

Potential **future** grant applications:

- Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE) – Source Water Protection Planning grant request in support of Upper Gunnison Basin municipalities.
- America the Beautiful – perhaps in collaboration with the Gunnison Conservation District, Trout Unlimited and Colorado Department of Agriculture.

4. Colorado River District Updates

- *Andy Mueller, general manager of the Colorado River District, provided expert testimony to the Senate Subcommittee on Conservation, Climate, Forestry and Natural Resources on Tuesday, June 7, in Washington, D.C.*

Mueller presented on the mounting water crisis in the West and its effects on agricultural producers and forest watersheds on Colorado's Western Slope. In his presentation, he also focused on the impacts of climate change on water supplies in the Colorado River Basin and the federal action needed for impacted communities. Over the last 20 years, the flows of the Colorado River have been 20% below average due to a drought more severe than any in the last 1,200 years.

Mueller also encouraged members of the Senate to support Colorado water in the 2023 Farm Bill. Approximately every five years, Congress passes a farm bill, covering a wide range of issues from conservation to rural development to food and nutrition. Brent Gardner-Smith/Aspen Journalism

To view the entire Senate Subcommittee video, click here: [The Western Water Crisis: Confronting Pe... | Senate Committee On Agriculture, Nutrition & Forestry](#)

- **Water with Your Lunch – How to Make it Rain Federal Infrastructure Funding:** *During this installment of the Colorado River District's popular Water With Your Lunch series, West Slope water users will learn about ways to successfully navigate the federal funding opportunities provided by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. A cross-discipline team of River District staff members will present information about specific funding categories for water projects, how to put together a successful federal grant application, and how to leverage other grant opportunities to maximize funding and project impacts.*

*Along with a look at the various federal funding pools for water projects, River District staff will present details on the recently established Community Funding Partnership “**Accelerator Grant**.” This special funding opportunity is designed to support the grant-writing, feasibility, design, preliminary environmental review, benefit analysis, and engineering needed to complete federal funding applications. The deadline for this grant cycle is August 1. An audience Q&A session will follow the presentations.*

To register, please utilize the following link: [Water with Your Lunch - How to Make it Rain, Federal Infrastructure Funding \(coloradoriverdistrict.org\)](#)

5. Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee Hearing

On June 14th, 2022, there was a committee hearing of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee discussing ways to deal with extreme drought occurring in the western U.S.

Following is a link to that hearing if you wish to listen to all or portions of the hearing in which Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Camille C. Touton testified.

[Full Committee Hearing To Examine Short And Long Term Solutions To Extreme Drought... \(senate.gov\)](#)

B. Watershed Management Planning (WMP) Update (GM Chavez)

- Completed first draft of the Watershed Health & Wildfire Risk Assessment (Presentation by JW Associates at June 27, 2022 Board Meeting).
- Geo-fluvial summer field assessments underway (Watershed Restoration Science & Design)
- Reviewing first draft geologic and boatable days reports (revised WMP version)
- Conducting system optimization and infrastructure assessments. Two field days currently planned for June 28 and last week of July (specific day TBD).

C. Grant Program (Beverly Richards, Water Resource Specialist)

- 2022 Contracts: Completed – 3; In progress – 7; Not started - 4
- 2021 Contracts: Open – 7; Closed – 10. Three of the seven open contracts have expiration dates that have elapsed. Beverly has reached out via email and by phone with no response from two awardees at the time of drafting this memo. We will be sending certified letters the beginning of July for those that we have not heard back from, letting them know that they have until July 29th to respond, or their contracts will be effectively cancelled.
 - Total 2021 Grant Budget: \$204,130
 - Total Expended to Date: \$111,527
 - Balance Remaining: \$92,603

D. Wet Meadows Update (Cheryl Cwelich, Watershed Program Coordinator)

See Wet Meadows Program update memorandum.

E. Taylor Local Users Group (Director Sabrowski)

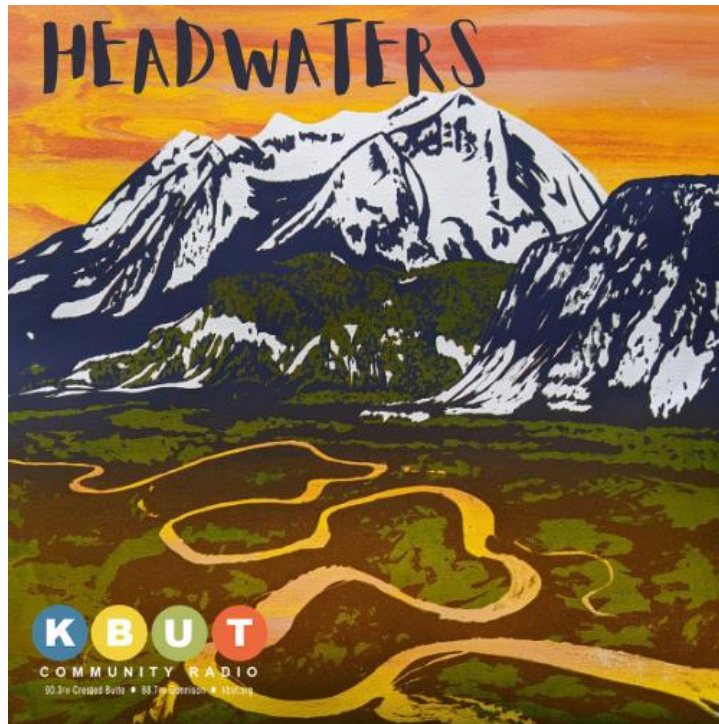
Verbal Update will be given by Director Sabrowski. Draft meeting minutes attached as Exhibit A.

F. Scientific Endeavors Update (Director Carroll)

KBUT Water Desk Headwaters Series by Stephanie Maltarich (To listen, click on the following links):

- 1) [Blue Mesa is threatened by a two-decade-long drought and downstream obligations. - KBUT Online](#)
- 2) [Scientists in the East River watershed collect ‘mountains of data’ to understand water in the West - KBUT Online](#)

- 3) [Advocacy and science work together to improve water quality in Coal Creek - KBUT Online](#)



Art by Jennie Noreen Omasta with financial support from the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District Mini-Grant Program.

G. Gunnison River Festival Update (Director Fonken)

TLUG Minutes from June 7, 2022

Draft v. 06-16-22

A TLUG meeting was held on Tuesday, June 7, 2022 via Zoom video/teleconference at 9:30am

Attending the meeting were the following TLUG members:

- Don Sabrowski, UGRWCD Board representative and TLUG Chair
- Ryan Birdsey, representative for flat water recreation interests
- Ernie Cockrell, representative for Taylor Placer
- Pete Dunda, representative for property owners
- Roark Kiklevich, representative for wade fishing interests (via Zoom)
- Mark Schumacher, representative for rafting/boating interests
- Andy Spann, representative for irrigation interests

Also present: Erik Knight (BOR), David Gochis (UCAR)

UGRWCD Staff: Sonja Chavez, Beverly Richards, Cheryl Cwelich, and Sue Uerling

Members of the Public: John Bocchino (Riffle and Rise LLC), Doug Forshagen

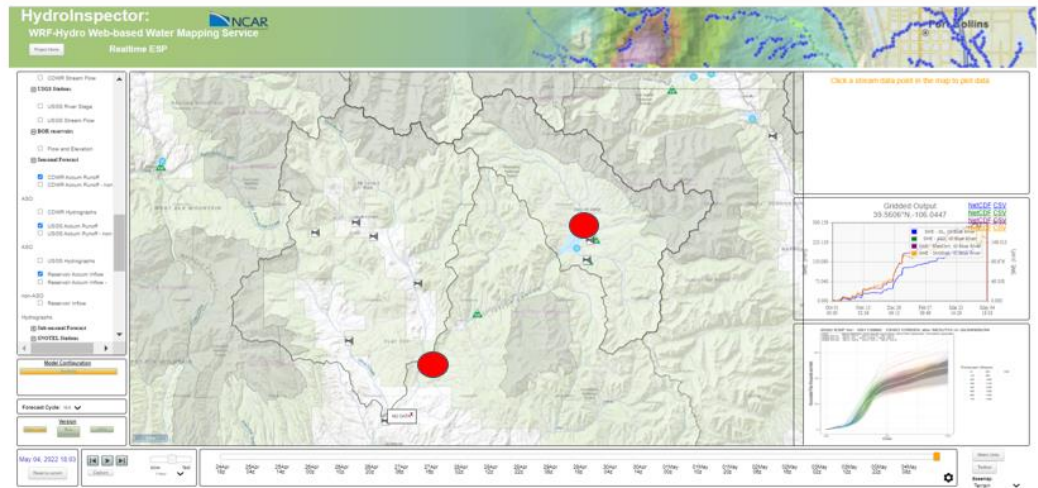
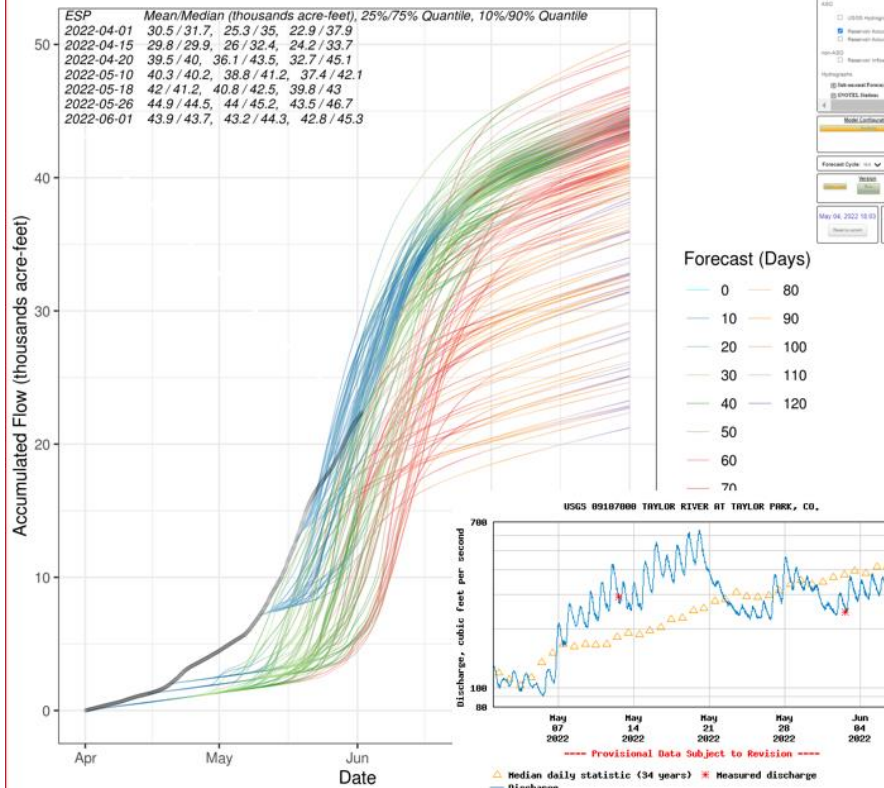
Agenda Item Ia: Review of May 5 meeting minutes:

- Ernie Cockrell – page 6 paragraph should say “...fish get concentrated at low flows...” not “...large influx of fish...”
- Roark Kiklevich – page 6 paragraph above should say “...hopes to never see winter flows below 75 cfs...” not “...hasn’t seen flows drop below 75 cfs...”
- Request to incorporate purpose of asterisk in flow recommendations and note that this paragraph was incorporated by Sonja to summarize the TLUG discussion and provide clarification for the minutes and Four Parties.
- Ernie – requested that minutes be distributed when finalized. *Post meeting follow-up note from UGRWCD:* Corrected and finalized April minutes were sent to the group on May 3rd via email.
- Request: Call the meeting summary “minutes”

Agenda Item II: Latest UCAR Model Forecast & ASO Flight Data (David Gochis, UCAR). Please see summary power point slide below.

WRF-Hydro Forecast: East R./Taylor R. – Jun 1

2022 ESP for: 09107000 TAYLOR RIVER AT TAYLOR PARK



Apr-Jul: (w/ ASO Assimilation)

- Taylor River @ Taylor Park: 43.7 kac-ft (90%/10% exceedance values: 42.8/45.3 kac-ft)
- Taylor Reservoir Inflow: 79.5 kac-ft (90%/10% exceedance values: 77.8/82.4 kac-ft)
 - CBRFC w/ ASO....71 kac-ft (w/out ASO 83 kac-ft)
 - May 1 NRCS...83 kac-ft



Agenda Item III. CBRFC Water Supply Update and USBR Model Forecast (Erik Knight, USBR)

Erik reviewed the Taylor Park Reservoir update report with the TLUG using the June 1 forecast of 80,000 AF of runoff into Taylor Park Reservoir (85% of average). The June 1 forecast is down 10,000 AF from the May 1 forecast and 7,000 AF from the May 15 forecast.

This runoff forecast puts the year type in the Average Year category. In the Average Year category there is a requirement for a spring peak release of 445 cfs for 5 days. The end of October target content is 70,000 AF.

The preliminary operations plan shows the reservoir filling to a maximum seasonal content of 86,850 acre-feet (82% full) at elevation 9319.9 ft.

Releases from Taylor Park Dam are currently at 450 cfs as part of the spring peak release. Releases are scheduled to decrease over the next couple days.

The report from Erik contained adjustments to the previous May release schedule provided to the Four Parties to keep the projected reservoir content above 70,000 acre-feet on Oct 31. Graphs and tables comparing the release schedule agreed upon at the Four Parties meeting along with the latest proposed plan are included in the report (Attached as Exhibit A).

Agenda Item IV. TLUG Operational Flow Release Recommendations

Following is a table of recommended changes to the operational flow releases developed by Erik for consideration by the TLUG at the June 7, 2022 meeting.

There was some discussion on whether the TLUG should make cuts now due to the declining forecast. It was ultimately decided against since 300 cfs in the June – July period is getting on the very lower end of minimum flows needed by agricultural users at a critical period in the growing season and it can be important for the boaters as well if there are no or minimal additional inputs from side channels. The TLUG agreed that they would likely, once again, have to forego water in September.

There were questions from the TLUG on where the water went between the May and June inflow forecasts. Erik indicated that it could be persistent wind, dust on snow, it was never there in the first place or dry soil conditions soaked it up and that water never made it to the rivers.

There was also a question about repairs to Spring Creek Reservoir and anticipated flows as downstream homeowners are dependent upon water. Dan Brauch was not present to answer the question, so Don responded based upon his conversations with CPW. He indicated CPW had hoped to install the gate by June 10. Inflows were greater than the outlet pipe could handle so they had to store some of that snowmelt water as the current outlet pipe can only handle a max of 40 cfs safely. Release will remain constant at 40 cfs until water levels drops below pipe and then it will be back to flows that the creek can produce.

There was unanimous agreement from the TLUG to accept Erik's flow recommendations as provided (see below).

RELEASE CHANGES

	<u>4 Parties</u>	<u>June 1</u>
Apr-16	125	125
May-01	140	140
May-16	200	200
May-17	250	250
Jun-01	350	350
Jun-02	445	445
Jun-07	400	400
Jun-08	350	350
Jun-09		300
Jun-16	350	275
Jul-01	350	275
Jul-16	350	275
Jul-24	300	
Aug-01	300	250
Aug-16	250	250
Sep-01	250	250
Sep-06		225
Sep-07		200
Sep-16	225	
Sep-17	200	
Sep-27		175
Sep-28		150
Sep-29		125
Sep-30		100
Oct-01	175	
Oct-02	150	
Oct-03	125	
Oct-04	100	
Oct-16	91	85
Nov-01	91	85

Max Fill 84,175 85,850

October-31 59,800 70,000

Pete Dunda asked if there was some type of training or education given to public boaters regarding respecting private property. Mark indicated that when they rent out boats to private boaters, they have them sign a waiver that says they will respect private property rights. He also indicated that American Whitewater does a lot of education. No further action was recommended by the TLUG.

Agenda Item V. Citizens Comments

There was a question from the public (John Bocchino) that visual observation did not support 800 cfs inflow into Taylor Reservoir. Erik clarified that the forecast of inflow comes from the CBRFC based upon snow they believe is still up in the basin. It may or may not be realized by June 12th. The CBRFC model factors in/predicts weather conditions going forward and sometimes when weather changes either way, it can throw those predictions off.

Agenda Item VI. Miscellaneous Updates and Schedule Next Meeting

Sonja indicated that the 2022 Water Roundup Conference had been cancelled due to staff illness. The UGRWCD is unsure if it will be rescheduled for this year or if staff will just put off to next year.

Next Meeting is set for July 8th at 9am.

Meeting adjourned at: 10:34 a.m.

MEMORANDUM



TO: UGRWCD Board of Directors
FROM: Cheryl Cwelich, Watershed Program Coordinator
DATE: June 16, 2022
SUBJECT: Wet Meadows Program Update (June)

During the month of June, the following activities have commenced or been completed in the Gunnison Basin Wet Meadows & Riparian Restoration Collaborative (GBWMRRC):

Notable Activities Completed or in Progress

- Completed initial Wet Meadow site assessments and construction layout at a total of 17 locations across the Gunnison Basin, including recent sites at:
 - Black Sage Pass
 - Monson Gulch
 - Spring Creek
 - Upper Willow Creek
- CPW conservation crew started restoration work on June 6th at Cabin Creek.
- Presented to Western Water Futures Games attendees about wet meadow restoration history, treatments and successes on May 23rd.
- Exhibited wet meadows practices to 4-H Club using NRCS water trailer on June 15th.
- Continuing to standardize data collection practices with partners in the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service and Colorado Parks & Wildlife in close collaboration with The Nature Conservancy (TNC).
- Awaiting final grant award announcements on Congressional Directed Spending (CDS) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) funding.
- Submitted final invoice on the U.S Forest Service (USFS) funding agreement of \$32,941.05. A new funding agreement with the USFS is being developed.
- Awarded Greater Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant of \$158,100 for wet meadows & riparian area restoration planning and capacity building.

AGENDA ITEM 13

Scientific Endeavors Update

AGENDA ITEM 13

Gunnison River Festival Update

AGENDA ITEM 14

Miscellaneous Matters

Monthly Energy Production Report

Generated for Beverly Richards
on 06/15/2022

UGRWCD

Gunnison, CO

This report provides energy production for June.

Week	Peak Power	Energy Produced
06/01/2022 - 06/07/2022	5.92 kW	305 kWh
06/08/2022 - 06/14/2022	5.93 kW	319 kWh
06/15/2022 - 06/21/2022	5.92 kW	0 Wh
06/22/2022 - 06/28/2022	0 W	0 Wh
06/29/2022 - 06/30/2022	0 W	0 Wh
June 2022 Total:		624 kWh
Previous Month Total:		1.32 MWh
Year to Date:		5.44 MWh
Lifetime Production:		31.3 MWh

Your **Carbon Offset** for this month: 951.0 lbs

You have offset the equivalent of: **11 Trees**



Browser not supported

Use Microsoft Edge, Google Chrome, Firefox or Safari to access the fresh new look of MyEnphase with the exciting new features.

Ok, Got It

6 <---- Month to Summarize (change this number to look at a different month)

PRELIMINARY - SUBJECT TO REVISION

TO

Daily Summary for Month --> **Jun**

						Taylor Park Reservoir								Silver Jack Reservoir				Aspinall Unit								GUNNISON TUNNEL ALLOCATION												
River Call						Average Flow		Reservoir				1st Fill	2nd Fill	Other	Aspinall	Reservoir		BP Acct	AU Acct	Reservoir Contents			Total Aspinall Unit Inflow			1st Fill	Contract	Streamflow and Divs		Type of Water Diverted into Tunnel								Tot 1st fill
Day of Month	Tunnel (GT) Excess Shortage after AU				3-Day Average	3-Day Ave. GT					Other Account				SJ Inflow to		AU												GT Divs - UGRWC D Contract water (af)								Remain. 1st Fill Credits in TP and AU (af)	
	Silver Jack Reservoir & Juniors In Priority (1=Yes, 0=No)	TP Releases from TP 1st Fill (1=Yes, 0=No)	Released TP Inflow and AU Nat Inflow (cfs)	Nat Inflow and TP Inflow (cfs)	Excess TP Inflow and AU Nat Inflow (cfs)	Shortage after AU Nat Inflow (cfs)	TP Res. Content (af)	USGS outflow (cfs)	Computed Inflow (cfs)	1st Fill - in TP (af)	2nd Fill - in TP (af)	Storage in TP - Storage in TP - (af)	AU Storage in TP (af)	SJ Res Content (af)	Reservoir Storage (cfs)	BP - Storage - in SJ (af)	Water - Storage - in SJ (af)	BM Res Content (af)	MP Res Content (af)	CR Res Content (af)	AU Change In Storage (af)	Computed rel from CR (cfs)	AU inflow & with AU Aug Rel (cfs)	#REF!	#REF!	Gun. River below Portal (cfs)	Total Gunnison Tunnel Divs (cfs)	GT Divs - AU inflow minus TP released (cfs)	GT Divs - TP Released Inflow (cfs)	GT Divs - SJ Inflow by AU Exch (cfs)	UGRWC D Contract Water Rel (cfs)	Rel from 2nd Fill for Rec/Fish (cfs)	GT Divs - 1st Fill Credit in BM (cfs)	#REF!				
(1)	(2)	(3)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(11)	(14)	(15)	(19)	(25)	(30)	(34)	(36)	(39)	(43)	(47)	(49)	(77)	(100)	(124)	(125)	(127)	#REF!	#REF!	(128)	(131)	(132)	(133)	(134)	(135)	(136)	(137)	#REF!	(140)			
1	1	1	1,433	0	1,914	0	74,136	300	364	18,534	55,602	0	0	13,186	21	13,186	0	340,864	109,718	16,671	1,861	1,409	2,098			380	1,029	1,029	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,741			
2	1	1	1,720	0	1,682	0	74,202	420	459	17,698	56,504	0	0	13,195	6	13,195	0	343,163	110,070	16,499	2,479	1,410	2,291			380	1,030	1,030	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,738			
3	1	1	1,902	0	1,685	0	74,301	448	504	16,807	57,494	0	0	13,141	0	13,141	0	345,638	110,282	16,618	2,806	1,411	2,429			380	1,031	1,031	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,735			
4	1	1	1,813	0	1,812	0	74,449	449	529	15,914	58,535	0	0	13,150	6	13,150	0	348,366	110,125	16,630	2,583	1,411	2,316			379	1,032	1,032	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,733			
5	1	1	1,917	0	1,877	0	74,614	449	538	15,021	59,593	0	0	13,168	10	13,168	0	350,747	110,446	16,700	2,772	1,411	2,412			379	1,032	1,032	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,731			
6	1	1	2,351	0	2,027	0	74,795	450	547	14,126	60,669	0	0	13,171	3	13,171	0	354,154	110,540	16,812	3,613	1,413	2,837			380	1,033	1,033	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,728			
7	1	1	2,506	0	2,258	0	75,213	418	634	13,295	61,919	0	0	13,198	15	13,198	0	357,581	110,673	16,938	3,686	1,413	2,905			379	1,034	1,034	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,726			
8	1	1	2,367	0	2,408	0	75,714	364	623	12,571	63,144	0	0	13,198	1	13,198	0	361,454	110,141	16,923	3,327	1,411	2,777			379	1,032	1,032	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,724			
9	1	1	2,479	0	2,451	0	76,266	313	597	11,948	64,318	0	0	13,195	0	13,195	0	364,793	110,399	16,891	3,565	1,377	2,914			345	1,032	1,032	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,722			
10	1	1	2,483	0	2,443	0	76,873	302	614	11,347	65,526	0	0	13,189	0	13,189	0	368,470	110,391	16,770	3,549	1,355	2,896			329	1,026	1,026	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,720			
11	1	1	2,361	0	2,441	0	77,483	302	615	10,746	66,736	0	0	13,162	0	13,162	0	371,727	110,470	16,738	3,303	1,362	2,778			329	1,033	1,033	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,719			
12	1	1	2,019	0	2,287	0	78,024	303	582	10,144	67,881	0	0	13,144	0	13,144	0	374,883	109,992	16,747	2,688	1,365	2,471			331	1,034	1,034	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,717			
13	1	1	2,296	0	2,225	0	78,418	303	507	9,541	68,877	0	0	13,132	0	13,132	0	377,612	110,729	16,662	3,380	1,368	2,823			334	1,034	1,034	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,715			
14	1	1	1,774	0	2,030	0	78,761	304	483	8,937	69,825	0	0	13,114	0	13,114	0	380,050	110,768	16,580	2,396	1,366	2,324			333	1,033	1,033	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,714			
15	1	1							0																		0											
16	1	1							0																		0											
17	1	1							0																		0											
18	1	1							0																		0											
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28	1	1							0																		0											
29	1	1							0																		0											
30	1	1							0																		0											
31																																						
Total	30	30	29,421	0	29,540	0	5,125	7,596						60							42,006	19,482	36,270			5,037	14,445	14,445	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Tot (af)			58,357	0	58,593	0	10,165	15,067						119							83,319	38,642	71,941			9,991	28,651	28,651	0	0	0	0	0	0				
Min	1	1	1,433	0	1,682	0	74,136	0	364	8,937	55,602	0	0	13,114	0	13,114	0	340,864	109,718	16,499	1,861	1,355	2,098		0	0	0	1,026	1,026	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,714		
Max	1	1	2,506	0	2,451	0	78,761	450	634	18,534	69,825	0	0	13,198	21	13,198	0	380,050	110,768	16,938	3,686	1,413	2,914		0	0	380	1,034	1,034	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,741		

Annual Summary (all values in ac-ft) Note: Reservoir content is the end of the month content

	(days)	(days)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)			(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)	(af)		
Nov	30	30	33,397	0	31,516	0	58,737	4,470	4,632	54,117	4,620	0	0	1,713	300	1,713	0	220,759	110,430	15,977	11,721	20,025	29,369			19,420	604	604	0	0	0	0	105,924	
Dec	31	31	25,577	0	25,158	0	58,695	4,564	4,521	49,554	9,141	0	0	1,790	166	1,790	0	232,145	105,687	16,102	6,769	20,080	22,285			18,851	1,229	1,229	0	0	0	0	105,924	
Jan	31	31	22,806	0	23,602	0	58,327	4,412	4,043	45,142	13,184	0	0	1,880	90	1,880	0	237,819	104,652	16,186	4,722	19,520	19,830			18,453	1,067	1,067	0	0	0	0	105,924	
Feb	28	28	20,714	0	20,519	0	57,749	4,096	3,518	41,046	16,703	0	0	1,870	10	1,870	0	242,463	105,444	15,052	4,304	17,228	17,436			16,989	239	239	0	0	0	0	105,924	
Mar	31	31	31,306	0	30,735	0	57,303	4,581	4,135	36,564	20,739	0	0	1,977	107	1,977	0	240,539	108,948	16,820	3,347	32,745	35,299			24,617	8,128	8,030	99	0	0	0	105,924	
Apr	30	30	42,788	22	41,529	22	59,219	5,945	7,861	31,187	28,032	0	0	4,629	2,652	4,629	0	254,027	111,643	16,753	16,115	54,717	66,142			23,481	31,237	30,577	554	0	14	92	105,832	
May	31	31	148,388	0	146,825	0	74,021	11,966	26,989	19,132	54,889	0	0	13,147	8,806	13,147	0	338,237	110,673	16,481	82,970	107,604	180,566			48,437	59,167	59,167	0	0	0	0	105,744	
Jun	30	30	58,357	0	58,593	0		10,165	15,067					119							42,006	38,642	71,941			9,991	28,651	28,651	0	0	0	0		
Jul	31	31	0	0	0	0		0	0					0							0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Aug	31	31	0	0	0	0		0	0					0							0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Sep	30	30	0	0	0	0		0	0					0							0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Oct	31	31	0	0	0	0		0	0					0							0	0	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Total	365	365	383,334	22	378,478	22		50,199	70,766					12,250							171,953	310,561	442,868			180,239	130,323	129,564	653	0	14	92	0	
Min	28	28	0	0	0	0	57,303	0	0	19,132	9,141	0	0	1,790	0	1,790	0	232,145	104,652	15,052	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	105,744
Max	31	31	148,388	22	146,825	22	74,021	11,966	26,989	49,554	54,889	0	0	13,147	8,806	13,147	0	338,237	111,643	16,820	82,970	107,604	180,566	0	0	48,437	59,167	59,167	554	0	14	92	0	105,924



Save the Date: Summer Conference - August 23-25, 2022

Save the date for the Summer Conference at the Steamboat Grand! We will meet August 23-25, 2022.

The Summer Conference will include updates and dialogue on Colorado water legislation, panel discussions on pressing water issues, and POND outings.

Registration and event details will be posted once finalized in the coming months.

Brandon
I Thank you
Sara
I soac
Brian
Mario
Daria
BANA
Thank you for letting us have fun - Mia
L Lelf
Jyn Thank you
Logan
for a fun
time.
Eisley
Grey Brent
Thak you
Loren
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Thank
YOU BY Alex
Charlotte
thank
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TJ
Grandma
Mila
Thank you
Yenifer
Aspen
Sylvia
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Tracy
Zoe
thank
you!
-B- Ruby
Blaine
Brynn
Heath
xavier. all
Josh
Ms. Khus
Iris
Penny
CESAR
HADASA
Kelly
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Thank
you!
-mike
Jazmin
Colton
Harlow
Sofia
Diana
Stacy
Harrison
Top
Alex
Thank
you
Brynn
Josh
Ms. Khus



WATER

Colorado River water use may have to be slashed by a quarter to avert crisis, federal official warns

Drought and other climate factors have already slowed the flow in Colorado and other Upper Basin states. Some water managers say cuts must come below Hoover Dam.



Chris Outcalt 4:10 AM MDT on Jun 16, 2022



The headwaters of the Colorado River flow near Kremmling, above Gore Canyon, on Aug. 13, 2020. (Dave Timko, This American Land)

Credibility: Original Reporting Sources Cited

Top Colorado water officials this week highlighted the uneven use between the Upper and Lower Colorado River Basins and some suggested the vast majority of reductions needed to rebalance a system in which use far outpaces supply would have to come from the Lower Basin.



New data released Tuesday by the Upper Colorado River Commission, an interstate agency that manages water in the Upper Basin, shows that in 2021, drought and other climate factors reduced the amount of water available in Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming by about 1 million acre-feet compared with the previous year. During that same time, according to the UCRC data, water use increased in the Lower Basin.

“Those provisional numbers show the Upper Basin used 25% less water in 2021 than it did in 2020,” Colorado River Commissioner Becky Mitchell said at an UCRC meeting Tuesday at the state capitol in Wyoming. “That is a huge number, especially when we’re talking about a smaller piece of the Colorado River pie.”

Also on Tuesday, Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Camille Touton warned Congress that Colorado River water users must cut their water usage by as much as one-fourth by the end of next year to address “critically low water levels” and prevent depleting the reservoirs past the point at which they can continue to function and produce hydropower.

Speaking to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, Touton said that the bureau will work with the seven Colorado River basin states and the tribes to come up with a plan during the next 60 days to reduce use across the basin by between 2 million and 4 million acre-feet. Touton cautioned that, if necessary, the bureau has the authority to “act unilaterally” to protect the system, which supplies water and generates electricity for millions of users across the West

TODAY'S
UNDERWRITER

According to the new UCRC numbers, total Upper Basin water use, including water lost to evaporation, added up to about 3.5 million acre-feet in 2021, a provisional number. That number was about 4.5 million acre-feet the previous year. The UCRC numbers show 2021 water use plus evaporation losses in the Lower Basin — California, Arizona and Nevada — at nearly 10 million acre-feet, which includes about a 1.5 million acre-foot portion for Mexico.

Water users in Colorado have already been getting by with less, said Andy Mueller, general manager of the Colorado River District. “No one got paid not to use water; no one enrolled in a federal program not to use water; this was water that was either legally or physically not available primarily at our rancher’s and farmer’s headgates in 2021,” he said. “They are doing what the commissioner has asked; they have reduced their use.”



Colorado and the other Upper Basin states do not have the benefit of massive reservoirs above them to hold water and instead rely on the runoff that's available each year. Climate factors such as drought and dry soil have made that runoff less reliable. Scientists predict the amount of water that will flow into Lake Powell this spring and summer to be 59% of average.

"Colorado water users are on the front lines of climate change," Mitchell said in a statement.



In the Lower Basin, water users can pull water from the country's two largest reservoirs, Lake Powell and Lake Mead. However, those reservoirs have been significantly depleted during the current megadrought, which scientists believe is the driest 22-year stretch during the past 1,200 years. The lakes are now both less than 30% full.

"When you have low runoff in the Upper Basin that means that the water users who normally have water late in the year don't," said Chuck Cullom, executive director of the Upper Colorado River Commission. He noted that the poor runoff in 2021 reduced supply available primarily to farmers and irrigators. "Folks with a junior priority who would normally have water available in August had to shut off in July."

For example, Cullom pointed out that last year the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe Farm & Ranch Enterprise in southwest Colorado received only 10% of its normal water supply.

Mitchell noted that Colorado and the Upper Basin states have contributed 661,000 acre-feet the past two years to help protect Lake Powell from falling below 3,490 feet above sea level, the minimum elevation required for Glen Canyon Dam to generate power. This year, 500,000 acre-feet will be released from Flaming Gorge on the Utah-Wyoming border. In 2021, the Department of the Interior pursued emergency action that included releasing 36,000 acre-feet from Blue Mesa near Gunnison and 125,000 acre-feet from Flaming Gorge.





The Daily Sun-Up



A cement kiln in Boulder County has made an c

00:00 / 17:53



The Daily Sun-Up

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Mueller said that in the case of federal reclamation projects that supply water to Colorado water users such as the Dolores Project in southwest Colorado and others there are emergency provisions in the contracts that could allow the federal government to reduce an allocation to those projects.

“Is the commissioner talking about reducing use in the Upper Basin?” Mueller said. “She might be. Given the imbalance of where the water is being taken out and used right now that would be very hard to stomach.”

Anne Castle, a senior fellow at the Getches-Wilkinson Center at the University of Colorado Law School, said that the numbers commissioner Touton spoke about to Congress are significant.

“People have been thinking along the lines of solving a 2 million acre-foot deficit problem but the range from 2 million to 4 million is a big range. Four million is almost infinitely harder than 2 million,” Castle said. “Those numbers are so big I don’t see that that gap can be bridged by one basin alone; it can’t be bridged by one sector alone, like the agriculture sector.”



Outgoing Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association Manager Steve Anderson, left, and UVWUA Operations Manager Dennis Veo walk through a gate leading to the East Portal of the Gunnison Tunnel in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison on Thursday Nov. 4, 2021. (William Woody, Special to The Colorado Sun)



Colorado River water use may have to be slashed by a quarter to avert crisis, federal official warns
In Colorado, agriculture uses about 85% of the water statewide.

Steve Pope, general manager of the Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association, one of the state's largest diverters of irrigation water, said the commissioner's testimony concerns him. The association manages the water that comes out of the Gunnison Tunnel, a federal project.

"How do you get more blood from a turnip," Pope said. "There is no Upper Basin storage. How are we going to come up with it?"

Denver Water CEO Jim Lochhead said significant reductions in demands on the river should have started several years ago. Denver Water gets about half of its supply from the Colorado River system.

"Everyone is going to have to contribute to solving the problem," Lochhead said in a statement, "but the vast majority of reductions are going to have to occur where the vast majority of water use has occurred — in the Lower Basin."

Ken Curtis, general manager of the Dolores Water Conservancy District, which manages the Dolores Project, said this year they're already operating on about a 30% supply.

"In some ways we're already doing forced conserved consumptive use," Curtis said. "They just have different opportunities given the plumbing down in the Lower Basin versus it coming right down off the mountains and off it goes."

Mueller said the Upper Basin can also manage demands better. He said marginal land that didn't get irrigated in the past few years would probably need to stay out of production for the foreseeable future. But, he said, the majority of the 2 million to 4 million acre-feet Commissioner Touton cited needs to come from the Lower Basin.

"It's time they reduce the flow out of the Hoover Dam, which means the Lower Basin has to cut their use. Period," Mueller said. "Oddly enough, the Bureau of Reclamation runs the facility that has allowed it to be that way."

We believe vital information needs to be seen by the people impacted, whether it's a public health crisis, investigative reporting or keeping lawmakers accountable. This reporting *depends* on support from readers like you.

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GUNNISON COUNTRY TIMES

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Thursday,
June 16,
2022



Gunnison summer in full swing

Ethan Pierce pitches during a Babe Ruth baseball game against Salida on Tuesday afternoon. The team's next home game, set for Tuesday the 21st, will be a double header inter-valley showdown against Crested Butte. Games are slated for 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.

County under Stage 1 fire restrictions

Sheriff cites worsening conditions in announcement

Alan Wartes

Times Publisher

As of midnight Wednesday, Stage 1 fire restrictions are in place throughout Gunnison County. Sheriff John Gallowich announced the decision on Tuesday. Last year, to shorten response time to changing conditions, county commissioners passed a resolution granting the sheriff the authority to impose and lift fire restrictions in the county without ratification by commissioners.

The move followed similar decisions by the National Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management to impose Stage 1 restrictions as of June 15. The

National Parks Service implemented restrictions within the Black Canyon National Park and Curecanti National Recreation Area, among other locations.

Federal guidelines trigger a meeting of the Gunnison Basin Wildfire Council when a pair of metrics reach the 90th percentile in the county — the Energy Release Component and the Burning Index. That condition was met June 13.

Council members include:

- Gunnison Volunteer Fire Department
- Crested Butte Fire Protection District
- Gunnison Sheriff's Office
- Crested Butte Marshal
- Mt. Crested Butte Police Department
- Forest Service
- BLM
- NPS

Gunnison County Office of Emergency Management

Once convened, the council

Fire restrictions A6

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OPINION: River Compact wearing thin, A13



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ONLINE
GUNNISONTIMES.COM

Dust on snow fuels rapid snowmelt

Peak runoff in basin occurs weeks early

Bella Blondini

Times Associate Editor

Persistent high winds and dust-on-snow events fueled rapid snowmelt in the Gunnison Valley and across southwestern Colorado this spring — the snow melting away earlier than normal, even at high elevations.

Gunnison Basin snowpack reached near normal peak snow water equivalent (SWE) this year, but peak runoff occurred almost three weeks early. Jeff Derry, the executive director of the Center for Snow and

Avalanche Studies based in Silverton, said most SNOTEL monitoring stations in southwestern Colorado lost their snow early this spring. A lack of sizable spring storms, high winds and dust on snow created conditions that were ripe for rapid melting and the early disappearance of the snowpack.

To illustrate the speedy decline, recent data collected by Aerial Snow Observatory flights revealed that, as of mid-June, the SWE of remaining snowpack in the Upper Gunnison Basin has fallen to 43,000 acre-feet, down from 119,000 in late April.

Once the melt started, it really kicked into high gear, Derry told the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District late last month.

Dust on snow A6



Strong dust loading onto the snowpack was a significant contributor to early melt out in the southern regions of the state including the San Juan Mountains.

GVH to acquire more employee housing

Housing and daycare costs fuel labor shortage

Paul Wayne Foreman

Times Staff Writer

Blue collar, white collar, no collar — finding afford-

able housing in the Gunnison Valley presents a challenge for employees and also for employers. At their June 7 meeting, Gunnison County Commissioners approved a Gunnison Valley Health (GVH) plan to purchase a pair of dwellings to add to their growing stock of employee housing.

The Gunnison properties, located at 115 Mountaineer Drive and 804 College Avenue,

join 11 other sites owned and managed by GVH as employee housing.

Although GVH is a Gunnison County enterprise fund, with financial accounting separate from Gunnison County itself, technically the properties are owned by the county. Commissioner approval is required for GVH property acquisition. Though the county owns the land, all the uses for

such properties are determined by GVH.

"The funds used for the purchase of these two properties, one a house and the other a condo, comes from GVH revenues," said Wade Baker, GVH vice president for administrative services. "No taxpayer dollars are being spent to buy these properties."

GVH housing A7

BRIEFS

Free community COVID testing ends June 30

COVIDCheck Colorado, Gunnison Valley Health (GVH) and Gunnison County Public Health recently announced that the free community COVID testing site, located at GVH, will cease operations after June 30.

COVIDCheck Colorado has been managing the site and is closing the Gunnison County location as part of the emergency response to the pandemic winding down.

Gunnison County Public Health Director, Joni Reynolds, stressed that testing options for the community will continue to be available.

"If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 or feel that you need to be tested, please schedule a visit with your primary care provider," Reynolds said. "They will evaluate your symptoms and support you to access the appropriate testing and treatment. COVID testing is also available through local pharmacies."

Although COVID testing will no longer be a free service, there are resources available to offset the cost for some individuals.

"This shift in testing is indicative of the continued progression to the endemic phase of COVID, but there are resources available to help people who cannot afford testing," Reynolds said. "If you are in need of a COVID test, but don't have the ability to pay, please contact Public Health for assistance through our Community Service Block Grant."

Immigrant Heritage Month

On June 6, Gunnison Mayor Diego Plata proclaimed June 2022 as Immigrant Heritage Month. He encouraged residents to learn more about the social and economic impact of immigrants to the community and state.

"During National Immigrant Heritage Month, we reaffirm and draw strength from that enduring identity and celebrate the history and achievements of immigrant communities across our Nation," Plata wrote.

Upper Gunnison board reappointments

The chief district judge on June 3 reappointed Stacy McPhail - Division 6 (Ohio Creek), Andy Spann - Division 7 (Gunnison River) and Sara Bergstrom and John Perusek - Division 8 (City of Gunnison) to serve on the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District's board of directors. No other applications were submitted.

The conservancy district is governed by a board of 11 directors who represent eight geographical divisions throughout the watershed. A director must reside and own property within his or her division and must be knowledgeable in water matters affecting the Upper Gunnison River Basin.



Gubernatorial candidate Heidi Ganahl



Gunnison County Commissioner candidate Rich Evans



Gubernatorial candidate Greg Lopez

County Republicans hold annual Lincoln Day event

More than a hundred people gathered at the Three Rivers Resort in Almont last Saturday for a BBQ lunch and to hear presentations from a lineup of Republican candidates and others. Organized by Gunnison County Republicans, the event notably featured speeches by U.S. Congressional District 3 Rep. Lauren Boebert and Republican primary gubernatorial candidates Heidi Ganahl and Greg Lopez. Also speaking were Rep. Marc Catlin, who represents Colorado House District 58 and Gunnison County Commissioner candidate Rich Evans.



U.S. Rep. Lauren Boebert



Gunnison Watershed School District board member Mandy Roberts and U.S. Rep. Lauren Boebert present a birthday cake to Jo Laird.

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NEW LISTING Willow Creek Drainage is 660 deeded acres overlooking Mill Creek & the Ohio Creek Valley, with awesome views of the Castles & Anthracites. So much to offer for the outdoor enthusiast, from RV camping, fall hunting camps & hiking. Large elk & mule deer herds nestled in the aspen & pine groves. Owners get 2 deer tags for Unit 54. 2500 County Road 6: \$1,900,000.

HOME ON 50 ACRES in Ohio City features an excellent mixture of wildlife, nearby trails, aspen, pines & 300 feet of Gold Creek frontage. 3 bdrm/2 bath house, huge attached garage, large detached barn, touched by Forest Service lands, 5498 County Road 771: \$1,750,000.

NEW LISTING Well cared for 2 bedroom/1 bath home at Three Rivers Park in Almont has a wonderful yard with mature landscaping, a deck, and a facing patio. Features a storage shed, a woodstove & partially remodeled. 55 George Bailey Drive #16: \$70,000.

3.30 ACRE parcel in Blue Mesa Subdivision has great mountain views & is ready for your cabin or weekend getaway. Phone & electric nearby. Located between Lake City & Gunnison off Highway 149. 4751 Blue Mesa Drive: \$47,000.

LAND FOR SALE Nice lot in-town in Whitepine would be a great location to build your dream cabin or park your RV. 9900 County Road 888; \$25,000.

SPORTSMAN'S RESORT in Ohio City features a 3 bdrm/1 bath. 1808sf main house with year-round access location, mature trees, all positioned on 1.28 acres. Rustic cabins onsite would make great storage. 116 County Road 771: \$499,900.

GORGEOUS 2 bdrm/2 bath Fairway condo near the Rios Golf Course features fully remodeled kitchen & bathrooms, balcony off the master bedroom, a partially fenced backyard & 1 car attached garage. 105 Shavano Dr. #B-3; \$399,000.

People's Choice Award for Best Realtor 2021
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Fire restrictions

from A1

evaluates conditions based on a number of factors, including available firefighting resources, the prevalence of fires started by humans, prevailing weather patterns and whether federal agencies are also imposing restrictions on managed lands.

According to a Sheriff's Office press release, "recent fire starts in Conejos, Teller, Montrose and La Plata Counties, as well as those in New Mexico, are drawing local, state and federal resources out of Gunnison County."

The release further pointed to the seasonal expectation of increased human visitation in the area. "The Fourth of July weekend is expected to bring many more campers/hikers to the area," it stated.

In addition, weather models predict a continuation of dry and windy conditions in the region. The local forecast for this weekend calls for scattered thunderstorms with minimal precipitation, which creates an elevated chance that fires are sparked by "dry lightning."

(Alan Wartes can be contacted at 970.641.1414 or publish-er@gunnisontimes.com.)



STAGE 1 FIRE RESTRICTIONS FACT SHEET

Applies to All of Unincorporated Gunnison County
Effective Wednesday June 15, 2022

✓ ALLOWED	STOP NOT ALLOWED
Permanent/Established Fire Devices: Fires within <u>permanently constructed</u> fire devices on private property or in developed recreational sites such as campgrounds or picnic areas. Flame length cannot exceed two feet in height.	Fireworks: All <u>personal use is prohibited</u> .
Temporary/Portable Fire Devices: Fires in portable chimineas, fire pits and tiki torches are permitted <u>only on private property</u> .	Smoking: Smoking (cigarettes, cigars, etc.) is prohibited, except within an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site, or while stopped in an area of at least three feet diameter that is barren or cleared of all combustible material.
Stoves, Lanterns, Cooking and Heating Devices: Fires may be fueled by liquid, jellied petroleum or gas, and they must be contained within the devices. (Note: Charcoal grills, hibachis and coal or wood-burning stoves are prohibited on federal lands.)	Explosive Targets: Explosive targets are prohibited. <u>There are no exceptions.</u>
Chainsaws: Chainsaws are allowed <u>ONLY IF</u> the device includes a USDA Forest Service or SAE approved spark arrester, and where the operator is in possession of a chemical-pressurized fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 2A.	Welding & Acetylene Torches: Welding or operating acetylene torches with open flame, <u>EXCEPT</u> in cleared areas of at least 10 feet in diameter <u>and</u> when the operator is in possession of a chemical-pressurized fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 2A.
	Combustion Engines: Operating or using any internal or external combustion engine without a spark-arresting device that is in effective working order and has been properly installed and maintained.
	Agricultural Burning: Agricultural burning and the burning of trash or debris are prohibited.



Photo: D. H. H. H.

QUESTIONS? ASK FIRST!

Call the Gunnison County Recorded Restriction Line 970.642.4686



Photo: D. H. H. H.

Dust on snow

from A1

At Stungullion Pass, located just outside of Lake City, the average daily melt rate was 0.23 inches per day in April, the highest rate in at least 17 years. In 2006, it was only 0.01 inches per day. The story was similar up north at Schofield Pass above Crested Butte, an area that had received an impressive amount of snow accumulation during the winter, where snow melted out a week early. At the Upper Rio Grande SNOTEL station, dust on the snowpack's surface and fewer spring storms caused the snowpack to lose almost 18 inches of water over

a two-week period in April, almost triple the rate seen in 1992.

Fresh snowfall creates a shiny white surface that reflects up to 90% of the sun back into space. When dust collects on snow it darkens the surface, causing the snow to absorb more solar radiation instead of reflecting it — warming the snow and melting the snowpack faster and earlier in the season.

The Center for Snow and Avalanche Studies has been tracking dust on snow in Colorado since 2003. Derry told the *Times* the amount of dust varies from year to year, but research shows that dust events are becoming more and more common.

In 2022, Derry tracked 11 dust storms that likely originated in the Four Corners region, the arid southwestern intersection of Colorado, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico. The Four Corners area is the source of most of the dust that travels into the state. The dust hits the San Juan Mountains first and the hardest and often dissipates in severity before it reaches the Gunnison Valley, he said. But this year there was plenty of dust to go around.

March, April and May are typically the worst months for dust out of the southwest because of strong spring winds, Derry said. Numerous weather agencies, including the Colorado Climate Center and the National

Weather Service, marked 2022 as one of the windiest springs on record — only adding to the problem.

"When you see that severe dust, unless you get a really snowy springtime, you are going to see early melt," Derry said.

High winds alone can also contribute to early snowmelt. In addition to bringing in dust, dry, warm air masses can redistribute snow and kick it back up into the atmosphere where it sublimates — transitioning straight from a snow solid into a vapor.

Warm temperatures, severe dust events and high winds are a bad combination, preventing the snow from sticking around, Derry said. The negative impacts from an early pulse of snowmelt can appear later in the summer with diminished stream flows compared to normal years.

"The snowpack is a natural reservoir and if it's losing its water early that's going to create problems for almost everybody: recreation, fishers and farmers," he said.

Dave Gochis, hydro-meteorologist for the National Center of Atmospheric Research, has been tracking flows across Colorado. According to Gochis, early peak runoff was a widespread phenomenon, particularly throughout the southern half of the state. The Dolores,

Animas, Rio Grande, Conejos, Uncompahgre, Gunnison and Taylor rivers all peaked in mid-May, nearly a month earlier than normal, depending on the basin.

As of June 9, the streamflow gauge on the Gunnison River read 74% of the historical average. On Tomichi Creek, streamflow sits about 22% of average. Upstream, the East River at Almont and the Taylor River at Taylor Park measured over 80%.

Local rafting guide Vito Covelli said that, although early runoff can negatively affect fish and the health of the river, he doesn't expect it to slow tourism along the Taylor River. The brunt of Three Rivers' rafting business spans eight weeks from June 22 to August 15 when kids go back to school, far after peak runoff. Flows also remain steady because water is released out of the dam.

"I've already had better trips this year so far than I've had the last two years in terms of excitement and water levels," Covelli said. "I think that's going to be pretty consistent, at least till the end of July and it'll get us through our tourist season."


(Bella Biondini can be contacted at 970.641.1414 or bella@gunnisontimes.com.)

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Local projects receive grants for land protection and watershed restoration

**\$280,000 in
GOCO funds
awarded**

The Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) board has awarded two grants totaling \$285,100 for projects in Gunnison County. A \$127,000 grant will help the Crested Butte Land Trust permanently protect the Schutt Wetlands near Crested Butte with a conservation easement and a \$158,100 grant will support the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District's planning efforts to increase resilient wet meadows in the county.

The first grant is part of GOCO's Land Acquisition program, which supports urban and rural landscape, waterway and habitat protection priorities across Colorado.

Funding will help the Crested Butte Land Trust permanently conserve 107 acres of private land adjacent to the town of Crested Butte with a conservation easement. The project will protect critical wetlands, grazed pasture land and a significant reach of the Slate River. The property is the last undeveloped large open space separating the town and neighborhoods to the south and provides habitat for nesting birds, fish and big game species that can all be viewed from the highway and adjacent public open space.

The conservation easement will also secure permanent public access through the property for an established popular winter cross-country ski trail that connects the town to the nearby Riverbend neighborhood.

"The conservation of wetlands throughout the Slate River Valley has guided the

Crested Butte Land Trust's work for decades," said Jake Jones, executive director at the Crested Butte Land Trust. "We are grateful that the Schutt family is willing to take the important step of protecting their land forever."

Additional funding for the easement has been provided by local partners, including the Town of Crested Butte, 1% for Open Space, the Gunnison Valley Land Preservation Fund, Crested Butte Land Trust and the property owner.

The second grant is part of GOCO's planning and capacity program, which invests in projects that address opportunities, explore issues, engage communities and examine trends in the outdoors.

Funding will help the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District expand meadow restoration in the Upper Gunnison River watershed and support restoration work in neighboring San Miguel, Mesa and Eagle counties. The project will implement low-tech processes that restore stream and meadow function; reduce erosion; improve habitat for a wide variety of wildlife species like the threatened Gunnison sage-grouse; and increase soil moisture to address impacts of drought, wildfire and climate change.

The investment will help address two significant barriers to wet meadow restoration in Colorado: the unavailability of trained professionals and volunteer groups able to do the work and necessary site planning and permitting to implement the projects on federal lands. Funds will support training and site planning and increase the project coalition's capacity to implement more projects annually and leverage increasing federal and state

funding opportunities.

"The Wet Meadow and Riparian Restoration and Resiliency Building Project is an exciting cross-boundary collaborative that has a long history of preserving and restoring wet meadows critical to drought resilience and the federally threatened Gunnison sage-grouse," said Cheryl Cwellich, watershed program coordinator at the Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District. "We are excited to scale up the next phase of our work in new areas and train the next generation of restoration professionals."

The project involves a broad coalition of state and federal government agencies, local ranchers and agricultural producers, nonprofit and volunteer organizations, youth leaders and academic institutions that have been working together to restore wet meadows for over 10 years.

Wet meadows make up a small portion of sagebrush and forest ecosystems but are vital sources of food, cover and water for a wide variety of wildlife. These features also act as sponges to trap water and sediment in the ground, which improves water quality and supports late season flows. These functions are beneficial to overall ecosystem health, drought mitigation, wildlife, wildfire prevention and grazing.

To date, GOCO has invested more than \$46.5 million in projects in Gunnison County and conserved 33,694 acres of land there. GOCO funding has supported the conservation of Trampe Ranch, Crested Butte's Town Park, renovations to Big Mine Ice Arena, the Gunnison Bridge to Bridge Trail, Charming Park and the Gunnison Dog Park, among other projects.

Join us for a Celebration of Life for Linda Fialkoff



We invite you to join us on June 30th at the Adaptive Sports Center's Kelsey Wright Building to remember and celebrate the life of our dear friend Linda Fialkoff. Linda was a huge part of our Adaptive family—a participant, board member, and past board president who left us far too early on December 18, 2021.

Date: June 30, 2022

Time: 4:00-6:00pm

Location: Kelsey Wright Building
19 Emmons Road, Mt. Crested Butte

RSVP by June 21:

allison@adaptivesports.org | (970) 349-2296



GUEST COMMENTARY

The Colorado River Compact hasn't aged well

The Colorado River Compact turns 100 this year, but any celebration is damped down by the drying-up of the big reservoirs it enabled. The Bureau of Reclamation's "first-ever" shortage declaration on the river acknowledges officially what we've known for years: the compact and all the measures augmenting it, collectively known as the Law of the River, have not prevented the river's over-development.

Nearly every pronouncement from the water establishment about the centennial of the Colorado River Compact calls it the "foundation," "the cornerstone" of the Law of the River — as though before the compact was adopted, the river was lawless.

It wasn't. The real foundation of the Law of the River is the appropriation doctrine that all seven river basin states embraced from their start, an evolving body of common law foundational to all water development in the arid American West.

There is much to appreciate in the appropriation doctrine. It allows water to be claimed only by those who are actually putting it to beneficial use, thus precluding speculation. It protects existing downstream users from having their supply dried up by new upstream users. It has shown flexibility in incorpo-



George Sibley
Writers on the Range

rating new uses.

But the appropriation doctrine also evolved as a powerful engine for growth. Its "first in time, first in right" promise of perpetual, secure use rewards those who get to the water first.

Judicial decisions then increased its potential for spurring growth. The abstract "right to use water" came to be a property right that could be bought and sold like an automobile, and water whose use was so purchased could then be moved anywhere — along with its seniority. This enabled cities and other large entities with concentrated economic power to buy and move water far from its origin, including water they were not yet ready to use, which clashed with the appropriation doctrine's anti-speculation intent.

The Colorado River Compact commission came together 100 years ago to impose some control on that growth engine.

The seven Colorado River Basin states had finally acknowledged that they would have to honor each other's prior appropriations and they knew that could precipitate a chaotic seven-state horse race, with each state trying to appropriate as much water as possible as quickly as possible.

Their initial strategy was to prevent that by determining what each state could "equitably" use. That failed, because the cumulative sum of what they each believed they deserved added up to considerably more than the river's average flow.

Finally, they just divided the seven-state horserace into three-state and four-state horse races, details to be worked out later, and that became the essence of the compact. It wasn't quite what they had set out to do, but it satisfied the federal government enough to allow reclamation's eager beavers to begin developing the river's mainstem.

The compact and subsequent laws, agreements, contracts and other measures we know as the Law of the River impose public priorities on the Upper and Lower Basins, limit water for California, designate water for Mexico, add recreation as a beneficial use, incorporate environmental restrictions, limit California again, construct shell

games with reservoirs, et cetera.

But a good question for evaluating the compact and the Law of the River today is this: Would the situation on the Colorado River today have been any worse, or different, had there been no Colorado River Compact and its augmenting "Law of the River?"

Given that the desert empire watered by the Colorado River continues to grow virtually unchecked, with 50-80% more growth anticipated by mid-century, even as the water supply shrinks 4-5% for every degree of temperature increase, it may be time to stop trying to construct control systems around the growth engine, and look into the engine itself.

This is, of course, something no one wants to touch. But what can else be done when an appropriation doctrine has nothing left to appropriate and the growth it enables has become dollar-driven and spiraling out of control?

(George Sibley is a contributor to Writers on the Range, writersontherange.org, an independent nonprofit dedicated to spurring lively discussion about Western issues. He writes extensively about the Colorado River.)

Now is no time to tax

Safe, reliable roads are a necessity in every community and ensuring their maintenance is one responsibility of local government. Good roads are a part of public safety and promote commerce through mobility.

For some time, Gunnison County leaders have put band-aids on the roads and bridges program, crossing their fingers that potential increases in state funds would solve the county's budgetary woes. Gunnison County funds road and bridge projects through a variety of state and federal sources. Yet, currently, the roads and bridges fund is operating with a \$1.3 million deficit. County leaders have long needed to address the underfunding.

More than a decade ago, county leaders, faced with a similar situation, considered an impact fee on new development. The reasoning was that heavy equipment traffic takes a toll on roadways so development should pay. That plan was ditched. Why? Commissioners realized the impending recession of 2008 would make this additional fee a burden to the construction business.

In 2018, Gunnison County leaders noted that two statewide transportation initiatives would be on the November ballot, one of which promised to



Chris Rourke
Special to the Times

bring funding to the local level. While money for projects was tight, county leaders made do, pending the outcome of the election. Both initiatives failed, leaving county leaders hanging.

Because general fund money cannot be used for roads and bridges, Gunnison County Commissioners now want us to pay the difference through a new tax, rather than fitting projects to available funding. Their idea is to put forth a ballot initiative asking for new revenue. While community infrastructure may be a good use of tax dollars, now is not time to tax.

Following a global crisis, soaring inflation (8.6% nationally), out of control gas prices (\$5 a gallon in Gunnison), growing unaffordability in food and housing, bear markets and a Federal Reserve rate hike on the horizon, Gunnison County taxpayers have little left to fork over. Leading economic fore-

casters estimate inflation will not go below 6.3% in 2022, and another recession may knock on our doors soon.

Yet, the county has spent millions of dollars on the purchase of land for a new boat ramp and park (Shady Island), a housing complex south of Crested Butte (the Whetstone parcel) and is funding the construction of a new library. While I recognize that certain pots of money come with strings attached as to how they can be spent, where is the similar creativity to fund the basics of our roads?

A new tax will burden a population already struggling to live here, and the timing could not be worse. A new tax will unfairly compete with the school district's ask for almost \$84 million in funding for school improvements. Should we ask voters to choose between our children and our roads? Most often when voters are faced with multiple tax increases, they say "no" to all.

To put this burden on taxpayers now gives the appearance that county leaders are tone deaf to the struggles their constituents are facing. The middle class is squeezed. Solutions should have been sought long before record inflation and gas prices took a chunk of our income.

Even Democrat Gov. Jared

Polis has agreed to delay a new transportation fee on gas passed by legislators in 2021. Lawmakers' transportation "fee" circumvented the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights which requires a new tax be put to the vote of the people (a topic for another column). This "fee" is only on hold until April 2023, only a few months after the November election. Still, you must admire the Democrat leader for reducing this financial burden, even if you question his motive in an election year. Why is our one-party board seeking a new tax right now?

Commissioners must show fiscal judgment and common sense when it comes to county business. While Cadillac projects are being funded through initiative and resourcefulness, leadership must be shown to provide the basic need of roads and bridges. It's time to sharpen pencils and prioritize fundamentals of government services without asking taxpayers yet for another dime.

(Chris Rourke is a freelance writer and a resident of Gunnison County.)

ALANWARTESMEDIA

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GUNNISON COUNTRY TIMES THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 2022



ENJOYMENT OF ALL THINGS 'RIVER'
GUNNISON RIVER FESTIVAL CELEBRATES 20TH ANNIVERSARY

Jacob Spetzler
Fiction and Sports Editor

The Gunnison River Festival celebrated its 20th anniversary last weekend. Warm weather and high flows meant perfect conditions for a variety of competitions and events.

On Friday afternoon, the festival kicked off with a "Wings over Water" bird watching float on the Gunnison. In the evening, the Upper Taylor raft and kayak race took place in the evening with flows at about 300 cubic feet per second (cfs) out of the dam augmented with snow melt.

On the kayak side, Kestrel Kunz took the top spot in the women's division, followed up by Sydney Dickinson, with second, and Lorraine Bruteig who earned third. For men, Nate Ober took first place, while Rob Dickinson found second and Sam Reaman notched third.

For the rubber boaters, a Three Rivers Resort raft took first place with a 31:49 minute time. At 33:20, Meghan Robertson's raft was a close second and "RapsofNM" was just behind her at 34:41.

The race had strong participation from both local and regional boaters, said festival organizer Joellen Fonken. Awards

were presented at the I Bar Ranch later that evening before a performance by the Waiters.

Then, on Saturday, the river action moved down to the Gunnison Whitewater Park. The spectacle lasted all day and featured everything from educational clinics to a kayak competition and an inflatable rodeo where rafters attempted to surf the waves like a kayak with inconsistent success.

"Saturday was hot, so the spectators numbers were back to pre-COVID stats looking for shade and action along the banks at Gunnison County Whitewater Park," Fonken said in an email.

The festival finished out on Sunday with another day at the Whitewater Park and a focus on board sports. A "Women's Intro to Surf" was held in the morning before an "Against the Flow Paddle

Battle." In the afternoon, the main Surf Jam took place. Rather than a standard placement model, the Surf Jam was ranked by style and tricks. PJ Brown took Women's Overall Crowd Favorite while Bo Thomsen was named the crowd favorite for the men's division.

The day and the festival itself wrapped up with a kid's "Grom Land Surf Jam." Logan Boscaro took the "Best Surfing" title, Heath Talbert was named "Crowd Favorite" while Moses Write, Dylan Boscaro and Makai took "Best Tricks," "Most Flow" and "Best Style" respectively.

A high point of the early summer, the festival showcases the Gunnison community's commitment and love for its various waterways.

"Our rivers were celebrated, newbies learned some skills, pros shared and smiles were broad," Fonken said.

(Jacob Spetzler can be contacted at 970.641.1414 or jacob@gunnison-times.com.)



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Stingrays eye another state championship this year

Take first at home meet

John Mark Sibley
JMK Sports & Events

This past weekend, Gunnison hosted a swimming event with participants from around the Western Slope. Among the represented towns were Salida, Meeker, Montrose, Delta and our Gunnison Stingrays. About 150 kids competed, with ages ranging from preschool to high school. This event ended with Gunnison coming in first place.

On Friday night everyone swam in the 100-meter. Then, on Saturday, they swam the younger ages in the morning and the older groups in the afternoon. On Sunday all ages were mixed and, in the end, Gunnison won by over 100 points.

With 46 kids in total at the meet, each swam a maximum of four events on Saturday and Sunday.

"I would say I was impressed with Jemma Petrie's 100-meter breaststroke. She was less than a second off of her top time this winter, in high school swimming. Maddie Stice swam well, just coming off of a track season. 'She was awesome,'" said Coach Tami Maciejko.

It's a large group of swimmers on the team this summer so they have a correspondingly large number of coaches who range in age.

"Ella O'Neal, myself, John Landrick and Anna Cattles are coaching this year. And it's been a great coaching staff," Maciejko said.

The team itself has a large range of ages, with the youngest being four years old, and the oldest being high schooler,



The Stingrays pose for a group photo at the Gunnison Community Center during last week's meet

Anna Cattles, who jumped in to compete during the weekend.

"These kids all show up every morning at 7:30 a.m. They train five days a week and they travel on weekends. Total of two hours in the morning and another at night, so that's a total of three hours a day that they are training," Maciejko said.

The fact is that the Gunnison Stingrays are a club team, yet they compete with year round teams, and they still manage to make waves. Gunnison is the returning Western Slope State Champ and Maciejko says she has high hopes for this summer as well.

"I think we can make a good showing of it again this year," Maciejko said.

With a meet this weekend in Montrose, Delta after that, and maybe Telluride, they're road to the finish is far from over.

The climax of all these events will begin on the fourth of July weekend with a large Grand Junction invitational, and shortly after that the State

meet will take place. These big events mean the Stingrays show their worth by standing up alongside teams from far more populated areas.

Maciejko attributes the team's strong recent performances to the community of Gunnison. "I give that to the parents and to the athleticism that's in the Gunnison Valley. You don't move to Gunnison to sit on a couch," she said.

Maciejko says the kids are taking that support and putting it to good use. Not every teenager is interested in the discomfort of participating in competitive sports during the summer.

"I'd just like some recognition for these kids, you know, they're on summer break. These teenagers are here every morning at 7:30. They are training hard, and just doing a great job," Maciejko said.

(John Mark Sibley can be contacted at 970.641.1414.)

THIS WEEK AT THE PIONEER MUSEUM

"The Summer of '82"

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Submitted by
Larry McDonald

Gunnison's "boom" was in full bloom back in 1882 and during this week 140 years ago our region was hoppin! Today we'll take a look back at those exciting days in our valley.

The front page of the Gunnison Daily News-Democrat was dominated by a double column ad for Old John Robinson's Overtowering Gigantic Union of Shows, likely the greatest circus to every appear in our "neck of the woods". Fifty magnificent palace cars carrying 2 million dollars (57 million today!) worth of investment from one of the longest running family-owned circuses in the country with four generations of Robinson's "running the show" between 1842 and 1911.

The Gunnison Daily Review featured an excellent article on the history of the Parks & Endner Planing Mill, and we sure are glad they made the decision to set up shop here and not in Leadville as they had originally planned. Mr. William H. Endner left a lasting legacy in our community as the museum recently received a \$20,000 donation from the trust fund he so generously left behind. Another front-page article was an update on a house bill in Washington dealing with the opening of the Ute Reservation to settlement along with an ad for the "New" Dawson House managed by the Herrick Brothers offering board for \$2.00 per day and \$6.50 per week.

The Gunnison Free Press reported on a grand picnic to be held at Central Park near the water works. "The grounds have been nicely fitted up with swings, croquet grounds, a splendid pavilion to dance in, in

fact everything to amuse and please all." Alonzo Hartman's store is offering Spaulding League balls and a "splendid lot of bats" for summer play. A meeting to finally establish a Fire Hose company on the east end was also announced to be held.

Tin Cup had two weekly newspapers back in '82 and the Banner was announcing that two railroads would soon reach their community, with the Denver & Rio Grande coming up Taylor Canon and the Tin Cup & Gunnison from Buena Vista over Cottonwood Pass. The Record reports on the importance of the area being well represented at the upcoming National Mining and Industrial Exposition in Denver and that plans to connect Tin Cup to telegraph and telephone were now being made.

The Pitkin Independent reported that the construction of the railroad line over Alpine Pass was making good progress and that the roadbed was completed to a point "a mile and half this side of Woodstock", along with mentions of continuing issues with smelters and mining updates.

Irwin's Elk Mountain Pilot published a wonderful review of the past year along with plenty of commentary on the poor conditions of the roads and the need to build a new one to Crested Butte.

And with Wyatt Earp and his brother Warren already living on the Chinery Ranch just west of town following the Vendetta Ride, Doc Holliday arrives this week and gives one of his greatest interviews to a local newspaper reporter with the News-Democrat.

Follow our Facebook page for a reenactment of "A Man of Sand", and so much more amazing local history!

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THOMAS N. STOEBER, CPA
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT



Colorado River District supporting grant applications for federal funding

News [FOLLOW NEWS](#) | 2d ago



Eliza Noe [FOLLOW](#)
enoe@summitdaily.com



The Colorado River Water Conservation District spans 15 Western Slope counties. Voters across the district are considering a mill-levy increase that would raise the River District's budget by \$5 million, funding a variety of water-related projects.
Colorado River District/Courtesy image

The Colorado River District is opening a special round of its Community Funding Partnership to to support applications for federal funding made available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

Community Funding Partnership's accelerator grants are designed to help Western Slope water users build a competitive application for federal funding. This includes support in grant-writing, feasibility, design, preliminary environmental review, benefits analysis and engineering. The Colorado River District will consider supporting up to 85% of funding needs for this limited funding opportunity.

Grant deliverables must include a timely application to a federal funding opportunity that must be submitted by Dec. 31, 2023 and in no cases later than Dec. 31, 2024. Priority will be given to applications targeting a 2023 federal funding round. For more information, visit ColoradoRiverDistrict.org.

Applications for the Community Funding Partnership grants are due Aug. 1.

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BRIEFS

Ballots on the way

This week, Colorado county clerks will begin mailing ballots to eligible registered active voters for the 2022 state primary election.

Registered Republicans, Democrats and Unaffiliated voters who selected a party preference will be mailed one ballot packet for their party's primary. Unaffiliated voters who did not select a party preference will receive both a Democratic and Republican ballot, but they may only vote and return one. If both ballots are voted and returned, neither will count.

Coloradans can still register to vote and update their voter registration at GoVoteColorado.gov through June 20 to receive a ballot in the mail. After June 20, Coloradans can register and vote in-person up to 7 p.m. on election day.

Beginning on June 15, 24-hour drop boxes will be available at:

- Blackstock Government Center at 221 N. Wisconsin St.
- Crested Butte Town Hall, Crank's Plaza, 507 Maroon Ave., Crested Butte
- Crested Butte South (Mail Room), 61 Teocalli, Crested Butte

Palisade Wall and Alpine Tunnel Road repairs begin

Phase one of three for the rehabilitation of the damaged Palisade Wall and reconstruction of the Alpine Tunnel Road near Pitkin, Colorado began on June 6. The first phase will include rock scaling of the cliff above the Palisades Wall and will last for approximately three weeks.

During the rock scaling phase, FS Road 839, above, below, and around the Palisade Wall, will be closed to traffic for public safety.

The large turnaround area at the junction of 839 and trail 888 that leads to Hancock and Tomichi Pass is part of the closure area and will be closed to the public. Rocks pried off the cliff face may roll long distances, and some could cross FS 839. Traffic control personnel and closure barriers will be in place during working hours.

The segment of FS 839 from Sherrod Loop to Alpine Station will remain closed to OHV use until the Palisade Wall and Alpine Tunnel Road are completely reconstructed.

Water Roundup canceled

Due to unforeseen circumstances the first annual Upper Gunnison River Basin Water Roundup at I Bar Ranch has been canceled. The district hopes to reschedule the event.

Clarification

Jody Coleman was listed as co-author of the article in last week's *Times* called "School board approves teacher pay raise." While Coleman contributed to the report, she did not write it. We apologize for any confusion.

COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
of the GUNNISON VALLEY

CFGV
here for good

SHOUT IT FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOPS –
THANK YOU TO OUR EDUCATORS!

To be a teacher is to make the choice every single day to love, protect, and guide a group of young people as they learn to make sense of the world and their place within it.

To make this choice each day, and to continue to cross the threshold of a classroom with the weight of all of the responsibilities of an educator in 2022, takes more than just courage. Those who continue to show up to do this work understand the sacrifices, large and small, that are baked into their professional duties and reinforced by their depth of care for their students.

Young people today are growing up in one of the most difficult times in the country's history. They see the stress in the eyes of their parents and families, friends in the classroom, and in the mirror looking back at them. In order to continue to function and grow, they need a sense of normalcy, consistency, and safety. And they need someone to remind them that they matter a great deal, just because of the human that they are.

If one were to stroll the hallways and peek into classrooms around Gunnison County, they would witness a spectrum of minor miracles being facilitated by our educators. Writing curricula and delivering lesson plans is itself a 40-hour per week job, that barely scratches the surface of what teachers give each day. They choreograph an elaborate dance around the classroom, differentiating their instruction based upon individual needs, assessing body language and facial expressions, uplifting each student's voice, and redirecting attention from inevitable distractions.

As kids grow up, their connections with teachers naturally evolve. For teachers, everything starts and ends with relationships. The path to mutual trust and understanding looks markedly different for each student, but it is up to the teacher to map out the route to get there. It takes a great deal of energy and time, but it is worth it because the end



Katy Dye, Special Education Teacher at Gunnison Elementary School, was the winner of this year's CFGV Dan Tredway Excellence in Teaching Award.

result is the student benefitting from the love and care directed toward them from a trusted guide.

In order for educators to continue showing up for our students in the classroom, they must will themselves through a host of outside influences that most other professionals can't fully understand. These factors, alongside stagnant wages for decades, help illuminate why there is a teacher shortage nationwide. But they also underpin the reasons why the teachers who have continued in the profession need to be celebrated, supported, and compensated even more.

The Community Foundation of the Gunnison Valley continues to celebrate and support our local educators in a variety of ways. Each year, in partnership with the school district, we provide the Dan Tredway Memorial Excellence in Teaching Award. This year's award went to Katy Dye, a Special Education Teacher at Gunnison Elementary

School. Nominated by her peers, Katy has built trust and created space for understanding and individual learning for hundreds of students over the years. Additionally, the Gunnison Valley Education Foundation, a component fund of CFGV, awards a number of Teacher Innovation Grants to district educators each year. This year, almost \$12,000 was awarded to nine different teacher-led initiatives in the District.

Achilles Johnson, current Gunnison High School student and Executive Director of the Gunnison Project, recently released a statement in response to the tragedy in Uvalde, TX. He shared a call to action, which can help serve as a beacon of direction as we prepare for a new school year in the fall: "We must look to the future with hope, with an unshakable belief that we can write a safe and more prosperous destiny for ourselves. We must be thorough when we make decisions that affect others. We must listen to each other, regardless of our viewpoint. We must pursue the future with an open mind and an open heart."

As we move into the summer, let us not forget to thank the heroes in our community who will once again welcome a new batch of students in the fall.

To all teachers, administrators and staff members of the Gunnison Watershed School District who continue to keep showing up for our students, we say, "Thank you!"

TO LEARN MORE:
22 years of Excellence in Teaching Awards:
cfgv.org/excellence-in-teaching/

Gunnison Valley Education Foundation:
gunnisonvalleyeducationfoundation.org

The Gunnison Project:
new.thegunnisonproject.org

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NEW LISTING Year-round mountain home is 2 bdrm/1 bath with open floor plan, hardwood floors, finished loft, and a large deck overlooking Gold Creek & almost a 1/2 acre. Don't miss this one! 25 County Road 771; \$495,000.

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NEW LISTING Well cared for 2 bdrm/1 bath home at Three Rivers in Almont has a wonderful yard with mature landscaping and a east facing patio. Features a finished metal roof, woodstove, and fully remodeled. 95 George Bailey Drive #16; \$70,000.

LAND FOR SALE Very nice lot in the town of White Pine, CO. White Pine has rich Colorado history known for Coal and Silver Mines. This is a great location to build your dream cabin or park your RV. 9900 County Road 888; \$25,000.

NEW LISTING 3.30 acre parcel in Blue Mesa Subdivision has great mountain views & is ready for your cabin or weekend getaway. Phone & electric nearby. Located between Lake City & Gunnison off Highway 149. 4751 Blue Mesa Drive; \$47,000.

OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS at Sportsmans Resort in Ohio City! Year-round access location, mature trees, positioned on 1.28 acres, would make a great retreat or base camp. Ride Cumberland Pass over to Taylor Reservoir for the day. 116 County Road 771; \$499,900.

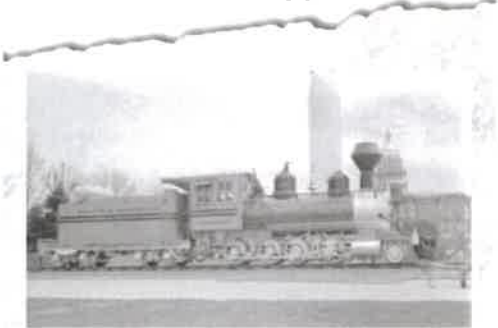
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GUEST COMMENTARY

THIS WEEK AT THE PIONEER MUSEUM

Cinder Ella –
The Glass Slipper Fit!



Submitted by
Larry McDonald

Baldwin Locomotive #268 was built in Philadelphia in early 1882, one of 150 C-16 2-8-0 narrow gauge engines General William Jackson Palmer ordered at a cost of \$11,290.07 each (approximately \$320,000.00 in today's dollars). They were shipped west on flatcars to the Denver & Rio Grande shops in Denver for final fitting before arriving in our region. A mention in the Salida Mail newspaper in December of 1886 noted #268 was Engineer Goodenough's locomotive working the Crested Butte branch.

What is believed to be the only fatal accident involving #268 was reported to have occurred on August 12, 1891, when she collided with a section gang on a pushcart on Marshall Pass, "injuring two or three men, one it believed fatally". Other early mentions noted her being serviced at the rail yards in Salida until the November 8, 1912, edition of the Gunnison News. Champion reported Ed Dundin firing #268 out of Gunnison and in December fitted with a wedge plow and bucking snow between Crested Butte and Floresta.

The mid-20's found her being leased to the Rio Grande Southern Railroad and working out of Alamosa and Durango in the 30's. The 1940's and war effort gave her new life, along with #223 and #278, with these being the only engines left light enough to meet bridge requirements on the branch up Ohio Creek to Baldwin. In 1945, the Denver & Rio Grande Western chose #268, along with other historic rolling stock, to tour their route during their 75th Anniversary. 1947 left only #268 and #278 active as #223 was sent to Utah to be put on display.

Three "mistaken" nicknames for #268 derived from her appearance at the 1949 Chicago Railroad Fair where 2.8 million visitors came through the gates. She has been mistaken for Santa Fe Engine 5, "Little Buttercup" who appeared in 1948, and "Bumblebee" was a new paint scheme the D&RGW had begun using during that era with #268 one of the first engines to appear with it. #268 was painted to resemble the D&RGWR's very first locomotive, "Montezuma" as a tribute.

It was her Hollywood co-stars that gave #268 the nickname "Cinder Ella" during her starring role in the 1952 Paramount Pictures movie "Denver & Rio Grande". She was hauled over Monarch Pass by truck to Union Station for the premier in Denver where she mingled with her co-stars and other celebrities before returning to Gunnison.

In the fall of '52, engine #278 was donated to the City of Montrose and that left only #268 to haul coal dust, livestock and bring in abandoned rail cars from Sapinero until 1955 when she hauls the scrap train dismantling track. July 1 saw her fires extinguished for the final time and two weeks later she was paraded down Main Street on a flatbed trailer during Cattleman's Days.

She put the "glass slipper" on for the final time during the 1959 "Rush to the Rockies" Centennial celebration where she sat on display next to a new Titan ballistic missile in front of the Colorado State Capitol. Before arriving at the Pioneer Museum, Cinder Ella sat on display at Legion Park, and on the west end of town where the A&W Restaurant used to be. We encourage you to follow our Facebook page for ongoing tributes to Cinder Ella during 2022.

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Meeting the Great American Desert

Romancing the 'River of Color' part 2

George Sibley
Special to the Times

The 100th Meridian is where the West begins, as distinguished from "Back East" — a line drawn roughly from the middle of the Dakotas to the middle of Texas. It is where the humid eastern three-fifths of the continent segued into the subhumid and arid West — "The Great American Desert." It began with the subhumid (or semiarid) high plains east of the Rockies, which receive 10-20 inches of precipitation annually, considered too little for dependable unirrigated agriculture. Then west of the Rockies came the arid region (<10 inches annually) — the Great Basin between the Rockies and the Sierras, and nearly all of the Colorado River Basin. The Great American Desert became Major John Wesley Powell's territory for western surveys.

What was really going on with all this "surveying?" Surveyors were avatars of the new nation's "Manifest Destiny," trumpeted by political canny-barkers like Colorado's first territorial governor William Gilpin, who declaimed to the U.S. Senate that it was "the untransacted destiny of the American people to subdue the continent — to rush over this vast field to the Pacific Ocean — to animate the many hundred millions of its people, and to cheer them upward — to set the principle of self-government at work — to establish a new order in human affairs."

Remember, though, the deeper contention going on in America's westward expansion: the cultural conflict between those advancing the dominant city-based Industrial Revolution across the continent, and those trying to get to the unsettled places ahead of the Industrial Revolution with a grassroots community-based Agrarian Counterrevolution.

Most of the surveys were launched on behalf of the Industrial Revolution that really took off during and after the Civil War. The development of new industrial fabrication and assembly procedures, and the enhanced power of fossil fuels on the production side were resulting in huge jumps in productivity. More of everything from the natural world was needed, and explorers were sent out to find it, with the industrial developers and their ubiquitous railroads not far behind.

Powell's survey of the Great American Desert became, as one might expect, an excep-

tion and even a challenge, to that drive. As a scientist, Powell saw that the agrarians, even the ones who had farming experience, did not understand a sub-humid or arid landscape. They were serious romantics, putting their minds to work in service to what their hearts felt, but without the balancing discipline of science.

Believing in their hearts in the manifest destiny the Gilpins preached, they came west to fulfill it despite the reports of a Great American Desert, accepting without question some hypotheses about "climate change." Rain would follow the plow, they were told, with moisture released from turned-over soil going to the heavens to rain back down on the cultivators.

Rainfall in the high plains was adequate for agriculture those years. But Powell was not fooled. His survey work had showed him enough of the natural history of the region to know that the agrarians were heading for disaster.

In 1878, he came out with the "Report on the Lands of the Arid Region of the United States" that went beyond the typical survey mapping and cataloging of resources. In his report, he laid out a somewhat detailed plan for how the Agrarian Counterrevolution could work in the arid region, including sample bills for Congress.

He challenged the Homestead Act with its one-size-fits-all 160-acre homesteads, arguing that 160 acres was too much for a family attempting an irrigated farm, and way too little for a rancher wanting to run livestock on unirrigated land.

Powell believed it took a communal effort to establish a good irrigation system in the arid lands, and tried to point out how little water there really was. Even with the most efficient irrigation systems, he calculated, there was only enough water to irrigate a tiny fraction of the arid West.

His "report" was generally ignored, but he was not discouraged. In 1879, he collaborated in the creation of a more formal U.S. Geological Survey.

In 1881, he became director of the USGS, and began to try and persuade Congress to let him do a thorough western survey, mapping all streams and rivers, and identifying all potential "irrigation districts," all unirrigable "pasturage districts" (for raising livestock) and all water storage sites, so the region could be settled in an intelligent and efficient way. He kept his request reasonable: let's just find out what we have before we dribble it all away.

Nature kicked in to support his request. A brutal winter in 1886 was followed by a decade

of drier years, which effectively laid to rest the hypotheses that settlement and cultivation were changing the climate favorably.

By 1890, all of the agrarians were convinced that irrigation was the only way to go in the arid lands, and in 1888 Congress actually approved his massive survey of the West's water resources — and going overboard, amended a funding bill to essentially shut down all western development until the survey was done.

That was a step too far. Once Congress realized following Powell's suggestions had shut down the American growth machine for (Powell said) six or seven years for the survey, they immediately reversed themselves, canceling the survey. They took their anger out on Powell, doing everything they could to end his tenure in government. He continued as director of the USGS, but he was given next to no funding.

Meanwhile, the agrarian advocates for irrigation began holding National Irrigation Congresses, with hundreds of attendees in public meetings more like revivals than scientific gatherings — a perception reinforced by journalist and chief organizer William Smythe, who proclaimed that irrigation was "not merely a matter of ditches and acres, but a philosophy, a religion, and a programme of practical statesmanship rolled in to one."

Powell realized that, while the agrarians had accepted the necessity of irrigation in the arid lands, they still had not fully understood that the essence of aridity was too little water. Invited to the second Irrigation Congress in 1893, in Los Angeles, Powell again tried to warn the 700 attendees that there was not enough water for the 600 million acres they proposed to make bloom like the biblical rose.

"I tell you, gentlemen," he said, "you are piling up a heritage of conflict and litigation over water rights, for there is not sufficient water to supply these lands!" The crowd booed him off the stage.

The next year, he resigned from the USGS, worried that he had become a liability to his own vision. In the sum, two out of three homesteads had failed by the 1930s.

Throughout the River basin, the arid West in general, the heritage the Major predicted is still playing out today. Powell died in 1902, too much a gentleman to ever say I told you so.

All romances do not have happy endings — although to be a tragedy, the players have to have learned something about themselves, even though it is too late. Otherwise it is just another unexamined travesty, blame to be laid elsewhere.

Gunnison River Festival to celebrate 20th anniversary

Upper Gunnison hosts inaugural Water Roundup

Bella Biondini

James Associate Editor

The Gunnison River Festival will return June 10-12, celebrating both the headwaters of the Gunnison watershed and the 20th anniversary of the event. The Upper Gunnison River Water Conservancy District will open up the festival with its inaugural Water Roundup on June 9, kicking off a weekend full of fun and educational water activities.

Numerous community partners have influenced and helped the river festival evolve since Bob Jones and a class at Western State College first created what was known then as the Gunnison Whitewater Festival 20 years ago. Due to the pandemic, the event hasn't been able to draw spectators for two years, and centered mostly on educational clinics during 2021. This year, the Gunnison River Festival is inviting the community and visitors back out on the water to cheer kayakers on as they race down the Taylor wear their best costume as they float the Gunnison or learn how to river surf.

"Education was awesome," said Joellen Fonken, director of the Gunnison River Festival. "But people like to compete and participate. And the collaboration of bringing people together, it's what makes the festival successful."

The three-day celebration will begin on Friday, June 10 with a "Wings over the Water" morning float on the Gunnison River led by wildlife experts Kathy Brodhead, Pat Magee and Arden Anderson. It will be followed by American Whitewater's annual Taylor River downriver raft and kayak races. Winners will receive awards at I Bar Ranch at the Wailers concert that evening.

On Saturday, festival goers can participate in hands-on educational clinics on numerous topics including water safety. Later in the afternoon, kids build their own foam boat on-site and race them down the river or go for a paddle on Mergelman pond and more. To close the weekend on Sunday, boaters and river lovers will gather at the Shady Island River Park to taste part in the "Town Run" fun costume float.

To add to the festivities, Gunnison Waves is hosting its first ever "Surf Jam," welcoming river surfers of all ages and skill levels to the Gunnison Whitewater Park. Surf Jam will include a women's intro to surf, an "Against the Flow Paddle Battle," live music and a surf competition with prizes. In addition to bringing the local surf community together, the money raised from the event will benefit Gunnison Whitewater Park.

 $N = 100$, $BL = 2$

Competitors race down the Taylor River during the Gunnison River Festival in 2021.



Journal of Interpersonal Violence

Community members participate in a boater safety clinic at the Gunnison River Festival in 2021.



Name: _____

A kayaker races down the Taylor River during the Gunnison River Festival in 2021.

improvements in the future.

Jason Lakey, one of the original founders of Gunnison Waves, said the competition is based on fun, and has a broad spectrum of categories surfers can win from most stoked to most improved for the day.

"It's not all about the best surfer out there," Lakey said. "I think it's gonna be really fun because of that. It's not an intense competition."

This will also be the first year the river festival is collaborating with the Lake Fork Valley Conservancy, expanding the celebration into Lake City at Lake San Cristobal. On Sunday, June 12, festival goers are encouraged to grab a paddleboard and participate in SUP yoga followed by races and non-motorized boat parade around the lake.

Water Roundup

On June 9, the Upper Gunnison River Basin Water Roundup will take place at the I Bar Ranch. The conference, scheduled for the day before the river festival begins, will focus

on how the community interacts with the local watershed — taking a closer look at responding to wildfire, watershed and forest health, ecosystem restoration and agriculture. The day will close with a barbecue and fire-side chat with Colorado Water Conservation Board Executive Director Becky Mitchell.

After attending conferences around the state, Upper Gunnison General Manager Sonja Chavez said she wanted to refocus the conversation to topics the community is interested in, from the economic impacts of low water levels at Blue Mesa to wildfire prevention. She invited all community members to attend.

"Let's make this about our community," Chavez said.

To learn more or register visit ugrwc.org/2022-water-round-up/.

(Bella Biondini can be contacted at 970.641.1414 or bella@gunnisontimes.com.)

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Country Meadows sale goes through

New owner to raise
rent by 70%

Bella Biondini
Times Associate Editor

After nearly a year of uncertainty, the Country Meadows mobile home park, located north of Gunnison, is under new ownership. The new owner plans to raise rents by 70%, putting the community's residents under a new kind of pressure, as many fear displacement due to the sharp increase.

Country Meadows first went up for sale in June of 2021 for \$2.5 million. Under the Colorado Mobile Home Park Act, residents are granted a 90-day window to purchase the park themselves. After reaching out to



By Bella Biondini

Country Meadows A6 Gregorio Luna stands outside his home at Country Meadows. He has been unable to work due to an accident last year.

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ONLINE
GUNNISONTIMES.COM

Elk Creek Marina closed for the season



By Bella Biondini

Nick Moore removes his boat from Blue Mesa.

Status of Lake Fork Marina still undecided

Bella Biondini
Times Associate Editor

It was an overcast Sunday afternoon in May, but all of the boat slips at Elk Creek Marina sat empty. Nick Moore backed his truck down the ramp to retrieve his boat, driving a long way before the pavement met the reservoir's edge.

Moore said he's never seen the reservoir

this low, even when the water level dropped in the early 80s after he graduated from Western State College. Retired now, he frequents Blue Mesa Reservoir throughout the summer months.

"This is my love life up here," Moore said. "It just breaks my heart to see this."

Although Blue Mesa Reservoir will be fully open for recreation, Elk Creek Marina and nearby Pappy's Restaurant will remain closed through the 2022 summer season due to the looming threat of more downstream releases. During the summer of 2021, the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) released 36,000 acre-feet — the equivalent

Marina A6

Melita Ferchau crowned discus state champ

Reflects on a storied
high school career

Jacob Spetzler
Sports and Photo Editor

Melita Ferchau took home the 3A discus state championship over the weekend. She threw a 139'2" at the meet which took place over the weekend in Lakewood. That score not only earned her the top spot, but broke her own school record which she set only last week at the regional meet.

Ferchau's discus career began in seventh grade.

"It was a sports day thing for P.E. and I got chosen to do the throwing section for it," she said. "And the coach said, 'have you ever thought about track?' and I thought, 'well, that sounds like something I'd be good at.'"

From the beginning, the distances she was throwing showed promise. During her debut year as a high school athlete, she set several stadium discus records

Ferchau A7

Meadows

from A1

the county for assistance, tenants requested an extension in September, but received no reply or communications from the previous owner, River Walk, LLC. Homeowners have been working for months to find a solution, including forming a non-profit association, Organización de Nuevas Esperanzas (ONE). The board continued working toward educating mobile home residents about their rights as they waited for answers.

On May 4, residents received a letter dated April 29 informing them the mobile home park had been sold, and that the new property owner, Ski Town Village, LLC, was raising rent from \$425 to \$725 per month starting July 1. The property, which is home to almost 400 residents, has been renamed “Ski Town Village.”

Elizabeth McGee, vice president of ONE, has been living in Country Meadows for almost a year. She is still making payments on top of the lot rent, and said she can’t see herself walking away.

“I just feel like we are being bullied out of our homes,” McGee said.

She said it will be very difficult for many residents to come up with the money they need to cover the rent hike because they are on social security, have a disability or are a one-income family. Country Meadows is also home to many immigrant families.

“It’s our home, and for me, I’m disabled,” said Peggy Johnson, McGee’s mother, who lives a few doors down. “For me to try and find a place by myself, I can’t, it’s just too hard. I cannot afford a place by myself the way prices are going up in Crested Butte and Gunnison.”

“People with money are doing great. But the lower class peo-

ple that are just trying to make a living are barely surviving,” Johnson said.

A ‘faceless company’

According to the Colorado Secretary of State, the new Denver-based LLC was formed on April 28, the same day the park was purchased for \$2.59 million. The post office box for the company is in Cheyenne, Wyoming. A google search for Ski Town Village’s chief executive officer John Romero generated few results, and the company’s website is mostly blank, except for the park’s address and a maintenance number. No local office exists. McGee said numerous residents have tried to contact Romero, but he doesn’t return their phone calls. Others are afraid to pay rent, because they don’t trust the address listed.

“There is a real issue with the fact that this is sort of a faceless company to the residents,”

If their homes cannot be moved, then they will lose them. They lose everything.

Liz Smith

said William Edwards, Country Meadows’ legal representative.

Cathie Pagano, assistant county manager for community and economic development, said she has contacted the new owner twice by phone. She also sent a certified letter to him to set up a time when the county can meet with him to discuss staff’s worries about health and safety issues at the mobile home park that have been identified by residents.

Snowmelt floods the roads at Country Meadows during the early springtime, creating deep potholes, and a number of trees are at risk of falling on homes if no maintenance is done, according to homeowners. Pagano received one voicemail from Romero, but did not get a response when she called back.

Pagano said that Gunnison County will continue to advocate for the residents both locally and at the state level, because they are “integral members of our community.”

But with the way state regulations are set, that can be a challenge and provide a lot of opportunities for property owners to exploit mobile home park residents, she said.

In 2020, the Colorado legislature passed the Mobile Home Park Act with the goal of creating more protections for mobile home residents as their communities began to become more vulnerable to disruption due to changes in ownership. In March of 2022, the state legislature introduced an amendment to the act with more protections, including holding the landlord responsible for repairing damages, as well as being transparent about any intent to sell a park. It would also extend the period that homeowners have to make a purchase offer and create the ability to compensate residents for the cost of moving their homes if they are displaced by a land use change.

“If their homes cannot be moved, then they will just lose them,” said Gunnison County Commissioner Liz Smith. “They lose everything. That is one thing that I think will actually help disincentivize land use changes with mobile home parks.”

Smith has been working to drive change at the state level — helping draft the legislation to improve the protections outlined by the bill based on what she believed was needed to support mobile home residents



Country Meadows resident Elizabeth McGee fears she and her boyfriend will have to get second jobs to afford the rent increase.

at Country Meadows and elsewhere within the county.

At one point the legislation included language that would have prohibited a landlord from increasing rent on a mobile home lot by 3% over the course of a year. However, the rent control portion of the bill didn’t pass during the last legislative session this month due to the threat of veto from Gov. Jared Polis. Even so, Smith said there’s a lot of momentum to continue working in that direction.

“It’s really important to figure out how to thread this needle of making sure we don’t punish people who have been really good stewards of this housing and keeping it affordable to families,” Smith said. At the same time, she said they also need to figure out how to navigate this “new kind of investment culture” within one of the most affordable housing markets.

“Some buyers may not be as connected to these communities and see an investment opportunity,” Smith said. “Around the state, we’re seeing rents being raised for some of our most socioeconomically vulnerable community residents to what the market can bear.”

Overall, Smith said, County Meadows is a structural piece of

the affordable housing conversation within the Gunnison Valley as the community continues to grow.

“We can’t just continue to invest in new ways of building affordable housing,” she said. “We also need to figure out from a policy standpoint how we retain the affordable housing that we still have.”

A devastating outcome’

After all the collaborative work that has been done between ONE, the county and the Community Foundation to protect the residents, Edwards described the almost immediate rent increase as a devastating outcome. He said he also hopes it is a wake up call.

“There’s so much talk about affordable housing, but a 70% rent increase — who is ready for that in the valley?” Edwards said. “How many employers can afford to pay their employees 70% more?”

The *Gunnison Country Times* reached out to the new owner, but did not hear back by press time.

(Bella Biondini can be contacted at 970.641.1414 or bella@gun-nisontimes.com.)

Marina

from A1

of eight vertical feet of water — from Blue Mesa Reservoir to augment the dangerously low water levels of Lake Powell, as it reeled from worsening drought conditions across the western U.S.

Blue Mesa, then already approaching record lows after another dry year, took a hit. The releases forced Elk Creek Marina to shut down almost six weeks early, leaving employees without work. Slip holders were only given 10 days to remove their boats from the reservoir, cutting over a month from the season.

In 2022, water levels in Blue Mesa Reservoir have remained low even after spring runoff. Although the elevation will fluctuate throughout the summer months, the reservoir is only projected to fill to a maximum of 50%. On May 20, a pale bathtub ring around the water body’s edge marked the water at 71 feet below full capacity.

According to the National Park Service, the boat docks at Elk

Creek Marina were not designed to be moveable. The agency noted significant labor and costs associated with moving the docks as water levels change, influencing its decision to keep the marina closed.

Eric Loken’s family has been running the marina and restaurant as concessionaires at Curecanti for decades. In the past, he said he’s operated the facility at lower levels than forecasted. Loken and his staff tried to negotiate with the Park Service, suggesting that his company become certified to move the docks, or creating mooring buoys for people with large boats. But they were told no, he said.

“They are concerned that those new docks that they bought will get damaged,” Loken said. “They’re the landlord, and we’re the tenant.”

Elk Creek Marina is usually open from May 1 through September. This year the business will be unable to collect any income. As he turned away slip holders, Loken said he doesn’t know if the business will be able to survive after being shut down

for an entire season.

“Everyone was pretty devastated,” Loken said. “I know a lot of people who bought boats recently that were excited to be out there at the marina, and now they are going to have to drive hours away or just sell their boats ... I’ve got employees that come back year after year that now have gone and found other jobs, so the long term damage it does to the business is substantial.”

Each year, Curecanti National Recreation Area, the lands surrounding Blue Mesa, brings almost a million visitors to the Gunnison Valley, a community dependent on summer tourism. While the ramp at Elk Creek Marina will remain open, the marina docks — a summertime attraction at the reservoir — will stay empty, driving hundreds of boat owners elsewhere.

Tannor Raisley has been working at the marina since 2013. Even after early closures last year, he hoped for a heavy winter that would help the reservoir rebound. A huge storm hit the valley around Christmas time and then “it kind of just quit

snowing,” he said.

“Even if we had one of those winters, it would kind of be a drop in the bucket when you look at what’s going on downstream,” Raisley said. “Even if we fill Blue Mesa, we’re not going to fill Powell or Mead in a year. It’s pretty scary to think that this could be a more common thing than we want it to be.”

The boat ramps at Ponderosa, Stevens Creek and Lake Fork are also closed. At Elk Creek Marina, only one single-lane ramp is available to boaters, often creating a line of people waiting to put in at the reservoir. Collin Osborn, a local fishing guide, said that other guides have had to show up an hour early to before their clients arrive to avoid getting stuck in line.

“It’s just been a tough season so far,” he said.

Looking downstream

Despite emergency releases from Blue Mesa, Lake Powell in March dropped below a critical threshold of 3,525 feet above sea level for the first time since it filled in 1980 — jeopardizing the Glen Canyon Dam’s ability to

continue producing hydroelectric power for nearly five million people across the western U.S. A 2022 drought operations plan signed by the states and the BOR in April does not anticipate any additional releases from Blue Mesa in 2022, but it leaves the possibility open in 2023.

The plan does call for a release of approximately 500,000 acre-feet from Flaming Gorge Reservoir on the Utah-Wyoming border to help bolster the water levels at Lake Powell, which sits at about 25% full. The reservoir will likely only receive about 60% of the normal amount of inflow, according to the latest projections from the BOR, signifying a tough summer ahead as the drought continues.

As he pulled his boat from the water, Moore shook his head.

“This is our water and it ought to stay up here,” he said. “What we do for Lake Powell is nothing, it’s minuscule. It’s not going to solve their problem.”

(Bella Biondini can be contacted at 970.641.1414 or bella@gun-nisontimes.com.)

Romancing the ‘River of Color’

The romance of science



George Sibley
Special to the Times

Humans have inhabited the region of what we now know as the Colorado River — Rio Colorado, River of Color — for 12 or 12 millennia in small wandering bands most of that time, hunters and foragers. Then as their numbers grew in the mellow Holocene, they became settled farmers with increasing levels of regional socioeconomic organization to handle even larger numbers. Then their increasingly complex cultures collapsed under still growing numbers, with great population loss, and the survivors went back to small farming communities; some even went back to hunting and foraging.

The remaining relatively stable first peoples in the region of the river were then disrupted half a millennia ago by invasions of Europeans experiencing their own homeland Holocene population explosions. Crossing the Atlantic, first from southern Europe, then mostly from northern Europe, and armed with guns and germs, they — we — overran and either destroyed or displaced most of the first peoples.

The Europeans knew the river first as two rivers. Coming northward from what we know as Mexico, the southern Euro-Americans encountered a desert river, an erratic on-and-off firehose of a river emerging from a region of canyons and flowing through hot and forbidding deserts — but being from the drier parts of Europe, they knew this land could be productive with water from the river. They named the river Rio Colorado, River of Color.

The other Euro-Americans, coming westward into the region a couple centuries later, found mountain rivers flowing out of snowpacks on the spine of the continent and rolling down to carve and create a mix of alluvial mountain valleys and canyons either inviting or challenging or both, depending on what you were looking for. These mountain rivers converged in high deserts and then disappeared into a region of canyons. The three largest confluences entering the canyons

they named the Green, the Grand and the San Juan Rivers.

The Euro-Americans eventually proved, that the mountain rivers that disappeared into the canyons and the desert river that emerged from the canyons were the same river, and eventually the whole river system came to be known as Rio Colorado, the Colorado River — a river of color, from its clear cold whitewater origins in the mountains to the warm muddy browns and reds of the silty soup that either poured or trickled into the Gulf of California, depending on the season.

Mary Austin, a wonderful writer about the river's desert lands, told in her book, "Land of Little Rain," of one small tributary of the Gila River, far down in the lower Colorado River Basin, a stream that was attributed with strange powers: "the fabled Hassayampa ... of whose waters, if any drink, they can no more see fact as naked fact, but all radiant with the color of romance."

As we get into the modern history of the human engagement with the River of Color, I find myself wondering if this Hassayampa disorder might not have spread through the entire Colorado River region (carried perhaps from stream to stream up to the headwaters by the endangered yellow-billed cuckoo). Why? Because it is really difficult to look at any of the

“May be we shall come to a fall in these canyons which we cannot pass, where the walls rise from the water's edge, so that we cannot land, and where the water is so swift that we cannot return.”

John Wesley Powell

interactions between the Euro-Americans and the Colorado River without seeing those interactions "all radiant with the color of romance."

And to sit in judgment of those interactions today, with pursed lips, skeptical eyes and doggedly rational minds, wondering how rational human beings could have once been so cavalier about the naked facts, is just to say that today our cleansing and chlorinating of the river's water succeeds in removing the romance along with the other pollutants. Good on us, but still.



By P. Buckholz

What is the radiant color of romance? It's more the radiance than any specific color — and requires a little contextual understanding of the word "romance." It is a degraded term today, equated mostly with the obsessive adolescent love, love that seemed to take over popular culture after World War II. But in earlier times, romance covered any passionate human response to a quality or feeling of mystery, excitement, and uniqueness in the larger world; romance is driven by the imaginative or emotional appeal of what is heroic, adventurous, remote, unknown or idealized.

Romance clothes the "naked facts" of a phenomenon like the Colorado River, a relatively modest river in actual water flow (naked fact), with visions of using it to make vast deserts bloom like the biblical rose, grow great cities as well as great crops, power great industries, convert the presumably infinite resources of a great land into wealth beyond the dreams of any previous peoples. And finally, today, for those grown tired of that kind of greatness — a nostalgic vision of the river returned to an airbrushed natural state, wildly perfect in a way that naked nature never pretended to.

Romance may be best defined as the enthusiastic personal imagination that is essential for actual engagement with the otherwise merely naked facts of life — but too brilliant a romantic radiance can also blind us to some underlying realities that don't change just because we don't see them (or don't want to).

These reflections on romance and the river are driven by the first book I've found about the Colorado River from the perspective of the Euro-American invasion: "The Romance of the Colorado River," by Frederick Samuel Dellenbaugh, published in 1902.

Dellenbaugh's personal introduction to the river was a real "baptism under water":

a 17-year-old looking for employment or adventure or both, he got hired in Chicago by Major John Wesley Powell for Powell's second voyage through the canyons of the Green and Colorado Rivers in 1871.

Having survived that journey (not always sure he would), he became bitten by the Hassayampa bug. He traveled through the region, odd jobbing to stay alive as he collected every historic document he could find about early explorations of the river and its valleys.

The bulk of the book is his account of both the 1869 and 1871 Powell expeditions down the canyons.

But I want to move on now to Major John Wesley Powell himself — one of the most interesting figures in America's ongoing mostly civil war between the Industrial Revolution and the Agrarian Counterrevolution. I am going to argue, those trips down the canyons of the Colorado River also revealed the heart and guts of Powell's romance with not just the river, but the West.

Not everyone will agree that Powell had a romantic engagement with the river, or with anything; but I cannot see his first trip into the unknown canyon region of the river as anything other than a romantic soul engaging in a risky adventure beyond the range of good sense and reason. Foolhardy, in a word — or a calculated but risky gamble. Powell had things to say and do in the evolving American experience, and needed a big move to get his foot in the door of the rapidly expanding federal "survey of the West."

Dellenbaugh, deep in Marble Canyon on the second trip, called him on that risk: "Major, what would you have done on the first trip if just beyond that bend you had come upon a fall like Niagara?" He regarded me a moment with his penetrating gaze, and then answered: "I don't know."

The Major himself had

reflected on that possibility in his own journalized account of the first journey while the party was making it way through the punishments of Cataract Canyon: "May be we shall come to a fall in these canyons which we cannot pass, where the walls rise from the water's edge, so that we cannot land, and where the water is so swift that we cannot return."

In another great book about Powell, Beyond the Hundredth Meridian, Wallace Stegner states that "Powell's party in 1869 only survived by the exercise of observation, caution, intelligence, skill, planning — in a word, Science." I would not deny that was how they survived, but it was certainly an override of caution that got them into the adventure in the first place; they also went in with no skill in negotiating large whitewater; and no planning or intelligence would have saved them had that mythic Niagara existed. He inserted himself — and his crew — into his own scientific research project, turning it into an experiment to test his own degree and quality of scientific discipline and courage.

Dellenbaugh saw that kind of self-testing in the Major: "Powell was fortified by Science, and he surmised that nowhere would he encounter any obstruction which his ingenuity could not surmount."

Where do you draw the line between that kind of self-testing courage, and plain "gambler's foolhardiness?" Powell's example suggests that line can be drawn when the experiment ends and the test can be considered passed, or at least past: the scientist has survived his own experiment, and has learned enough to do it better next time. This is the romance of science.

(George Sibley is a Gunnison writer and thinker.)

BRIEFS

Elk Creek Visitor Center open, marina closed for the season

The Elk Creek Visitor Center re-opened on May 16 after major renovations to the historic building began in fall of 2020. A complete rehabilitation of the interior spaces now provides greater accessibility, installation of an elevator, restroom remodeling and upgrades to the landscaping and parking areas. The summer hours of operations will be 8 a.m.-5 p.m. seven days a week with a closure for lunch from 12-1 p.m.

Visitors will be able to purchase passes to national parks, pay for Elk Creek campsites, and get two-day, two-week and annual boat permits for Blue Mesa. Other Curecanti campsites are self-serve or reservable on www.recreation.gov.

The visitor center was designed in 1965 by well-known architect Cecil Doty. He was responsible for the consistency of design that is the National Park Service Modern style. In the 1960s, the National Park Service championed an effort titled "Mission 66" that created infrastructure improvements and visitor centers in the modern architectural style throughout the nation.

Elk Creek Marina will be closed for the summer season due to low water levels at Blue Mesa Reservoir.

Gunnison River Festival to celebrate 20th anniversary

The Gunnison River Festival will return June 10-12, celebrating the headwaters of the Gunnison Watershed that flow into the Gunnison River.

The event will include American Whitewater Taylor downriver raft and kayak races, a canine big air competition, an inflatable rodeo, a "Town Run" fun float, flyfishing demos, Surf Jam and more. To register for the Taylor Race, Surf Jam or to learn more visit: gunnisonriverfestival.com.

All trails at Hartman Rocks and Signal Peak open

As of Monday, May 16, all trails at Hartman Rocks Recreation Area and Signal Peak will be open. This includes the trails south of Powerline Road at Hartman Rocks — Bambi's, Sawtooth, Outback, Back-In, 9-0, Skull Pass and Aberdeen Loop.

Trails at Signal Peak include the Ridgeline, Rasta Gulch, Chicken Wing and Shoelace. All roads in the Signal Peak area are now open to motorized use as well.

Colorado wilderness expansion bill fails to pass Senate committee

Thompson Divide protections survive markup

Bella Biondini
Times Associate Editor

The Colorado Outdoor Recreation and Economy (CORE) Act received its first committee vote before the U.S. Senate on May 3. It is legislation intended to protect roughly 400,000 acres of Colorado public lands — much of that in Gunnison County.

The membership of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources is split evenly between Democrats and Republicans resulting in a tied vote, although the bill has passed the House of Representatives four times. Local leaders are still hopeful the bill, which is widely supported by Coloradans, will become law in the future. After moving through markup, the bill is positioned to be included in a larger public lands bill package.

Within Gunnison County, the CORE Act would withdraw mineral rights from thousands of acres of federal lands in the Thompson Divide in the county's northwest corner — protecting it from new oil and gas development, and focusing on the area's agricultural, big-game habitat and recreational opportunities. The legislation would also formally establish the boundary around Curecanti National Recreation Area, allowing the National Park Service to better manage the lands as a unit, strengthening the protection of the natural and recreational resources that surround Blue Mesa Reservoir.

The legislation would also expand wilderness designa-



The CORE Act would formally establish the boundary around Curecanti National Recreation Area, allowing the National Park Service to better manage the lands as a unit.

tions for over 30,000 acres in the San Juan Mountains and establish Camp Hale, the World War II training site for the 10th Mountain Division, as a national historic landscape.

The CORE Act is widely backed by numerous counties across the Western Slope including Gunnison, Ouray, San Juan, Summit, Pitkin and Eagle. Colorado Senators Michael Bennet and John Hickenlooper spoke in support of the bill as it went before the Senate for the first time since it was introduced over a decade ago.

"The CORE Act didn't come about suddenly or miraculously, it was the result of hard work over the course of a decade, driven by local ranchers and farmers and community leaders," Hickenlooper said before the Senate committee.

"This is a high watermark for what we hope is the final hurdle before it passes and becomes law," Hickenlooper said.

Republican Congresswoman Lauren Boebert, who represents Gunnison County, labeled the CORE Act as a "land grab," and said the bill would accelerate wildfires due to its numerous wilderness designations and provisions that restrict federal agencies' ability to active-

ly manage their lands. Other Republicans disapproved of the CORE Act's creation of areas where new mining and oil and gas leasing will be prohibited on federal lands.

Gunnison County Commissioner Jonathan Houck, who has been working in support of the CORE Act for almost 12 years, disagreed.

"We believe in multiple use, and the uses of these landscapes in Gunnison County do drive and support our economy ... These are beneficial working landscapes for agriculture, for recreation and for wildlife," Houck said. "We want to see those uses continue to be protected and prioritized."

In addition to generating a lot of bipartisan support within the state, the CORE Act has also been vetted locally, he added.

"This is how public land bills should be put together, they're drawn from the ground up," Houck said. "They start with people who live in these communities and the CORE Act has been true to that."

A local view

In a separate proposal, Senator Mike Lee pushed for an amendment to the CORE Act that would exclude the Thompson Divide section of the CORE Act — language Houck said is directly connected to the work Gunnison County, the Town of Crested Butte and the Mt. Emmons Mining Company have been working toward for a long time. That provision would provide a permanent solution to the decades-long community effort to prevent molybdenum mining on the mountain.

Julie Nania, water program director at Crested Butte's High Country Conservation, said the inclusion of the Mt. Emmons withdrawal is big news for the organization. "It's an uphill battle to get that vote right now, but we're remaining hopeful," Nania said.

(Bella Biondini can be contacted at 970.641.1414 or bella@gunnisontimes.com.)

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Commissioners sign onto study of Blue Mesa algal blooms

Increased water sampling to be combined with satellite data

Paul Wayne Foreman
Journal Staff Writer

At the May 17 regular session, Gunnison County Commissioners voted unanimously to sign a letter of support and become a funding partner for a three-year water sampling project, begun last year at Blue Mesa Reservoir by the United States Geological Survey (USGS) and the National Park Service (NPS). The goal of the project is to study the blue-green algae blooms that have plagued Blue Mesa since 2018 and threaten to impact the local economy.

Sonja Chavez, Upper Gunnison River Water

Conservancy District manager, appeared before the commissioners seeking their support for the USGS project entitled, "High-Frequency Water-Quality Sampling to Support Harmful Algal Bloom Studies in Blue Mesa Reservoir Project." Commissioner Jonathan Houck noted, "We all understand the need for a study, and we want to participate as a partner in it."

The algal blooms have resulted in toxicity levels in Blue Mesa Reservoir that have exceeded Colorado state advisory levels in September of 2018, 2020 and 2021 according to Chavez. The blue-green algal blooms, that begin in the Iola Basin, can be toxic to humans and deadly to dogs when ingested, as well as being a skin irritant. The blooms have been increasing in extent and toxicity.

Water samples from Blue Mesa and tributary streams, gathered during the first year of

the project, were taken approximately every two weeks beginning in mid-July and continued through mid-September when cooling temperatures naturally begin a seasonal tapering off of the blooms. The samples were correlated with satellite data, refreshed every 4-6 days, to gain a more clear understanding of where the blooms begin and how they progress.

"The National Park Service and the United States Geological Survey started the water quality sampling project in 2021 and began data collection. After that one year of data collection it became clear the data had some gaps of information that need to be filled," Chavez said.

The sampling project is the first to take a detailed look at where Blue Mesa's blooms begin and how much of the reservoir is affected by them. Blue-green algae blooms cre-

Algal blooms A11

continued from A7

Drag Queen Bingo and Storytime

Drag Queen Bingo is May 20 at 7 p.m. in Taylor Auditorium—pay what you can. This is a fundraiser for The Gunnison Valley Theatre Festival. The next morning at 11 a.m. is Drag Queen Storytime, also in Taylor Auditorium, for free with a suggested donation of \$20/per family.

Gunnison Valley Health hosts a Celebration of Life

On June 4, Gunnison Valley Health Hospice and Palliative Care will host the second annual Celebration of Life. The event is a memorial celebration offering the opportunity to honor

loved ones who have died. The event begins at 10 a.m. in West Tomichi Riverway Park and will include a light brunch, music and the release of memorial lotus flowers.

GVH Bereavement Coordinator, Dawn Stewart, hopes that the event will provide an opportunity for families to honor their loved ones and find comfort and support. The event is built around the lotus flower which is symbolic of transition and change. Lotus flowers grow in murky waters, blooming in the light.

While the event will honor all patients served by GVH Hospice over the past year, all members of the community are invited to call and reserve a lotus flower in honor of their loved ones. To RSVP and reserve a lotus, call 970.641.4254 by May 25. More information is available at gunnisonvalleyhealth.org

Memorial Day Polka Party

On May 30 from 1:15 - 4:15 p.m. there will be a free polka party at the All Saints Catholic Church in Crested Butte which will feature the Pete Dunda Band.

Gunnison Valley League of Women Voters

Gunnison Valley LWV is helping sponsor a webinar alongside several other league chapters.

Five candidates for the CD3 House Seat will be participating. LWV Pueblo has secured Sara Blackhurst as the moderator. All questions to candidates will be established in advance by LWV and the forum will be in webinar format - no audience participation. Save the date for 6 p.m. June 8.

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continued from A5

ate problems globally, but in particular cause problems for western reservoirs like Blue Mesa, where years of extreme drought and the resulting shallower reservoir depths, combined with warming air temperatures, have led to Blue Mesa's blue-green algal blooms that indeed appear to be worsening over time, according to data collected.

USGS hydrologist Tyler King gave the commissioners a detailed presentation of the data thus far collected by the study of Blue Mesa.

"The science question around this partnership of the USGS and the NPS focuses on two major points: To develop remote sensing methods and to improve our understanding of toxic events. Remote sensing is just a fancy way to say 'analyze with satellite data.'"

The water sampling coincides with satellite data when the satellite is overhead every four to six days, King said. One goal of the sampling is to identify potential point sources of nutrients feeding into the reservoir, primarily nitrogen and phosphorus, that drive algal blooms.

"Our satellite data showed us tremendous growth in between the four to six day periods between satellite flyovers," Taylor explained. "It's these gaps in data we want to fill. Filling them will help us to understand trends over time as well as trends in climate, or driving forces. If we can identify the driving mechanisms that's the first step in identifying what can be done to mitigate their impact."

If the point source of elevated nutrient levels from rivers, creeks and seeps can be identified, rather than deal with algal blooms, "our approach would be to suggest steps that can be taken to reduce nutrient loading to prevent the blooms altogether."

Taylor noted that some evidence exists showing algal blooms are worsening over time.

"It might be the result of civilization and development," Taylor noted. "Nutrient loading can come from things as simple as leaves and grass clippings getting into streams. Poorly maintained or operated sewage treatment, whether centralized or individual septic systems, can contribute nutrients to streams and reservoirs. However, properly operating and maintained systems do remove nitrogen and phosphorus from the wastewater, Taylor said.

"It's what they are designed to do," Taylor pointed out. "Also, riparian corridors and wetlands are natural processors of waste materials, so it's wise to protect them. The good news is the ecosystem is there to help us."

One of the few long-term studies, done jointly by the USGS and Colorado State University (CSU), has amassed 39 years of observations of the Loch Vale Watershed in Rocky Mountain National Park.

The study has probed thousands of years into the past, according to Jill Baron, a senior

scientist with the USGS and a researcher at Colorado State University.

"We have taken core samples of sediment at the bottom of lakes that lie more than 10,000 feet above sea level," he said. "The data we've collected from the mud goes back 14,000 years."

Through time, the amount of algae in those lakes remained constant until the 1950s, when abrupt increases in the amount of algae were recorded.

"That corresponds with increased use of irrigation and fertilizers in the region and explosive growth in the population around Denver. As a result, emissions from agriculture and transportation rose drastically. Air pollution includes nitrogen — a common ingredient in commercial fertilizers," Baron noted.

Concurrently, declining precipitation and a rise in water use for irrigation and new development have translated into lower reservoir levels throughout the West, exposing fine soils that once lay underwater.

These bottom soils, which actually are river silt, can be observed locally on the exposed reservoir bottom at Blue Mesa. Owing to silt's extremely fine nature, it readily becomes airborne during strong wind events.

Wind can carry dust from distant upwind locations, and deposit it on local snowpacks, a familiar phenomenon that's often visible as a slight reddish tint to snowpacks. This dust is rich in phosphorus, a vital plant nutrient. Blown-in dust accelerates snowpack melting, which produces earlier run-offs and reduced late summer inflows to reservoirs, Baron said.

"All of this further promotes algal blooms," he said.

Locally, the effects of lower water levels and blue green algal blooms threatens to produce economic repercussions.

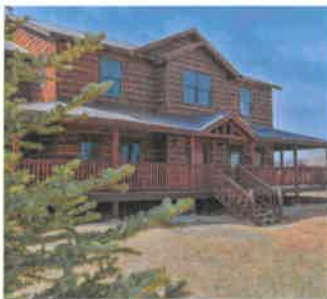
The popular Elk Creek Marina and Pappy's Restaurant will not open for the 2022 summer season, although the NPS boat ramps will be open. The economic repercussions to the local tourism-based economy remains to be seen. On the other hand, business at the Taylor Park Marina already has increased.

"Oh yeah, we're seeing more people," said Jennifer Birdsey, who owns the Taylor Park Marina with her husband Ryan. "Over last weekend alone we had 20 or so people here who said they usually go to Blue Mesa. We are anticipating a busy season and we're doing what we need to do to gear up for it."

Taylor Park reservoir is set to fill to 92%, and no big draw downs are anticipated over the summer season.

"It really breaks our hearts to see Blue Mesa so low, even though it's looking good for us," Jennifer Birdsey said.

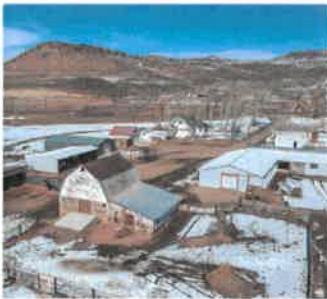
(Paul Wayne Foreman can be reached at paul@gunnison-times.com.)



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UNDER CONTRACT



307 Van Tyl Circle Unit A MLS #792879.
\$471,500, 2bed, 1.5 bath, 1058 sq.ft Brand new 2 bed/1.5 bath townhome unit with 1 car detached garage.

BACK ON MARKET



between the other two oversized bedrooms. The enormous backyard has a shed and plenty of sun exposure to plant/seed flowers, play with your pets and have get-togethers with friends. The two car garage is attached to the house and is very spacious and heated by a wood burning stove. There is sufficient amount of parking in the driveway and along the east side of the house. This home is magnificent so don't miss out and schedule a showing by contacting the listing agent office.

BACK ON MARKET



621 N 11th \$780,000 MLS #790550 4 bedroom 3 bathroom. 3234 sqft. This magnificent gem is within city limits consist of 6 city lots or .43 of an acre. Can see Valleys and Mountains views at the distance. This exemplary home is a split level with 2 bedrooms and 1 full bathroom and a bonus office and/or storage on the garden level and 2 bedrooms and 1-half bathroom. 1 3/4 bathrooms on the main level. The house offers an open kitchen and formal dining room, large bedrooms, covered porch, mature landscaping with large areas of fenced backyard, living room plus a den, metal roof, & off street parking. Plus a detached 3 car garage and attached 1 car garage. Located less than 1/2 block to bus stop, a full block from both high school and elementary/middle schools and less than a mile from trails. Must see, contact the listing agent for a showing today.

NEW LISTING



25 Meadowlark Trail \$1,475,000 MLS 792288 Built 2022 4bed 3bath 2471 sqft
26 Meadowlark Trail is the newest home within highly coveted North Elk Meadows subdivision. This custom home is meticulously built and designed from solid cedar including the exterior siding with rock accent. Large foyer with vaulted 18 foot ceilings, a large 8 x 24 back deck, solid wood front door, abundant windows throughout the home giving natural light and views of Carbon Peak, Red Mountain, Flat Top and Signal Peak. This property has 4-bedrooms 3-bathrooms, with a master bedroom on the ground floor with large walk-in closet an open kitchen with 9 ft ceilings throughout the main level. Separate dining room and a den possible office space with in floor radiant heat throughout the home. Gas stove and all stainless appliances, soft close drawers and doors cabinet. Granite countertops Large kitchen island Hardwood floors throughout, the main floor and custom bling of bathroom floors and showers. You can enjoy the Gunnery summer days on the deck and plant and garden on your huge lot consist of 1.13 of an acre. This unique home truly has it all and is located only a short 3 miles from Gunnison and 22-25 miles from Crested Butte. This is a truly a dream home with impeccable views and serenity contact the listing agent for details and showing request.

UNDER CONTRACT



117 S 8th \$380,000 MLS 792400 Built 1943 2bed 1bath 918 sqft
Quaint 2 bedroom/1 bath house on a corner lot with a 1 car detached workshop/garage. Property exterior was completely painted in Spring of 2021. All one level layout with up dated bath and spacious kitchen/dining area. Established trees, raspberry bushes and landscaping with fenced side yard. New sewer line was installed in 2019 from house to tap in 8th street. Property has great rental history and is currently rented for \$1600/month + utilities.



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AJ MANI

LETTERS

Crested Butte News



MOUNTAIN WORDS LITERARY FESTIVAL: Visiting writers went head-to-head in a new game show called the *Literary Death Match* at the Center for the Arts during the Mountain Words Literary Festival. The festival hosted multiple world-renowned writers to teach workshops, perform in plays, participate in discussions and readings, and to simply enjoy and be inspired by our community. PHOTO BY NOLAN BLUNCK

Diving deep into local water issues

To anyone interested in water,

This week marks the beginning of "Headwaters," a five-week radio series that dives deep into water issues in the Upper Gunnison River Basin. The series will air on KBUT and was made possible by a generous grant from The Water Desk, a journalism initiative through the University of Colorado's environmental journalism program.

This project was sparked by my own curiosity about water in our valley. Despite living here for a decade, I knew very little about how water is used and stored — but I also knew our valley is one of the most important

headwaters of the Colorado River Basin. Forty million people depend on the "big river" for drinking water, agriculture, hydropower and recreation. In short, we have a very important place in the story of water in the West.

I worked on this project for nearly four months getting out into the field and interviewing about two dozen people. I learned so much about drought, snowpack, soils, reservoirs, agriculture, water rights and more. I also learned that I have so much more to learn! I hope this project serves as a learning opportunity for everyone in our valley. I hope it also encourages everyone to dig in even more.

The five episodes will air each Wednesday on KBUT's Morning Edition and will also be available online. A million thanks to KBUT for supporting this project and Chad Reich for providing editorial support. I also want to thank the Center for the Arts Writers in Residency program which gave me the time and space to finish the project. Oh, there is also very cool cover art! It was made by the talented former Gunnison resident Jennie Noreen with a grant from the Upper Gunnison Water Conservation District.

Regards,
Stephanie Maltarich

(Story on Next Page)

75¢

LAKE CITY SILVER WORLD.

Vol. 45, No. 9

Friday, June 3, 2022

Lake City, Hinsdale County, Colorado 81235

U.S.P.S. No. 436-630

1111*****AUTO**5-DIGIT 81230
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Gunnison CO 81230-2543



48-Year-Old Local Man, Sterling Smith, Dead in Highway 149 Accident

A single-vehicle Highway 149 accident south of Lake City has claimed the life of a 48-year-old Lake City resident.

Sterling Smith was declared dead at the scene shortly after 6 a.m. Tuesday morning, May 31, after his south-bound 2000 Chevrolet Pickup left the highway near the Dawn of Hope Bridge, base of Slumgullion Pass, and struck several trees.

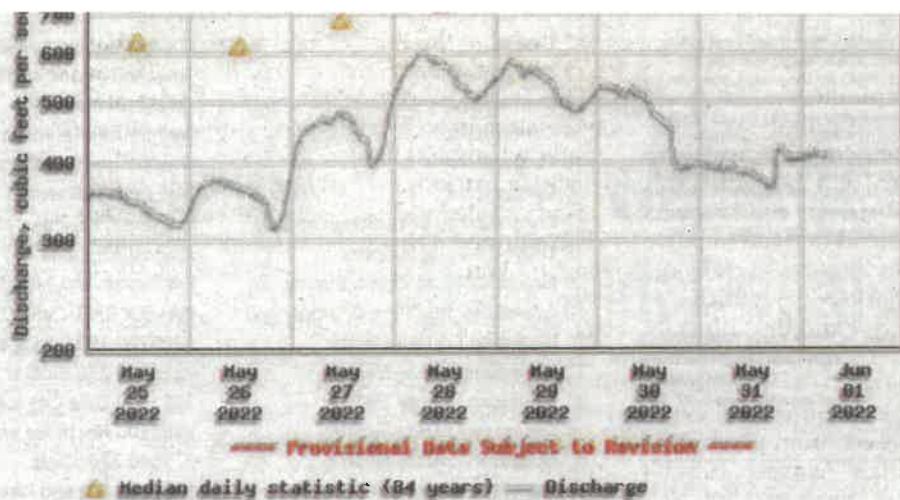
According to Colorado State Patrol and Hinsdale County Sheriff's Office, the red Chevrolet pickup with Smith the driver and sole occupant, was heading south toward Slumgullion Pass when it failed to negotiate a left hand curve at Mile Post 69-1/2. The vehicle left the right side of the highway and went down an embankment before striking two trees.

The accident took place to the south of the highway between the gated entrance to Weems Malter Placer Subdivision and Highway 149's crossing the Lake Fork River at Dawn of Hope Bridge.

According to Trooper Lewis, Public

Flags Aloft

at Country's



runoff as measured at the Gateview gauging station on the lower Lake Fork.

Snowmelt peaked approximately a month earlier than usual and now shows a steady decline.

The slight elevated blip in water flow on May 28 is the result of a storm event and several inches of very wet snow which occurred — and then vanished — on the upper Lake Fork.

strongly suggested in large indoor gatherings. For susceptible individuals who have been in crowded indoor situations, the state is suggesting personal testing both before and after the gathering.

During a recent media press conference, Herlihy stated, "it's the season for graduations, now is the time to take precautions in advance."

The individually-administered BinaxNow testing kits for COVID remain widely available in the state, including kits free of charge at Lake City Library. Individuals self-testing and testing positive are asked to report their findings to the local public health office and the state at <https://covidbinax.colorado>

While acknowledging that state infection statistics do not reflect the results of the now prevalent home testing, known daily positive infections increased to approximately 1,500 positives per day in Colorado as of late last month, a statistic which is still relatively low compared to the height of the pandemic last year.

Scott Bookman, Colorado Dept. of Health's COVID-19 Incident Commander, states indications are that the COVID virus is gradually evolving and becoming more transmissible, yet generally less severe. "We're learning to live with it," says Bookman who predicts that in the future COVID will be combated with a vaccine similar to the annual flu vaccine. "It's going to be with us for a significant amount of time," Bookman says.

Another interesting and alarming informational graph, top right, comes to us from USGS Water Resources. The graph confirms the month-early peak of spring runoff in the Lake Fork River and a steady drop in the river's flow which has occurred since mid-May.

At last Tuesday afternoon's meeting of Upper Gunnison River Water Conservation District directors in Lake City — Henry Woods present representing Town of Lake City, Robert Hurd and Tom Carl for Hinsdale County — and Silverton resident Jeff Derry made a remote and highly interesting report on the impacts of wind-blown dust to the high country snowpack. Based on readings and observations at a variety of sites, including Spring Creek Pass and Red Mountain Pass 15 miles from Hinsdale County, Derry reported "extreme dust on snow" combined with warmer and windier conditions than normal. Based on those conditions, "the snowpack doesn't stand much of a chance."

According to Derry, regional snowmelt began "full bore" a month earlier than usual this year, snowpack decreased an average of .23" per day which, he said, is "pretty huge," especially for the month of April.

Derry also commented on the lack of snowpack on Spring Creek Pass, noting that during a normal winter he'd go up to the 10,901'-elevation pass in

May and then dig down through the accumulated snow to analyze dust in the snow layers. "This year I couldn't find a patch of snow to test for dust on snow" Derry told water conservation directors, concluding, "I guess I should have gone up there earlier. It's really really dry up there, as is the case for the entire region."

Derry also commented on other dust-on-snow testing sites in the region, including Scofield Pass, where conditions were right for rapid snowmelt starting in mid-April, and the Upper Rio Grande. On the Upper Rio Grande, he commented, conditions were "much worse" with a significant amount of wind-borne dust impacting the snow.

As opposed to winter 2019 when there was significant snowpack — and dust — on the Upper Rio Grande snowpack, snow accumulations in both 2018 and 2022 were lower than normal. This year, however, "takes the cake," said Derry, for rapid snowmelt which he attributes in large degree to warm temperatures and the presence of a dust layer which concentrates heat and encourages an early snowmelt.

Derry explained that snow precipitation in the region "flat-lined" starting in April, with minimal new snow to cover up the residue of 11 dust events which occurred, some of what he termed "severe." The dirtier snow surface, he continued, absorbs greater solar penetration and, for 2022, is comparable with low snow year 2009 which was an "epic year" for dust-on-snow.

Comparing this year to prior low snow years, Derry said that the early loss of snow this year — including more high wind events this spring bringing in warm, dry air — is comparable to 2002 and 2018.

Elsewhere in water conservancy's Lake City meeting last week. Beverly Richards referred to the "Drought Conditions" graph (WORLD, May 20) and said simply, "well, all that has now changed."

In the earlier graph, Hinsdale and surrounding counties were listed, part as D1-Moderate Drought and part as D2-Severe Drought. In Hinsdale County's case, as of last month, 40.38 percent of the county's land was classified D1 and the majority, 59.62 percent, as D2.

The now worsening moisture prognosis, according to Richards, is that 100 percent of Hinsdale County — together with neighboring Ouray, San Juan, LaPlata, Archuleta, and Mineral Counties — has now been moved into the D2-Severe Drought category.

The exception is Saguache County which is now listed as part D2-Severe Drought and part D3-Extreme Drought.

Word from Bruce Heath just before press on Thursday is Lake Fork River flow at Gateview gauging station as of June 2 is 484 cubic feet per second, compared to the historic average 878 cfs for this date. Heath, who plans to be back in Lake City in early July, sums it up, "it's going to be a tough water summer ahead."

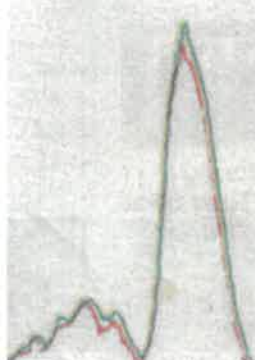
Ukulele musician Ava Marie Wingard is recalled for her 15th birthday on June 3. Other Friday, June 3, birthdays are Realtor Jeff Worthen, 51, and Colorado Springs resident Steve Meredith, 69.

June 4 adds a year for newly returned Phil Fleishman, Ruthanna Urankar Hall, prize-winning radio reporter Laura Palmisano, vocalist Bill Blue, 70, and Creede resident Erin-Lynn Keech, 65.

Lake City Community School graduate Caroline Thompson, 18, Hinsdale County Treasurer Lori

Graph at left illustrates a state-wide high point for COVID-19 Omicron infections which occurred early this year.

Colorado infections for the COVID variant have steadily decreased since January, although there has been an uptick in the number of infections in recent weeks with an increase in the number of BA 2 12.1 variant



Mussel Decontamination, continued from page 1

Denver database which can be tracked wherever the boat travels in the state.

Decontamination stations with requisite 140-degree water to kill mussels in all stages from infinitesimal larvae stage through the adult cycle during boat washouts are now streamlined with solar-powered, self-contained 8'x10' mobile units which are set up and staffed on site.

In Lake San Cristobal's case, all that would be required would be a concrete pad and site configuration assuring that all wash-out water is self-contained and not allowed to drain into the lake. Hot water used in the decontamination is collected on specially-designed mats, excess flow allowed to soak into the ground at the site. According to Martin, the amount of water used in the decontamination is minimal and the actual inspection is "benign," taking only a couple of minutes.

Commissioners, CPW and Park Service are still discussing an ideal location for the decontamination station, earlier prospects including public lands on Clawson Mesa above Lake San Cristobal — admittedly a bit distant from the county boat launching ramp — and, preferably, a designated site close to the boat launching ramp at the county's Peninsula Park.

In terms of ultimate location, Martin stated the program is "nimble" and can be altered as needs arise. He suggests the commissioners, CPW, BLM, and Park Service "brainstorm together to come up

with a good spot."

In addition to preventing the introduction of Zebra or Quagga Mussels into the pristine lake, focus of the decontamination stations also includes invasive aquatic plants and non-native snails which might innocuously be transported within water on the boats or caked mud.

Mussels are able to survive for up to 30 days out of water in a moist environment. At the decontamination stations, any residual water left onboard a boat, including mud or vegetation, is suspect and subject to a quick cleansing with a hot water wash.

When inadvertently allowed to colonize and proliferate, the mussels have the potential to wildly multiply and eventually encrust surfaces which, in the case of Lake San Cristobal, might include the outlet gates and related equipment regulating the lake's water level.

Among those remotely attending last week's commissioners' workshop, and expressing her support for the decontamination station was Sonja Chavez of Upper Gunnison River Water District who offered to draft a letter to expedite funding for the decontamination program which she termed "incredibly important."

"This is something which has very much been on my mind," Chavez told the commissioners, noting that with lower water levels in Blue Mesa, she foresees greater pressure on Lake San Cristobal.

Elsewhere in their multi-hour morning workshop, Hinsdale Commissioners conferred with the county's Emergency Manager, Phil Graham, on the outlook for wildfires in many areas of Colorado this summer as the result of extremely dry conditions.

Rather than a single fire zone for the entire county, Hinsdale is roughly configured into three separate zones comprised of the South End of the county abutting Archuleta County on the Upper Piedra in San Juan National Forest, central Hinsdale County made up of the Upper Rio Grande adjoining Creede and Mineral County in Rio Grande National Forest, and the north portion of the county adjacent to Gunnison and Saguache Counties, including Town of Lake City, within Gunnison National Forest.

Public lands managers in each region, as explained by Graham, utilize specific criteria in determining when to go into and out of fire bans. In evaluating for a fire ban, U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management utilize specific guidelines which he said eliminate the "emotional aspect."

Evaluation guidelines are based on fuel moisture, energy release components ranging from light to dense, fire activity, available fire fighting resources, weather conditions and zone preparedness from a low of 1, reflecting minimal resources, to a high of 5 with extensive resources.

When three or more of these criteria are checked as conducive to fire, a Stage 1 Fire Ban is warranted, if a majority of the criteria — five to six of the guidelines — are indicative of fire danger, a complete fire ban is instituted.

Graham explained that Town of Lake City mirrors fire regulations which are set in place by Hinsdale County; in unincorporated areas of the county, Hinsdale County Sheriff Chris Kambish serves as Fire Warden, while Fire Chief Joe Wonnacott regulates fire prevention activity within the Town of Lake City.

Fire restrictions come in the form of a county resolution passed by the County Commissioners at a special meeting citing emergency conditions. Non-scheduled meetings of the county board require 24-hour advance notice, although that stipulation can be relaxed in emergency situations.

On an optimistic note at last Wednesday's meeting, Commissioners Borchers, Levine and Hurd breathed a sigh of relief after meeting the May 6 deadline for submitting a Colorado Dept. of Transportation Multi-Model Opportunity Fund grant application under the umbrella of the Gunnison Valley Transportation Region.

The county is seeking \$720,000 in grant funding, not including local 10 percent match, for installation of a 30'-wide chip and seal roadway for four miles from the start of County Road 30 to the inlet of Lake San Cristobal.

The proposed 30'-wide roadway would consist of two 11'-wide vehicle lanes with delineator stripes, and further delineation separating the vehicle lanes from two 4'-wide bicycle lanes on the road's shoulders.

The chip & seal road surface would consist of 3/4" gravel base topped with...

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AGENDA ITEM 15

Citizen Comments

AGENDA ITEM 16

Future Meetings

FUTURE MEETINGS/EVENTS

- ▶ Offices closed for Independence Day - Monday, July 4, 2022
- ▶ Taylor Local User's Group Meeting - Friday, July 8, 9:00AM
- ▶ Jr. Livestock Show and Luncheon (UGRWCD Sponsors)- July 12th, Noon
- ▶ Watershed Mgmt. Planning Committee - Wednesday, July 13, 1:30PM
- ▶ Gunnison Basin Roundtable Meeting - Monday, July 18, 3:00PM
- ▶ UGRWCD Board Meeting - Monday, July 25, 5:30PM
- ▶ CO Water Congress Summer Convention - August 23-25, 2022
- ▶ RESCHEDULE AUGUST UGRWCD BOARD MEETING? (August 29?)

AGENDA ITEM 17

Summary of Action Items

AGENDA ITEM 18

Adjournment