Metro Basin Roundtable Education Action Plan

Background Information:
The 2005 Colorado Water for the 21st Century Act (House Bill 05-1177) is based on the premise that Coloradans must work together to address water needs within the state. The legislation created a framework to encourage dialogue on water, broadened the range of stakeholders actively participating in water decisions, and created a locally driven process where the decision-making power rests with those living in the state's river basins. The statewide structure, the Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC), and the local structures, the nine basin roundtables, bring over 300 diverse stakeholders into water supply planning discussions across the state.

As each basin roundtable carries out its charge to develop basin-wide consumptive and non-consumptive water needs assessments, they are also required to advance the understanding of future water needs through educational programs and processes. In the statutes of HB 05-1177, each basin roundtable has powers and responsibilities that include the following:

"(c) ... Basin roundtables shall actively seek the input and advice of affected local governments, water providers, and other interested stakeholders and persons in establishing its needs assessment, and shall propose projects or methods for meeting those needs.
(d) Serve as a forum for education and debate regarding methods for meeting water supply needs; and
(e) As needed, establish roundtable subcommittees or other mechanisms to facilitate dialogue and resolution of issues and conflicts within the basin."

The Public Education, Participation, and Outreach (PEPO) Workgroup is a legislatively created committee of the IBCC. This group is tasked with: creating a process to inform, involve, and educate the public on the IBCC's activities and the progress of the interbasin compact negotiations; creating a mechanism by which public input and feedback can be relayed to the IBCC and compact negotiators; and educating IBCC and roundtable members on water issues.

The PEPO Workgroup's membership consists of the Education Liaisons (a volunteer position on each basin roundtable), members of the IBCC, statewide water education experts, staff of the Water Supply Planning section of the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB), and a consultant firm that facilitates the PEPO Workgroup.

The members of this committee work to identify the best approaches for education and outreach at the statewide and basin-specific levels. The PEPO Workgroup and roundtable members are collectively defining the most helpful and meaningful ways in which the public can participate in the work of their basin roundtable.

The PEPO Workgroup will assist the basin roundtables in strengthening their education and outreach activities. Each roundtable is expected to have a functioning Education & Outreach Committee (E&O Committee) tasked with creating an Education Action Plan (EAP). The EAP will detail the educational goals and tasks most effective for the basin roundtable. It will identify

roundtable member education activities that promote a well informed and high-functioning basin roundtable. It will also define public participation objectives and appropriate implementation methods.

To assist the basin roundtables in implementing their completed EAPs, the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) has created an application-based education fund. All basin roundtables with a completed EAP will have the opportunity to apply for up to $2,000 in state funds per year for action plan implementation.

Metro Basin Roundtable Education & Outreach Committee:
The E&O Committee plans to draw from its member resources to continue the committee's work, building on the past successes and momentum established with assistance from the Colorado Foundation for Water Education (CFWE). In order to accomplish the E&O Committee goals, objectives, and tasks, the E&O Committee will actively engage with PEPO and other basin round tables to find common ground and discuss differences.

In the past, the E&O Committee had focused its efforts on educating local, county, and state elected officials, primarily through the Metro Basin Roundtable Reception held in the spring of 2011 and 2012. When the E&O Committee evaluated these events, they determined that the effort was worthwhile. Likewise, participants have indicated the Reception is a benefit; therefore, the E&O committee should continue to schedule this event.

The E&O Committee, believing that a well-educated public can engage productively with their elected officials, propose an ongoing program that brings taxpayers, ratepayers and elected decision makers together in a forum that addresses the educational needs identified in the 2010 Basin Roundtable Education Survey

This update to the Metro Roundtable Basin EAP presents those themes and a program plan to implement additional enhanced public outreach. The anticipated outcome is to create widespread public support for MBRT goals, and in this way engage the public, decision-makers and elected officials to support solution-oriented water supply planning efforts of the Metro Basin Roundtable and its member organizations reflecting statewide efforts.

I. Governance

A) Names and affiliations of Education & Outreach Committee members:

1. Casey Davenhill, Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners – MRT Education Liaison
2. Janet Bell, Bell Associates
3. Tom Bellenger, Metropolitan State University
4. Julio Iturreria, Arapahoe County
5. Mark Koleber (MBRT Chair), City of Thornton
6. Phyllis Thomas, Phyllis Thomas Consulting
7. Denver Water – TBD

8. Aurora Water – Natalie Brower-Kirtin
9. Kristin Maharg, CFWE
10. Kate McIntyre, CWCB

B) Annual meeting plan for Committee:
1. Monthly meetings; prior to regularly scheduled roundtable meetings as needed
2. Committee and/or sub-committees may meet more frequently as needed
3. Purpose is to discuss development and implementation of the EAP

C) Current Sub-Committees
1. Education Action Plan Update – Casey Davenhill, Phyllis Thomas, Janet Bell, Julio Iturreria
2. WSRA Liaisons
3. Others, as necessary

II. Educational Priorities & Implementation

Overall goal(s) of the E&O Committee: To educate and engage the public, decision-makers, and elected officials on solutions-oriented water supply planning			
OBJECTIVES	**TASKS**	**LEAD(S)**	**TIMELINE**
Integrate into statewide outreach initiatives	Meet with S. Platte BRT Ed. Com. to coordinate activities	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com.	Ongoing
	Have a roundtable presence at the future Statewide Roundtable Summits	Roundtable members	March 2015
Develop and communicate criteria for Basin RT approval of grant requests	Review CWCB WSRA criteria, communicate to MBRT and evaluate need for MBRT specific criteria.	WSRA Needs Committee and E&O Committee	June 2015
	Review of outcomes of previous WSRA grants	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	June 2015
	Identify priorities within the Metro/S. Platte BIP	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	June 2015
	Review and update surveys for MRT members and general public that help direct future communication, education and outreach planning.	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	December 2015
Provide consistency and commonality of water education outreach messaging	Compile lists (map) of other groups that have background and interest in water issues.	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	December 2015
	Develop simple message for RT	Ed. Liaison	June 2015

	members to take back to their communities	/Ed.Com. *	
Coordinate Social Media Communications	Coordinate with existing programs and outreach	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	June 2015
Submit articles to news agencies on BIP and State Water Plan	Setup meetings with editorial board of local newspapers/newsletters within the Metro Area. Obtain commitment for articles in 2015	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	December 2015
Solicit input from affected stakeholders	Revise 'Fact Sheet' to be informative and shared with constituent groups	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	December 2015
	Compile input to inform development of outreach events and workshops	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	December 2015
	Recruit new MRT members and committee members to enhance effectiveness, diversity and participation.	All	December 2015
	Recommend other committee formation?	All	December 2015
Provide orientation for RT Members	Update content for member notebook	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	June 2015
Promote integrity of the process	Work with CWCB and CFWE to ensure MRT information is up to date (bylaws, membership information, etc.)	All	Ongoing
Submit WSRA grant application for staff assistance or education coordinator to assist Ed. Com.		Ed. Liaison	Spring 2015
Work with S. Platte RT to host a public meeting for elected officials	Develop meeting agenda based on compiled input, current issues and roundtable's portfolio of solutions	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	Summer 2015
	Secure venue	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	Summer 2015

Work with S. Platte RT to host a public meeting for elected officials (cont.)	Find appropriate speakers and meeting facilitator	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	Fall 2015
	Identify and outreach to elected officials and decision-makers	All	Ongoing
	Develop and print attendee packet of speaker/educational materials	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com. *	February-March 2016
	Host the reception in March-April 2016, including day-of logistics	All (CWCB, BRT, CFWE, CWA)	March –April 2016
Follow-up from 2013 meeting	Review the attendee evaluation forms and revise future activities to reflect the results.	Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com /PEPO	April 2015
Long Term – 2016 and Beyond			
BIP & State Plan Outreach	Follow up with the participants of the 2013-2014-2015 public meetings on their informational needs	TBD	TBD
	Develop content, venue, speakers, etc.	TBD	TBD
	Market to appropriate audiences	TBD	TBD
	Record the event for a future speaker's bureau	TBD	TBD
Submit periodic articles to basin news agencies on BIP and State Plan	Recruit roundtable members to write articles	TBD	Throughout
Work with 3rd party/universities to develop online survey to gauge public's support and knowledge of the BIP and State Water Plan	Beyond 2015	TBD	TBD

Note: "Ed. Liaison /Ed.Com *" refers to tasks that require hired technical, research and writing assistance.

III. Budget

The E&O Committee proposes to use $2000 in state funds, immediately, to hire assistance in research and writing for the Education and Outreach Committee. The Committee also proposes to use state funds later in 2015 to hire a facilitator to conduct a joint Metro/S. Platte Education & Outreach session with the goal of identifying Education & Outreach priorities and strategies to implement those priorities.

The Metro Basin Roundtable E&O Committee has been encouraged to develop grant proposals and anticipates applying for a WSRA grant; and to partner with other organizations to fund the efforts described above over the next several years.

Below is a conceptual list of proposed programs currently under consideration.

Outreach to DARCA (Ditch and Reservoir Company Alliance), S. Platte Roundtable, Arkansas Roundtable and various watershed groups.

Details of the grant proposals and budgets are in the process of being developed for later presentation to and approval by the Metro Roundtable. The E&O Committee and partners(s) will articulate how each task seeking WSRA funding relates to the Metro Roundtable activities, Basin Implementation Plan and the WSRA Needs Committee.

IV. Partnerships

The E&O Committee plans to expand on previous efforts to identify and partner with other groups and/or entities, which are doing water related public education and outreach. These groups know their respective communities and/or audiences best and can help identify how the message of the Metro Basin Roundtable and IBCC could be integrated into their programs to reach an increased percent of the state's general public. The E&O Committee thinks the Metro Roundtable, the IBCC, and the State would be best served if common messages were being communicated regarding the precious nature of water, the importance of conservation and the need to support and implement solutions (IPPs) through the Basin Implementation Plans.

Educational groups and efforts already existing in the Metro area as potential partners:

- Colorado Foundation for Water Education
- Metro State College of Denver – OWOW
- Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners
- Denver Water
- Aurora Water
- City of Thornton-Utilities
- other water providers
- Colorado Division of Water Resources

- EPA
- South Platte Greenway Foundation
- Colorado WaterWise Council
- Colorado Watershed Assembly
- American Public Works Association
- America Water Works Association
- Urban Waters Partnership
- CSU Water Center
- Colorado Water Quality Control Division
- Colorado Stormwater Council
- Ditch and Reservoir Company Alliance
- CSU Extension Offices
- Special Districts
- Colorado Counties, Inc.
- Chambers of Commerce
- Other Round Tables