

**MINUTES**  
**Taylor Local Users Group**  
**May 6, 1:00 p.m.**

**TLUG Attendees:**

TLUG Representatives Present:

Don Sabrowski, TLUG Chair  
Ernest Cockrell (Taylor Placer via Zoom)  
Andy Spann (Irrigation Interests)  
Ryan Birdsey (Flatwater Recreation Interests)  
David Fisher (Property Owners via Zoom)  
Mark Schumacher (Boating Interests)

Absent: Roark Kiklevich (Wade Fishing Interests)

**Other Attendees:**

Sonja Chavez (UGRWCD)  
Jules Iovino (UGRWCD)  
Beverly Richards (UGRWCD)  
Dustin Brown (Scenic River Tours)  
Julio Del Piccolo (Colorado Parks and Wildlife)

**Attendees Via Zoom:**

David Gochis (Airborne Snow Observatory)  
Dennis Cakebread (Taylor at Wilder Resident)  
Ches Russell (Scenic River Tours)  
Conor Felletter (US Bureau of Reclamation)  
Andrew Limbach (US Bureau of Reclamation)  
Shawn Muenchow, US Forest Service  
Brad Wheaton, Citizen  
Doug Forshagen (Crystal Creek HOA)  
Pete Dunda (Taylor River Homeowner)  
Dirk Schumacher (Three Rivers Resort)

**I. Approval of Minutes**

Don Sabrowski called the meeting to order. The minutes from April 7 and 23, 2026, were presented for review and approval. A correction was made to the April 23<sup>rd</sup> minutes, last page under the release recommendations, the bullet should be changed to "...75 cfs on October 31"

Mark Schumacher moved and Andy Spann seconded approval of the April 23<sup>rd</sup> minutes with corrections from Ernie Cockrell. The motion carried.

## **II. Upper Gunnison Basin Water Supply Report – Beverly Richards**

Beverly presented PowerPoint slides showing 98% of Gunnison County experiencing severe to exceptional drought conditions. The drought classification map shows no further degradation in drought over the past 4 weeks due to recent precipitation. Average precipitation for April was in the range of 0 to 170% of normal in a very small area of the Upper Gunnison Basin. Not much precipitation occurred in the Taylor Basin. The Upper Taylor Snotel sites showed the basin remaining at 80% of median. No additional precipitation is expected over the next week. Streamflow has remained relatively flat. We hope to see a bump in tributary flow but we are not optimistic.

## **III. Taylor Year Type Memorandum Calculation**

The Taylor Year Type summary of Nominal 1/3 Volumetric Criteria was presented to the TLUG showing changes in the Dry Year and Average Year upper limits and five-year average. These calculations are required under the decree and provided in the meeting packet. There were no questions.

## **IV. CBRFC Water Supply Update and USBR Model Forecast – Andrew Limbach, USBR**

Andrew reported that the May 1<sup>st</sup> official forecast dropped from 37,000 acre-feet on April 1 to 34,000 acre-feet. For the meeting forecast, he left everything the same as what we discussed at the last meeting and put the new inflow information in which puts us at 53,500 acre-feet on October 31 which is below the amended stipulation minimum end of year storage content of 60,000.

He also corrected the typo in the table of information stating that the figure for the March and April inflow amounts should read 7,298 and not 7,388 for mid-April and May figures.

Andy Spann asked to confirm what he thought he was seeing which is that CBRFC is anticipating runoff coming around 13<sup>th</sup> May or 15<sup>th</sup> May. Andrew confirmed that it does show an increase in runoff with warmer weather starting in a week or so but to the extent that it is showing in the graph, he's not sure. He explained that the spike we see in the graph is the model attempting to balance the volume and timing with other historic low year flows. Essentially the model is trying to reconcile the averages of the 10 day forecast with the monthly volume forecast and that it's really just a best guess.

## **V. WRF-Hydro Model Forecast Reports (ASO, Inc.) – Dave Gochis, ASO**

David Gochis reported that the ASO WRF-Hydro model is forecasting that there is still 17 TAF and in the upper reaches of the watershed near Italian Creek, Cottonwood Pass and Upper Texas Creek. Above 11,000 feet, the snowpack has remained steady over the past two-week period due to replenishment associated with recent precipitation. The Park Cone, Taylor and Butte Snotel sites are all melted out which makes estimating snowpack difficult. Snolite sites in Upper Taylor show Italian Creek with 38", Cottonwood Pass with 33", Tin Cup with 1" and Trail Creek melted out. They are waiting to run an updated ASO WRF-Hydro forecast as they are waiting for assimilation forecast from Forecast Center. The April 21 forecast for April to July runoff had Taylor Inflow at 40.2 TAF, East at Almont 62 TAF, and East at Cement at 60 TAF. He should be able to get updated information for us within the next couple of days. Biggest question is how efficient the snowpack runoff will be.

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

Mark Schumacher made some preliminary recommendations based upon feedback he's heard from boaters which involves putting more water into June rather than August given the declining snowpack. Mark spoke to Andy in advance about the proposal and how it would work for the agricultural community. Ernie Cockrell asked for one modification, an increase, in the last half of the month of August for the benefit of the fishery when temperatures are typically highest. Those conversations resulted in the following proposal:

- May 16 – 31 at 175 cfs
- June at 200 cfs
- July at 225 cfs
- Aug 1 at 200 cfs
- Aug 16 at 125 cfs

\*This proposal is subject to change pending hydrology. The current plan put the WY end of season storage content at 52,300 acre feet with a projected winter flow of 56 cfs.

Andy supports the current proposal at this time but noted that he's concerned about the last 15 days in June. He also noted that the increased release last month from 60 cfs to 150 cfs helped but did not completely solve the problem on the Gunnison River with producers having difficulty diverting at low flow.

Ryan supports the current proposal but cautioned that there may be deeper cuts required pending future weather.

**Mark Schumacher motioned and Andy Spann seconded approval of the above operational plan. The motion carried.**

Sonja will carry the proposal forward to the Four Parties meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup> at 2pm.

## **VII. Miscellaneous Matters**

The Northwest Colorado Council of Governments Quality and Quantity Committee wants to not include temperature data for this extreme year because of the significant impacts to all dischargers.

W3IC is still planning on installing a gap weather radar mobile set up on a trailer up on Big Mesa. District is in a wait and see mode, as W3IC has made promises in the past and did not come through.

Giulio updated the group on Spring Creek Reservoir. Next year they are starting construction on the dam. Don asked if they would be choking back flows to start to fill the reservoir and Giulio indicated that yes, he thought they were closing incrementally but it is still opened. Don was concerned that he cannot get a full ditch of water and needs the gate open. Giulio will provide Don with the contact information for the operator.

## **VIII. Citizen Comments**

Pete Dunda asked about publicizing the schedule and plan for the reservoir construction as there is significant public confusion because it has been drained or lowered several times and the public does not know what to expect. The project is estimated to cost around \$15 million. Giulio will see what he can find out to improve communication with the public.

## **IX. Next Meeting Date**

The next TLUG meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, June 9, 2026, at 1:00 p.m.

## **X. Adjournment**

The May 6th TLUG meeting was adjourned at 2:17 p.m.