

**MINUTES**  
**Taylor Local Users Group**  
**July 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**TLUG Attendees:**

TLUG Representatives Present:

Don Sabrowski (Chair)  
Mark Schumacher (Boating Interests)  
Roark Kiklevich (Wade Fishing)  
Ernie Cockrell (Taylor Place)  
David Fisher (Property Owners)  
Andy Spann (Agricultural via Zoom)

TLUG Representatives Absent:

Ryan Birdsey

Others in Person:

Dustin Brown (Scenic River Tours)

Beverly Richards (UGRWCD)  
Sonja Chavez (UGRWCD)  
Cheryl Cwelich (UGRWCD)  
Alana Nichols (UGRWCD)

By Zoom:

Dirk Schumacher  
Erik Knight (BOR)  
David Gochis (UCAR)  
Raquel Flinker  
Sue Uerling (UGRWCD)

## **I. Introductions and Approval of Minutes**

Chairman Don Sabrowski asked the Board if there were any requested changes to the June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023, meeting minutes.

Ernie Cockrell said he did not agree with the “Post Meeting Note” at the bottom of the release recommendations section. He asked for the “Post Meeting Note” to not be included in the meeting minutes since it was not discussed during the meeting.

Sonja Chavez agreed and said she would change the note to specify there had been a subsequent discussion on having additional water storage for next year.

Mark Schumacher moved and David Fisher seconded the motion to approve the June 6, 2023 minutes with the post meeting note removed as discussed. The motion carried.

Chairman Sabrowski asked for introductions of participants and Beverly Richards presented the names of those in attendance.

## **II. CBRFC Water Supply Update and USBR Model Forecast**

Erik Knight presented the July CBRFC forecast. The April-July runoff forecast is up to 120,000 acre-feet of inflow to Taylor Park Reservoir or 128% of average. June inflow came in higher than expected which caused a small redistribution in the model, and therefore, it is expected that there will be a little less inflow in July. The Taylor Park inflows are in the top 25% of historical inflows. The peak inflow never went over 1,000 cfs for Taylor Park Reservoir. There was a long and sustained runoff period from mid-May to the third week of June before flows began to drop. **Since there was a sustained high runoff, peak inflows did not reach the highs projected.** This provided for less flooding concern during the runoff period in the area.

Taylor Park operational releases were decreased to 400 cfs today and will continue to be at 400 cfs for the remainder of July. The Taylor Park max fill is estimated to be 103,400 acre-feet and should occur within the next day or so. The releases are projected to be reduced to 350 cfs in August for the entire month and then September releases will be reduced to 300 cfs for the month. The projected end of water year content on October 31 is 76,725 acre-feet.

Mark Schumacher asked Erik Knight what day inflows became less than releases.

Erik Knight said that the inflow on the last couple of days was calculated to be at 460 cfs and 450 cfs which were below the rate of release. Since releases were dropped to 400 cfs today there will be two or three days of inflows above 400 cfs before dropping down below the release rate.

Don Sabrowski asked Erik Knight if there were any challenges of keeping water from going over the spillway or if the colder temperatures helped prevent spilling.

Erik Knight said he does believe the colder temperatures helped prevent spilling. He noted they were able to keep the level down to at least a one and one half foot buffer below the spillway.

Mark Schumacher asked Erik Knight what the operational advantages there are for keeping an extra 1,600 acre-feet of water in storage at the end of October 31<sup>st</sup>.

Erik Knight indicated that additional carryover storage helps create a buffer for a potential poor water year next year. There is a good probability of a max fill next year with an average year, but the trade-off would be choosing to limit the outflows for the current year.

Sonja Chavez said they are predicting another strong La Nina (correction: she meant to say El Nino) pattern for this next year which means a dryer and warmer weather pattern for our area..

Ernie Cockrell asked Erik Knight if we could store more water this year and if it did turn out to be a wet year next year, can releases be increased earlier in the spring if they are worrying about not have capacity in the reservoir.

Erik Knight said that although it is possible to make early season releases, early season forecasts are not as accurate as later season forecasts. The initial early season forecast would likely not reflect another major wet year and it would only be determined to be a wet year later into the season. This would still require managing potential high runoff. Erik noted that Taylor Park has significant release capacity, up to 1,500 cfs and therefore there is ability to control reservoir levels and not spill.

### **III. Latest UCAR WRF-Hydro Model Forecast**

David Gochis presented the latest UCAR WRF-Hydro model forecast. He mentioned there was not a significant difference from the last cycle of forecast or from what Erik Knight presented. Taylor Reservoir inflow according to WRF-Hydro dropped to 117k AF and the majority of that decrease came from the mainstem Taylor River which is now 59.9 kac-ft. There is no physical explanation why the flows in the mainstem of Taylor River have decreased, but later reports should provide more explanation. David said to keep in mind that the ESP forecasts are not taking into account short-term weather events that provided recent rain in the area. The snowpack conditions in the basin are basically gone at this point and no longer will be updated in his reports.

The East River at Almont showed a small drop compared to the last forecast which is now at 265.3 kac-ft. Most of the tributaries decreased proportionally except for the Slate

River which seems to be carrying most of the water. The last ASO flight images had shown a large amount of snowpack in the Slate Basin which has been sustaining the flow rates. David mentioned he is reaching the end of the season analysis and he will be in a good position to have a full seasonal analysis of the forecasts, snow products, impact of ASO, etc., soon.

Don Sabrowski asked David Gochis when the last ASO flight was. David answered that believed the last ASO flight was on May 29<sup>th</sup>. The second ASO flight for Taylor Park showed a late season increase in the model when there were some late season snows. The second ASO flight image was beneficial in capturing the spring precipitation occurring.

#### **IV. Preliminary TLUG Draft Operational Release Recommendations**

Ernie Cockrell mentioned the flow regime as looks good. It's hard to get head around additional storage because the reservoir is full. He indicated that if the group decides to increase the year-end storage, it would probably be best to wait until the reservoir is going down. Ernie said his gut feeling is to increase the year-end storage a little bit at this time and set an objective level, knowing that the group will not be held to that objective. He is concerned about the wind and no rain causing the current dry conditions. He said he wouldn't mind trying to increasing storage to 76,000 or 77,000 and then decreasing it later to 75,000 if needed for the benefit of ag producers and boaters.

Andy Spann said this is a different year for ag producers and hay will be coming in later because of a later start. He predicts they will be pulling water later in the seasons. Andy wants to leave the flows as is, so there will be more water in the fall. He likes the idea of more water storage but isn't sure if water users downstream will agree with that. He said if the group does decide to set a different storage objective, he would rather pull water out of August or September. He does believe the objective should stay the same because it would be nice to have more water for irrigation in the fall.

Mark Schumacher said he doesn't want any water taken out in August or September. He would like to use up the 1600 acre-feet which is 50 cfs for 15 days, but he is good with the flows the way they are forecast for now. However, if it turns out that flows from 400 cfs to 300 cfs through September can't be sustained, then at the August meeting he would like to use see the flows utilize that 1600 acre-feet of storage. Right now, it is great the way it is for boaters.

Roark Kiklevich said he is good with the way it is set right now, but he is always supportive of having extra water for storage because of the issues TLUG has encountered in the past when dealing with drought years.

David Fisher said he sees both sides and understands it's a balancing act, but thinks there are positives on both sides for higher releases or higher year-end storage..

Roark Kiklevich said this morning prior to the decrease to 400 cfs, there were 480 cfs coming out while 422 cfs was coming in. The big change was in Willow Creek. In the last four or five days, he said it seems we have now released more than is coming in.

Ernie Cockrell said not all flows in the report are accounted for so it might be a good idea to account for it to see the most accurate flows.

Roark Kiklevich is very curious where we were on the spillway crest.

Don Sabrowski said there was a consensus among the TLUG representatives to go forward with Erik Knight's flow recommendations and storage objective and that this can be addressed again at the August meeting.

## **V. Miscellaneous Updates**

Sonja Chavez reported that she and John McClow met with the Four Parties, and they are fine with the release recommendations made to date. They said holding storage for buffer would be fine if everyone agrees and that this can be revisited at the end of the season to have a better understanding of what will happen with holding water storage.

Sonja Chavez made note of Ernie Cockrell's comment about whether or not there needed to be an amendment to the stipulation to hold more storage and she said will get back to the board on this topic. As of now, she felt there was no need to address this until August or September. The application for ASO flights did get put in last meeting and the District is waiting to hear about funding.

## **VI. Schedule Next Meeting**

Next meeting planned for Tuesday August 8<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 pm.

This meeting was adjourned at 12:34pm by Chair Don Sabrowski.