Advisory Council Beginning Time: Wednesday, October 26, 2016, 2:00 p.m.

Designated Federal Officer: Kib Jacobson

Presiding: Chairwoman Tanya Trujillo

I. Welcome and Introductions

Advisory Council (Council) Chair Tanya Trujillo called the meeting to order. As there was no one in attendance who had not been previously introduced at the Forum meeting held earlier, the group decided to dispense with introductions. A roster was circulated to take attendance for the meeting. A copy of the attendance roster is attached to these minutes as Appendix A.

II. Opening Comments, Acceptance of letters of substitute members

Kib Jacobson welcomed the group and made sure he had alternate letters for those who were sitting in for Advisory Council members. Alternates participating with the Advisory Council included Carlee Brown for James Eklund from Colorado, Paul Harms for Tom Blaine from New Mexico, Robert King for Gawain Snow from Utah, Angela Slaughter for Jayne Harkins from Nevada and Andrew Burns for John Entsminger from Nevada.

III. Review and Approval of Agenda

Chair Trujillo asked for any suggested changes to the agenda. As there were none, a motion was made to approve the agenda. The agenda was approved and a copy is attached as Appendix B.

IV. Draft Minutes of 2016 Spring Council Meeting – Keystone, CO

Trujillo asked if there were any suggested changes to the minutes from the meeting in Keystone. As there were none, a motion to approve the minutes was made and seconded. The motion passed.

V. Charter Renewal

Regarding the renewal of the Advisory Council Charter, Jacobson explained that there were a few changes made, mostly just language that goes in all the charters. They added the U.S. Code in the Authority line. Under the Designated Federal Officer paragraph, they noted that the DFO is the Colorado River Salinity Control Program Manager with the Bureau of Reclamation. Under the Ethics paragraph, they added a sentence that requires Advisory Council members to disclose to the DFO any interests they might have that involve lands or resources administered by Interior, Agriculture or the EPA, as well as any litigation related to those matters. There were a few comments about how the different organizations that many of the Council members are a part of may have such interests. Jacobson responded that it may apply more to a personal interest, rather than an organization. Jacobson suggested that they send a copy of the charter out so Council members could determine if it may apply to any of them.
VI. Items from the Forum

Eric Millis reported that there were two things to bring from the Forum to the Advisory Council. The first was the program funding recommendations, which were detailed in Forum Memo 2016-53, Tables 1 and 2, which were approved by the Forum. The other item was the short-term management of the Lower Colorado River Basin Development Fund, which recommendations were detailed in Forum Memo 2016-56 and the draft letter that was attached. A motion was made to adopt the program funding recommendations that were brought forward, as well as the recommendations for short-term management of the Lower Basin Fund. Both of these items were approved by the Advisory Council.

VII. Agency Reports

Chair Trujillo reported that the Federal Accomplishments Report for FY2016 had been made available. She invited the federal agency representatives to give their reports.

EPA

Peter Monahan from Region 8 gave a report on EPA. He indicated that the Advisory Council charter was signed on August 1, 2016. He explained that they are trying to build more consistency on approving salinity standards between Regions 6, 8 and 9. Region 8 will now be the sole coordinator for the Salinity Control Program. Monahan reported that EPA has provided informational updates to the Forum and Advisory Council when requested and has assisted with the NPDES questionnaire on permitting for the triennial review. They will continue to participate as a cooperating agency with the Paradox EIS. They have a NEPA program reviewer who should have been participating on the calls. Regarding the chart included in the FAR which shows adoption of salinity standards by the Basin States, Monahan noted that he was having trouble trying to find consistency amongst those who approve water quality standards for the states. Terminology was also a problem. He indicated that he would be working on getting consistency in these areas in the coming year. Monahan reported that applications have been approved for five tribes to be treated as a state to administer water quality standards in the Basin, with one new application from the Southern Ute Tribe for similar approval. Monahan made a comment that he noticed in the 2014 Review submittal letter, there was “40 CFR, part 120” listed. He noted that it was consolidated in 1983 and was no longer there. Don Barnett suggested that if Monahan could send it to him, they would get to the bottom of it and make sure that the right language is included in the 2017 Review.

USGS

David Susong reported that they have been very active in the scientific investigations that have been occurring the last couple of years. Many of those are winding down, with reports due out soon. He indicated that the modeling studies for Paradox and the Dolores River were nearly complete. Other studies are continuing, and they are summarized in the FAR. He shared a handout regarding their work at two sites in Muddy Creek (see Appendix C), where they are looking at the possibility of using a change in stream chemistry to determine the source of salinity so they can consider remediation strategies. Susong noted that the second SPARROW model would be coming out. That report is in review and should be out soon. They are also working on quantifying TDS loads in the base flow component of streamflow. A report on their modeling of rangeland salt mobilization and transport should be available in the fall. Susong also noted that their work at Pah Tempe Springs is continuing, and the next phase will be to drill into the fault zone which they are trying to get scheduled.

USDA-NRCS

Travis James/Dave Mason
Travis James began by introducing the NRCS folks in attendance. He shared a couple of handouts (see Appendix D). He explained that the previous year their allocation had been about $10 million for FY 2016, but they received two additional small allocations. One handout showed the actual obligations for FY 2016 for on-farm programs. Financial assistance came to about $10.2 million, with technical assistance at $1.6 million for a total of about $11.8 million for salinity control projects. Also shown was the cost share from the Basin States Program funds at just over $5 million.

James referred to a bar chart shown on page 2 of the Federal Accomplishments Report which showed the on-farm/near-farm allocations since 1978. He pointed out how the USDA funding has varied over time. The allocations were based on the assessments by the states in terms of need. He noted that since 2004 they have taken into consideration the three-year funding plan developed by the three state conservationists. They currently have 12 active approved salinity control projects areas in three states. The status of the projects in these areas is explained in the FAR.

James shared a couple of highlights. He reported that in the Grand Valley, NRCS was in deficit of about 400 acres in habitat replacement. Through the efforts with partners, the Basin States Program, Reclamation and other programs in Colorado, they were able to find additional wildlife habitat. This work has been underway and should be completed in 2017. Additionally, he reported that they had begun their newest project in Henrys Fork, Wyoming, where they are installing a new 100-acre sprinkler irrigation system. Also, he noted that there has been quite a bit of interest over the last few years to improve the irrigation delivery infrastructure to the Navajo Nation and farmers along the San Juan River in New Mexico, which may spur on-farm irrigation improvements.

Dave Mason noted that it was an interesting time in Washington, D.C. with the elections coming up and the inevitable changes that will come as a result. He didn’t have any other comments, except to say that he hoped the allocation would be out soon and that the three-year plan would be fully funded.

James mentioned that they were a little dismayed at the beginning of the fiscal year with the $10 million allocation, but he came to understand more as the year went on. Commodity prices in the Upper Basin for corn, wheat, alfalfa, hay, etc. were about half of what they used to be. He felt that this had a direct impact on the applications that they saw.

James mentioned four personnel changes in NRCS. Kendall Higgs is the new Assistant State Conservationist for Field Operations in Flagstaff, Arizona. He will cover the entire northern half of Arizona, including the Navajo Nation. Francine Lheritier is the new Area Conservationist in Grand Junction covering all of the Colorado River portion of the State of Colorado. Anders Fillerup is taking over the role of Ed Whicker in Utah, and he will also be on the Science Team. David Brown, State Conservationist for Utah, will retire in March 2017.

Barb Osmundson explained that the role of the Fish & Wildlife Service in the Salinity Control Program is to get involved in any environmental consultations that take place with the projects that are going forward, which would include endangered species and migratory birds. This falls under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. She noted that the consultations they have been involved in are detailed in the FAR. Osmundson mentioned that FWS is a partner agency with the Paradox EIS planning. She has reviewed and provided comments on the risk assessment for evaporation ponds, and she still has concerns about the take of migratory birds under any of the mitigation plans. Osmundson explained that she works with Reclamation and NRCS on reviewing, providing input and getting approval of wildlife replacement projects.
Osmundson reported that in 2014 there were two new species listed under The Endangered Species Act, the Gunnison Sage Grouse and the Yellow-Billed Cuckoo. There is a potential for overlap of habitat with some of the Paradox alternatives concerning the sage grouse. They are also dealing with how to handle the Yellow-Billed Cuckoo in terms of some of the wildlife replacement projects. Two of those birds were found at a wildlife replacement project outside of Delta, Colorado. It becomes a little bit more complicated because the habitat replacement project is planning to remove non-native vegetation, which takes out the habitat for Yellow-Billed Cuckoos. They have to determine how to deal with that. Osmundson noted that a revised critical habitat report would be coming out by the end of the year.

Osmundson explained that they have had to train themselves to “think outside the box” in dealing with wildlife replacement at some of the salinity project areas. She reported that with the Henrys Fork EIS there would have been about 800 acres of potential wetland loss, which there was no way to replace. Working with Reclamation and NRCS, FWS was able for the first time to count in-stream improvements as habitat replacement. A fish barrier was put in to prevent non-native fish from going through the river and causing problems for the trout, protecting about 100 miles of the stream. Another example of thinking outside the box was prompted by reviewing replacement projects that had been done on small pieces of private property. FWS found that they had lost about 40 percent of those types of projects due to various reasons, including urbanization or property owners not keeping them up. They found it beneficial to do habitat replacement on larger pieces of land where you know there will be a responsible party to maintain them. This was the case with the Grand Valley wildlife project done on Colorado Parks and Wildlife properties. She also mentioned that BLM has come up with a project proposal to do some riparian restoration projects on BLM land. Again, BLM would be the responsible agency to take care of the O&M.

Osmundson reported that she reviews the monitoring and evaluation reports each year to try and summarize the salinity control units that are proportional and concurrent, or those that are not, with their wildlife replacement. That information is included in the FAR.

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**McKinley-Ben Miller/Cole Green**

McKinley-Ben Miller began by explaining that BLM is an authorizing agency which authorizes uses, as opposed to EPA’s role as a regulatory agency or other agencies that have a more active role in managing certain resources on the ground. Miller serves as Deputy Division Chief for the division that includes Soil, Water & Air and was attending the meeting in place of Miyoshi Stith. As far as leadership in Washington, he suggested that as a result of the presidential elections, Neil Kornze may be replaced as BLM Director. Steve Ellis, Deputy Director for Operations, will be retiring in November. Assistant Director for Resources and Planning is Kristin Bail. Jeremy Kruger is the new Soil, Water & Air Program Lead, overseeing all of the budget policy and oversight. Ed Roberson is the new State Director for Utah, and he has two new Deputy Assistant State Directors. Miller introduced Doug Curtis, a water resources specialist who will be working with the Forum and Advisory Council.

Cole Green explained that every month they have a teleconference regarding current issues and how to address them, along with BLM strategy. They discuss whether they are meeting BLM mandates and requirements and how to meet the current needs brought before them. She reported that they have a salinity strategy document that is currently in publication and will be posted on the BLM website when completed. She noted that BLM has 53 million acres of land within the Colorado River Basin where they address salinity funded activities, as well as numerous other activities. Green reported that they are continually working on their plot to watershed tool, and they have been using it to come up with numbers such as are found in the FAR. They use this model and other models to look at water quality and to quantify their findings for the Colorado River Basin. Green mentioned several projects that are ongoing in the different states. Green’s PowerPoint is attached as Appendix E.
Miller finished up with a heartfelt recommendation. He suggested sitting down and speaking with the State Directors at every possible opportunity. The State Directors are responsible for all of the actions in their state and are the ones, if you have their ear, to get the rest of the organization moving.

**Reclamation**

Kib Jacobson introduced the Reclamation folks who were in attendance at the meeting. Brent Rhees gave a report on personnel at the Washington D.C. office. He noted that Jennifer Gimbel had gone back to Colorado. Tom Iseman is the new Deputy Secretary of Water and Science and Camille Touton is Deputy Assistant Secretary. Rhees noted that they also expect an administration change as a result of the election.

Stacy Wade reported for the Lower Colorado Region that she had just recently been changed from acting status to permanent status as Chief of Financial Management. Jaci Gould and Jennifer McCloskey are Deputy Regional Directors. Wade reported current reservoir conditions at Lake Powell to be 52%, Lake Mead 37%, and total basinwide system storage 50%. Powell’s inflow for water year 2016 was 89% of average, with 14 of the last 17 years below average. The chance of shortage in the Lower Basin was being projected at 48% in 2018. The latest salinity differential projection for calendar year 2016 is 135-139 ppm. Wade reported that it takes about $10 million per year to maintain the Yuma Desalting Plant. Its future operation is something that is being discussed in the context of the Drought Contingency Planning (DCP). The DCP and Mexican negotiations have been a priority over the last 6-8 months. They have been working hard and hope to have the Mexican negotiations wrapped up before the elections.

Brad Parry reviewed the summary tables that appear at the end of the FAR (see Appendix F). He reported that as of FY 2016, the target for tons of salt removed by 2035 would be 1,680,000 tons. Regarding the Lower Colorado River Basin Development Fund, Parry pointed out that they stopped making advance payments in 2014. A payment is due in 2026 of $3.4 million. Continuing on with no advance repayment, the next payment would be due in 2039. He pointed out some numbers in up-front cost sharing, with $11 million being taken from the Lower Basin Fund spread over the different categories. Another spreadsheet for the Upper Basin Fund shows they have never made an advance payment, but there is a payment scheduled in 2026 of $1.4 million. Parry reviewed the income from Hoover and Parker-Davis and the salinity fund balance in the Lower Basin Fund. The last spreadsheet showed the funding forecast for all the Basinwide projects that are ongoing in the Basinwide Program. Parry noted that they spent close to $13 million in the Basinwide Program in 2016. They will need to release another Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) in 2018 in order to generate projects for 2019.

There was a question about the FOA process. Jacobson explained that they talk to their acquisition people to find out when they can have the agreements executed so that they can start work. Then they work back from there to determine how long it will take to get the agreements executed and so on. In order to start receiving funding for FY 2019, the agreements will have to be executed in 2018. So the FOA could be released in the latter part of 2017.

Patrick Dent made a comment on Parry’s report. He noted that if you look at the cost share from the NRCS report plus the cost share dollars required from the funds in Parry’s report, the Lower Basin Development Fund would have been required in 2016 to provide $9.5 million for cost share in federal appropriation. If you add to that the delayed repayment of the original units in 2016, which would have been an additional $1 million, it adds up to $10.5 million, and the fund had only $9 million in revenue. So the deficit for 2016 was about $1.5 million if both the repayment and the appropriation are included.

As some people often ask about the difference between actual and accrual amounts, Parry gave an explanation. He noted that in 2016 the actual balance in the LCRBDF was about $9 million. The accrual amount in that fund was about $12.7 million. The difference of about $3.7 million represents the amount
that has not been requested to be paid from the Lower Basin Development Fund for the program. So it is accruing to the deficit balance in the fund that needs to be paid. Parry explained that if the program were ended today, they would have to come up with the full amount of $12.7 million to be fully compliant with the cost share that has been required for the appropriations that have been received. This is independent of the repayment obligation. He noted that this accrual balance can start to build up as the revenues continue to fall short with the drought that has been going on.

VIII. Public Comment

As there was no public comment, the Advisory Council was adjourned, to be reconvened the following morning.

Reconvene Meeting

Thursday, October 27, 2016, 8:30 a.m.

IX.A. Basin States Program (BSP) – Basin Funds Status and Accounting

Marcie Bainson reviewed some handouts regarding Basin States Program funding (see Appendix G). She noted that funding for EQIP TA expenditure was only $1.6 million for FY 2017. The required cost share percentage results in $688,000 that can be spent on TA. In 2016, there was $3.2 million in TA, resulting in allowed TA expenditures of $1.37 million. This is a significant drop from the previous year. In the summary Bainson pointed out that $2.7 million will be spent in the states, $1.4 million with NRCS and almost $2.2 million in TA. So the total coming down would be $6.5 million. Based on NRCS numbers, this allows for the expenditure of just over $5.5 million. Bainson explained that she has been able to carry over additional funds from a few sources that had remaining money at the end of the year.

Bainson highlighted a few items on the funding forecast spreadsheet which breaks out by contract where the money is going. As she was discussing the states section, she commented that when she was putting the final numbers together for the meeting, she had not yet seen the NRCS EQIP pass-offs and that she had heard there wasn’t much that they would want to fund with Basin States funding. She reported that she actually saw the pass-off list just the day before. She noted that in past meetings the states have said that they really need a constant budget amount each year to work with, and the amount shown on the list was well below the amount that both Utah and Colorado have said they need to keep their agreements functional and staff their programs. Bainson suggested that there should be a discussion on how to go forward in the future because if you look at the state agreements for 2018 and 2019, those funds are being cut way back. There was some conversation from the group about how some of the states have been trying to work around the problem.

The discussion continued by focusing on two major issues. The first was a concern that NRCS was not getting the list of pass-through projects to Reclamation in a timely manner and that this delay might not allow for fair consideration of the projects. The second issue was that some of the projects had a very high cost per ton and perhaps should not be considered when there are other projects with a much lower cost per ton.

Regarding the first issue, Travis James reported that NRCS provided the list as soon as possible and it is left up to Reclamation to determine what to do after that. David Robbins responded that providing the list just the day before, especially when there is a crisis that will result in a significant outcry from certain states, doesn’t constitute “providing the list.” He said he wanted to make it clear that NRCS did not do its job this year and that if we are going to work on this as a partnership, then the salinity Forum and the salinity process in the seven basin states ought to be entitled to exactly the same priority as every other program that NRCS operates. James commented that they didn’t realize there was a deadline to submit the list and they provided
it as soon as it was practical. Robbins responded that this process has been going on for a long time and there are obviously deadlines that have to be met in order for the Bureau team to figure out how to fund things.

There was a comment that if the list is provided early enough, there would be some chance to talk. In some instances resources can be brought in from the states or other entities that could lower the cost of the projects and make them more competitive. Cindy Lair said they are focusing on work in the Lower Gunnison where they are faced with small laterals, small ditch companies, and smaller parcels of land which makes it difficult to get the cost savings per ton that is hoped for. Generally they are not going to see a lot of projects coming through in the price range of less than $100/ton. With these smaller parcels, the economies of scale don’t line up as nicely as they would like, but they are still a higher priority than some other less expensive projects. Another comment was made suggesting that if the projects are chosen solely on dollars per ton, then it would be important to determine how those figures are calculated and make sure there is an “apples to apples” comparison.

Kib Jacobson noted that the NRCS list included projects ranging in cost from $43 - $185 per ton with dollar amounts anywhere from $18,000 up to $454,000. He wondered if they should be considering funding the $150 or $185/ton projects.

In answer to a question about timing for NRCS, Dave Brown explained that the batching period is in November, following the cutoff for acceptance of applications. It takes a couple of months to rank the applications, and then around the first of March they begin to select the applications to be funded with available salinity money. The process of finalizing those contracts and obligating dollars generally goes on through the summer months, sometimes into August. Oftentimes people get right up to the signing date and decide not to pursue, so that money goes back into the pot to be used for the next project at the top of the list. So they are usually pushing the first of September to finalize all the funding obligations. Brown suggested that if they can just be told a date when the list is needed, they will provide it at that time, with a caveat that they may be funding some additional contracts off the top of that list if money becomes available.

NRCS suggested that if they are just looking for applications like they had in the past, they could have the information to Reclamation in the spring before the Advisory Council meeting.

Robbins felt that this conversation and expression of concern by a member of the Advisory Council should be included in the Advisory Council Report. He commented that when a state program goes from a funding level over $1 million to $75,000, it is extremely difficult for the State Department of Agriculture to participate and assist in attempting to meet the salinity program goals. He felt that we should give them a full and complete disclosure about where we are headed and what we are expecting of them so they can take the appropriate actions. He understands Reclamation’s standpoint that if you don’t get any projects at all, it’s difficult to continue to allocate funds. From the perspective of Utah and Colorado, the state ag people can’t do much because it first has to originate at NRCS. Robbins felt that there are some bridges to build and some procedures to discuss so some policy guidelines can be set for the partners.

Robert King was interested to hear what the other states, particularly the Lower Basin states, felt about this since the bulk of these Basin States funds are coming from there. He commented that the process that was followed in the past was to look at all of the pass-through projects and, if they were under $100, it was pretty much a slam-dunk to accept them. If they were over $100, there may be some circumstances that warrant their approval, such as completing a system or some other special situation. He added that there may be less expensive projects that they don’t want to fund because they don’t quite fit. They would like to see all the projects and judge them on their individual merits. King asked Jacobson if they could pass
the list on so the states could be aware and give input. Though those in the Bureau have good judgment, he
didn’t think that this was the process that everyone agreed to. His concern was that this is a Basin States
funded program, and the Basin States ought to be making recommendations, rather than just the federal
agencies.

Robbins agreed with King. He noted that some big systems have been funded in pieces with the cost per
ton being blended over the whole system. There are areas in both states where there are pieces of irrigation
companies and irrigation systems that need to be fixed. The tonnage limit may not be met exactly, but it
nevertheless becomes important within that agricultural community to get the project done. Robbins also
suggested that when there are going to be fairly large, obviously impactful decisions made on the budget,
it would be good to get that information from Reclamation prior to the meetings.

Pat Tyrrell added that getting that information early would be valuable because it would allow for a state
agency to buy down the project if they have a special interest of their own to see it done. This wouldmake
the project competitive, but that opportunity will not be available if the state is not aware.

Robbins commented that it is also important to deal with community expectations. If they spend a lot of
time trying to get ditch companies to buy into the program and accept the proposed improvements to their
systems, and then treat some within the community one way and others a different way, it creates friction
that in the long haul isn’t good for the overall efforts.

Chair Trujillo wanted to determine the appropriate process to address the concerns that had been expressed.
It could be sent back to the Forum to be addressed, or it may be turned over to the Work Group for technical
consideration.

Patrick Dent suggested that the Work Group consider this subject with two assignments. The first would be
to work on establishing a process of sharing information to create more of a joint environment for decision
making on the pass-offs. Second, they would work on providing some information ahead of the spring
meeting to talk about project costs to help determine what should or shouldn’t be funded. The Work Group
would then bring this back to the Forum ahead of the spring meeting. The Council members agreed on this
path.

Bainson then reviewed the SIR agreements on the spreadsheet. She reported that the SIR agreements from
2016 had all been awarded and are in the works. She mentioned that they will need to do an additional year
on Desert Lakes, which will amount to $29,000 for 2017. The SIR budget she is showing for 2017 is
$320,275. With the addition of the $29,000 for Desert Lakes, the budget will not exceed the $350,000
ceiling agreed on. At the bottom of the spreadsheet, it shows the total amount of Basin States funds to be
spent in 2017, which is $6.5million, with $4.3 million being from the Lower Basin. Dent commented that
Reclamation has continued to find ways to manage this program and this budget more tightly. There are a
number of non-salinity related administrative-type activities on the list, and Reclamation has found other
money within their budgets to perform some of those functions. This has cut out a lot of the overhead and
is greatly appreciated.

IX.B. BSP – Update on State Ag Agreement Projects Cindy Lair/Keenan Hendon/ Mark Quilter

Cindy Lair reported that they have had a challenging year. They have a very close partnership with Colorado
NRCS, and their technical assistance funding from NRCS goes straight to the conservation districts who
hire employees. There have about 10-12 employees in local field offices to accomplish salinity work
through irrigation improvements. Most of the work being done is EQIP and they have had about five
projects that they have been patiently waiting to get through the queue. Lair reported that Clint Evans was
able to get quite a bit of funding through the State of Colorado for EQIP and their staff has been
really busy trying to get that money obligated. As a result, the non-EQIP eligible projects have kind of fallen by the wayside. The challenge with those five projects is to get the cultural resources and employees back on those. Lair feels that there is a great need for communication and understanding of where the Basin States projects fit in the whole load of NRCS EQIP projects. She learned that one of the projects they have been waiting on will have the NEPA work done by spring time. However, the contract expires in April and it has already been extended. This becomes a major setback and these projects with really old money need to get that taken care of. Lair posed a question asking if they could be in a position with the federal agencies to consider contracting their own NEPA process based on the federal agencies’ guidelines and requirements. They are eager to do their part to move the projects forward, but they find themselves limited in what they can do.

Steve Miller commented that there is a need to continually communicate with NRCS. They get a significant amount of funding which should allow for staff to be available to process the Basin States and regular EQIP salinity projects. When you see a significant decrease in the amount of TA expenditures being reported, it’s pretty obvious that their staff is working on other things and being taken away from the salinity program.

Cindy added that she is hopeful that they will see more projects. When they have a machine to churn out $1.2 million in projects and they are only getting $300,000 worth, she has to do some rearranging within her program. She feels that the best thing that can happen right now is greater communication with all salinity partners, federal and state, to find a way to process more projects. She looks forward to future conversations with the Work Group to come up with some solutions.

Keenan Hendon then addressed the work in Wyoming. He explained that he works for the Wyoming Water Development Office and they report to a Commission which reviews and approves any Basin States projects that they bring forward. He is the Project Manager in the Construction Division. They do studies and construction projects throughout the state for water infrastructure, new development and irrigation projects. As far as funding, he reported that they provide 100 percent of the funds for studies and then they use cost share on construction projects within the state. Hendon explained that Wyoming is a little bit new to the program. In 2015 they had their new Wyoming Basin States Program agreement with $2.8 million allocated to them. Since they signed the agreement in August 2015, they have been working with their Attorney General’s staff in order to call up an agreement between Wyoming and sponsors. They worked with their Commission to get their FOA hand-off project approved for the Eden Valley Irrigation District in the Big Sandy area of Wyoming. It is over five miles of ditch-to-pipeline conversion. They hope to be headed towards construction in the next year. Coinciding with this project, Eden Valley was awarded additional funds from another program, so the two projects will tie in with each other. Going forward, they are looking to pursue a study in the Blacks Fork area to see if they can reduce the salt loading there. They are also interested in the possibility of getting a salinity coordinator for Wyoming. Hendon’s presentation is attached as Appendix H.

Mark Quilter began by thanking Reclamation for the FOA projects that were approved in Utah, which has been a great help in keeping their program going. Along with that, he expressed appreciation for the help from Reclamation’s contracting people and grant people for getting their agreements through in a very timely way. He also appreciated the Council bringing up the issue with EQIP projects and the pass-offs. He is looking forward to working on resolving that issue so the program can move along more smoothly. Quilter commented that Utah has been very fortunate to have Brett Prevedel as the coordinator for the Uinta Basin. He has been a great help out there and they get comments almost every day regarding the service he has given to the agricultural producers and the canal companies in that area. Prevedel has agreements in place with the Ute Indian Tribe, which is something that they were hoping to get going. Everything looks very favorable. Quilter also expressed his appreciation to the Council, the Forum and Work Group and for the support of the federal agencies for their willingness to work together on problems as they come up and get answers to solve some very difficult issues.
Patrick Dent reported that the TAG had one recommendation that was passed forward through an email from Don and a letter to the Advisory Council that recommends we continue to fund the two salinity coordinators in Utah and Colorado. He explained that the coordinators were brought on as a result of some planning studies that were undertaken a few years earlier. This was one of the recommendations that came out of that which would help facilitate additional salinity control work in areas that were prioritized as good opportunities, but maybe not as active participation as they would have liked to see. They have been on task for two years, and the recommendation is to continue to have them working to help applicants prepare for the upcoming FOA. The recommendation was to continue to retain them with a budget of $75,000 each per year.

There was a motion made to accept the TAG’s recommendation to continue to fund the Lower Gunnison and Uinta Basin salinity coordinators through FY 2019. The motion passed unanimously.

X. Allocation of Payments between Upper and Lower Basin Funds

The Advisory Council voted to continue the 85/15 split for cost-share contributions from the Lower Basin and Upper Basin. Robbins commented that he hoped the Council would continue to press forward in attempting to rectify the current funding problems so the program will not suffer in the out years. Tyrrell noted that the Program Funding Committee has been discussing this for the last couple of years and that a change in this mix would have to be visited at a federal level as part of a larger program that would include some fixes in the Lower Basin.

XI. Direction to the Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

Patrick Dent reported that the TAG looks at Science, Investigation and Research each year. Prior to the meeting, they had taken an extra step by working with Reclamation to target the dollars that should be considered by the Science Team in this area with regard to the Basin States Program budget. This target is right around $300,000. The TAG will hear reports and recommendations from the Science Team, and the Council should expect some recommendations on funding for the proposed studies at the spring meeting. They will also continue tracking and developing tools to help the Council understand the cash flow issues in the Lower Basin Development Fund. Last was an assignment to try and develop some criteria regarding EQIP pass-offs to the state agencies. In answer to a question about potential impacts of the new power contracts coming online in 2017, Dent explained that the surcharge should be applied by WAPA to all the power contracts, new and old, for generation at Hoover. He noted that the mix between states may have changed slightly, but it was so slight that it probably won’t even be noticeable in terms of revenue from Hoover coming into the program. Dent will double check on that.

XII. 2016 Advisory Council Report

A. Program Funding Recommendations – The Council acted on this previously in the meeting.

B. Discussion of Items for Report – Patrick Dent reported that, with Don Barnett’s assistance, he had been making a list of items to include in the Advisory Council Report. He indicated that it would include assignments just discussed in the previous agenda item. He noted that there was a request to include in the report the discussion relative to EQIP pass-offs to the state agencies. Dent reported to Trujillo that he had a long list of items that he felt should be included in the report. It reflected many of the reports that had
been given by federal agencies during the meeting, along with guidance on subjects for which the Advisory Council would like a response. Trujillo asked the group if they had particular items to suggest at that time or if they would prefer to wait until the first draft was prepared. It was determined that they would save the discussion until the draft was written.

XIII. Items for the Forum

Eric Millis mentioned the discussion earlier in the morning about the state projects. There was a request that this discussion be continued within the Forum, along with the Work Group assignments that were talked about.

There was no other business to be discussed and no public comment. The Advisory Council was then adjourned.
AGENDA
COLORADO RIVER BASIN SALINITY CONTROL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Moab Arts & Recreation Center (MARC)
111 East 100 North
Moab, UT

Advisory Council Beginning Time: Wednesday, October 26, 2016, 1:00 p.m.

Designated Federal Officer: Kib Jacobson

Presiding: Chairman Tanya Trujillo

I. Welcome, Introductions Trujillo

II. Opening Comments, Acceptance of letters of substitute members Jacobson

III. Review and Approval of Agenda Trujillo

IV. Draft Minutes of 2016 Spring Council Meeting – Keystone CO
   A. Review Jacobson
   B. Action Trujillo

V. Charter Renewal Jacobson

VI. Items from the Forum Eric Millis

VII. Agency Reports (about 20 minutes each)
   A. EPA Peter Monahan
   B. USGS Dave Susong
   C. USDA-NRCS Travis James/Dave Mason
   D. FWS Barb Osmundson
   E. BLM McKinley-Ben Miller/Cole Green
   F. Reclamation Rich Eastland/Jacobson

VIII. Public Comment Trujillo

Recess Meeting: Approximately 4:30 p.m.

Agenda Continued on Next Page
IX. Basin States Program (BSP)
   A. Basin Funds Status and Accounting
      a. Basin Fund Payments / Accrual
      Jacobson
   B. Update on State Ag Agreements projects
   C. Status of Basin States Program
      a. State Ag Agreements
      b. NRCS Agreements
      c. SIR (studies, investigations, research) agreements
      Dave Susong
      d. Other
   D. Funding Recommendations from TAG
      a. Lower Gunnison and Uinta Basins Salinity Coordinators
      Jacobson/Patrick Dent

X. Allocation of Payments between Upper and Lower Basin Funds
   Parry

XI. Direction to the Technical Advisory Group (TAG)
    Trujillo/Dent

XII. 2016 Advisory Council Report
      A. Program Funding Recommendations
      B. Discussion of Items for Report
      Trujillo

XIII. Items for the Forum
      Millis

XIV. Other Business/Actions
      Trujillo

XV. Public Comment
      Trujillo

Adjourn Meeting: Approximately 10:00 a.m.