

**MINUTES**  
**Taylor Local Users Group**  
**March 12, 2025, 9:00 a.m.**

**TLUG Attendees:**

TLUG Chair: Don Sabrowski

**TLUG Representatives Present:**

Roark Kiklevich (Wade Fishing Interests)

Ernest Cockrell (Taylor Placer via Zoom)

Ryan Birdsey (Flatwater Recreation Interests via Zoom)

David Fisher (Property Owners via Zoom)

**TLUG Representatives Absent:**

Mark Schumacher (Boating Interests)

Andy Spann (Irrigation Interests via Zoom)

**Other Attendees:**

Sonja Chavez (UGRWCD)

Bailey Friedman (UGRWCD)

Beverly Richards (UGRWCD)

Sue Uerling (UGRWCD)

**By Zoom:**

Erik Knight (BOR)

Rory Birdsey (Taylor Reservoir Dam Operator)

Giulio Del Piccolo (Colorado Parks and Wildlife)

Peter Dunda (Taylor River Resident)

David Gochis (Airborne Snow Observatory)

Jay Whitacre (Irwin Guides)

Doug Forshagen (Crystal Creek Homeowner)

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

Chairman Don Sabrowski called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. The minutes from September 9, 2024, TLUG meeting were presented for review. No changes were requested. Ernie Cockrell made a motion and Roark Kiklevich seconded approval of the September 9, 2024, Meeting Minutes. The motion carried.

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

Erik Knight with the US Bureau of Reclamation provided information from the March 1 CBRFC forecast. The forecasted April to July runoff is 87,000 acre-feet, which is 93% of average and is 3,000 less than the February forecast. Eric also discussed the proposed operations plan, which indicates the peak to be just over 103,000 acre-feet of storage, about 1.6 feet below the dam crest during runoff.

At the water year end in October, the reservoir is expected to be just under 74,000 acre-feet. Currently, the plan is to keep releases at about 85 cfs until April and then increase to 100 cfs on April 1. The snow accumulation in the Taylor Park Basin is currently at 99% of normal with the Taylor Park Basin doing better than the rest of the Gunnison Basin. There were no questions or concerns raised about the information presented.

## **III. WRF-Hydro Model Forecast Reports (ASO, Inc.)**

David Gochis provided an update on the snowpack and upcoming forecast. He reported that ASO is waiting for the next batch of storms to pass before conducting the first flight for the Taylor Basin. The District will be funding two flights with the first flight expected to be in late March or early April. David noted that dust accumulation on the snowpack has been minimal so far this year with just one significant event that is about halfway down through the snowpack.

David said they will be curious to see how the impact of recent warm spells has affected current snowpack and soil moisture conditions. David reported that in addition to the two flights planned for the Taylor Basin this year, they have also been contracted for additional flights in the North Fork basin for the first time.

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

Chair Don Sabrowski asked the TLUG representatives for their recommendations for water flow management. Chairman Sabrowski reported that Mark Schumacher had sent him an email, since he could not be at the meeting, suggesting TLUG be conservative with early flows in April and May until they get through the snow months of March and April to see how the runoff goes.

Ryan Birdsey agreed with this approach and mentioned that his brother, Rory Birdsey, has taken over Bill Gallanbeck's job of caretaker of the dam and is responsible for adjusting the flows. Roark Kiklevich was in agreement with proposed flows for now, but he would like to see if they could possibly keep the outflows a little higher in the last half of August.

Ernie Cockrell and David Fisher were also in agreement with the consensus of the group to be conservative with early releases in hopes that they can hold more back from August through October when the temperatures become more challenging for the fishery.

Chair Don Sabrowski asked for a motion to approve the recommended operations as presented by the Bureau of Reclamation. Ernie Cockrell moved, and Roark Kiklevich seconded the motion to approve the proposed operations as presented. The motion passed.

There was discussion about issues with the hydropower plant's bypass valve, which has caused occasional drops in water flow to as low as 40 cfs at times. Rory Birdsey said he thinks they are awaiting a new transducer which should fix the problem, and in the meantime, he is performing daily checks on the flows manually. Rory offered to research the issue more and provide an update to TLUG at the next meeting.

## **V. Miscellaneous Matters**

Giulio Del Piccolo introduced himself as Upper Gunnison Basin Aquatic Biologist replacing Dan Brauch. Giulio, originally from Basalt, completed his bachelor's at Colorado State and his master's at New Mexico State University. He started his position in January and expressed his intent to attend future meetings in person. Giulio agreed with the TLUG representatives' recommendations on flows, saying the levels would be suitable for the fish.

Bailey Friedman was introduced as the new Water Resources Project Manager and announced that the District will be holding a Water Funding Workshop on March 25th at 11 a.m. at the Gunnison Library, focusing on funding and other resources for water projects.

General Manager Sonja Chavez reported the District's decision to change course in getting a Doppler radar system, as the Western Water & Weather Intelligence Center has not followed through in getting the radar system placed in Gunnison as agreed. She said the District instead is looking at possibly owning and operating their own radar system. She also said an Eddy Covariance flux tower is planned for the Tomichi Creek Basin to refine crop consumptive use water estimates. Sonja said Rosemary Carroll, a Board member for the District, is conducting a scientific study on snowpack temperature measurements during snow course data collection.

The group discussed the next TLUG meeting, with Erik Knight proposing a date of April 10th. The meeting time was set at 9:00 AM, which was agreed upon by all attendees. Staff will send a calendar invitation for the meeting.

## **VI. Citizens Comments**

There were no Citizens' Comments

## **VII. Adjournment**

The March 11, 2025 TLUG meeting was adjourned by Chairman Sabrowski at 9:35 a.m.