

**PURGATOIRE RIVER WATER CONSERVANCY DISTRICT  
MINUTES, THURSDAY, August 3, 2023**

**Board Meeting:** Purgatoire River Water Conservancy District monthly meeting was held on Thursday, August 3, 2023, at 7:30 P.M. City Hall Chambers, Trinidad, CO.81082

**Directors Present:**

Frank Milinazzo, Joey DeGarbo, David Philpott, Tony Paradisa, Jeremy Yoder, Jarrod Tortorelli, & Daryl Aubuchon

**Directors Absent:** Tom Verquer, Joe Amato

**District Staff:**

Steve Kastner; General Manager, Connie Mantelli; District Secretary (Absent)

**Guests:** Robert Philpott, Dalen Philpott & Connor Philpott (New John Flood Ditch), Jeff Montoya (Water Commissioner), Michael Yoder (Enlarged SouthSide), Julie Knudson (PWP), TJ Verquer (Chilili Ditch)

**Enterprise Account**

Nothing to Report at this time.

**Board Meeting Minutes**

Joey DeGarbo made a motion to accept the minutes of the July 2023 meeting. Daryl Aubuchon seconded the motion which was voted upon and passed.

Frank Milinazzo made a motion to approve the Financial Statements and Cash Disbursements for the July 2023 as printed. Joey DeGarbo seconded the motion which was voted upon and passed.

**Chairman's Report:**

Nothing to report at this time.

**NRCS:**

Sammie Molinaro was not present at the meeting but he sent copies of the most current SnoTel Report for each of the PRWCD Board members and attendees.

**District Manager's Report – August 3, 2023**

**A. Trinidad Reservoir and PRWCD Operations Report**

- The total content of Trinidad Reservoir on July 31st was 21,330 acre-feet. A net decrease of 3,090 acre-feet from the end of the previous month. This net decrease in storage is principally due to Irrigation Season storage releases to meet crop irrigation demands.
- The Project Account currently contains 4,473 acre-feet. A decrease from the preceding month of 2,510 acre-feet.
- The Model Account currently contains 68 acre-feet. A decrease from the preceding month of 894 acre-feet.
- The Joint Use Pool currently contains 3,944 acre-feet. A net increase of 260 acre-feet, which increase is principally due to City of Trinidad's storage of its changed John Flood Ditch and Model Canal water rights.
- The Permanent Fishery Pool currently contains 12,912 acre-feet.
- Purgatoire River flows for the month of July averaged 79 cfs at the PURMADCO stream gage. Historical July flows average 125 cfs.
- The District remains in Project Administration. Most District ditches continue to receive at least some direct flow river waters at this time. Due to the drop in river flows, no water is currently being required to be passed to water rights located below the District area. The Model Canal and the Picketwire Ditch are predicted to run out of stored water supplies within the next week absent any additional supplies being available.

- Hoehne Ditch Irrigation Season diversions through July total 3,632 acre-feet. The District's remaining obligation to the Hoehne Ditch is 1,339 acre-feet. The Hoehne Ditch's storage account currently contains 1,480 acre feet. 1,000 acre-feet of water was transferred from the Hoehne Ditch's storage account to the other Project Account ditches at the end of July.
- No District sprinkler system diversions have been collected for July yet. Fully consumable water diversions have been made for irrigation use by two ditches during July. The return flows from these diversions are anticipated to provide at least a portion of any return flow deficit replacement requirements due to July's sprinkler system diversions.

#### **B. Stockwater Committee Report**

At its regular monthly May 2023 meeting, the president of the board appointed a committee to review the District's past Non-Irrigation Season stockwater operations and to report back at the board's July meeting with any recommendations for changes in operations.

The General Manager, Clint Winter, Daryl Aubuchon and Water Commissioner Jeff Montoya (as an advisor) met twice during the month of June and once in July. This committee discussed all relevant aspects of District stockwater operations since the year 2000.

A recommendation memorandum has been provided to the board for review. The General Manager recommends the District draft a written livestock water policy based upon the determinations made by this committee to help govern future District Non-Irrigation Season stockwater operations.

#### **C. General Items**

##### City of Trinidad Water Lease

The City of Trinidad has agreed to lease to the District a further 500 acre-feet of fully consumable waters. If approved by the District, these leased waters should be available for transfer to

the District's account in Trinidad Reservoir and available for delivery to District ditches next week.

Trinidad Reservoir Joint Use Pool Water Storage Right

The Division Engineer's Office filed a Supplemental Consultation Report during July now supporting the District's Water Court application for a finding of continuing diligence regarding the portion of the District's Joint Use Pool water storage right which yet remains conditional. Based upon this support and no other opposition in this case, the District has motioned the court for approval of a proposed decree on August 1<sup>st</sup> confirming a finding of reasonable diligence. The next diligence or absolute application will be required in 6 years from this month.

Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART Grant

The District is still awaiting a Notice to Proceed from the Bureau of Reclamation for its requested WaterSmart grant funds to purchase and install new automatic headgates on the John Flood and Picketwire Ditches.

Congresswoman Lauren Boebert's Office Letter of Support

Congresswoman Lauren Boebert's office contacted the District during July requesting a letter of support for the congresswoman's introduction of a bill seeking renewal of the Upper Colorado and San Juan River Basin Endangered Fish & Threatened Fish Recovery Implementation Programs. The District provided a letter of support toward these efforts.

**Secretary's Report:**

Connie Mantelli was not present at the meeting. Julie Knudson recorded the minutes of the meeting.

Steve Kastner reported that there were still a few ditches that needed to submit their 2022 O&M payments to the District. The payments are due on August 15, 2023.

Accounting firm, Hancock and Froese & Company, LLC has accepted the District as a client beginning January 1, 2024. The firm, located in Rocky Ford, Colorado will be conducting the annual audits for the District in the coming years.

**Water Commissioner's Report:**

Jeff Montoya commented on the stock water report given by Steve Kastner. He stated that he appreciated the discussion and feels that it is also important as an educational tool to raise everyone's awareness on the issue. This was an important effort by all.

Jeff stated that the pond issues were still being dealt with. It appears to be the same companies and private landowners that are not in compliance. He has been using desktop auditing and then having to go out in the field to check ponds for surface water and ponds fed from ground water feed. An example of this is documented in case number 20CW3087 where thousands of dollars are being spent in water court to enforce pond compliance.

There appears to be favorable conditions on the stream.

The Trinchera-Branson area have been getting some good rain lately.

The Acreage Verification System (AVS) is to begin in the Fall.

The water commissioner and deputy will be responsible for approximately 78-80 parcels in the District to inspect. They will be reporting activity throughout the project.

**Corp of Engineers:**

No one present

**City of Trinidad:**

No one present

**Purgatoire Watershed Project**

The PWP was awarded the CWCB-WSRF Grant in the amount of \$497,000.00. This grant money will help fund the upcoming Baca-Picketwire ditch lining project.

Julie Knudson reported that there will be a Purgatoire River clean-up taking place on Saturday, August 5. Everyone is encouraged to help out with this community project.

**Other Business:**

Joey DeGarbo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Daryl Aubuchon seconded the motion. The motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 pm.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 7, 2023 at 7:30 pm.at  
Trinidad City Hall Chambers.

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**Connie Mantelli, Secretary**