

# **MINUTES**

Coconino Plateau Water Advisory Council

Friday, March 30, 2012

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

USGS Building #3

2255 N Gemini Drive, Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Flagstaff, Arizona

## **Members Present**

Brenda Smith, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, CPWAC Co-Chair

Celia Barotz, City of Flagstaff

Joanne Keene, Coconino County

Ron Sieg, Arizona game and Fish

Carl Taylor, Coconino County

Leslie Meyers, Bureau of Reclamation

Leo Manheimer, Navajo Nation

Pete Shearer, Town of Tusayan

Mandy Metzger, Coconino County

Sybil Smith, ADEQ

John Davison, Coconino NRCD

Patricia Cox, Bureau of Reclamation

Don Bills, USGS

Mike Foley, Navajo Nation

Ray Benally, Navajo nation

Diane Chung, National Park Service

Malcolm Alter, City of Flagstaff

Amanda Acheson, Coconino County

Ron Doba, CPWAC

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

Brenda Smith opened the meeting and introductions were made by those present.

## **2. Action Items**

### **A. Election of CPWAC Co-Chair**

Brenda announced the CPWAC is seeking nominations for the co-chair position that was vacated when Art Babbott left. Anyone interested in the position or knows of someone in their organization that would be interested should contact Ron Doba. The item will be on the April agenda for nomination and election by the members.

## **3. Government Affairs Committee Report**

**Joanne Keene, Chair**

The Government Affairs Committee report was moved up on the agenda due to Joanne needing to leave early. Joanne indicated the Government Affairs Committee is restarting and is looking for new members. The Committee typically meets prior to the WAC meetings at 9:00 A.M. The group talks about state and federal legislative items. It is currently hoping to hold a Legislative

Day in August of this year. If anyone is interested in serving on the Committee they should notify Joanne or Ron. Celia Barotz indicated she was interested in serving on the Government Affairs Committee.

#### 4. Non-Action Items

##### **A. Presentation on City of Flagstaff Rio de Flag Restoration Project – Malcolm Alter**

Malcolm Alter, City of Flagstaff Stormwater Manager, introduced himself. Malcolm is also the manager of the Rio de Flag Restoration Project. The reaches of the Rio were channelized into a ditch during the 1970's which resulted in changes to the natural ecosystem and eventual use as a dumping ground. Malcolm described the reaches of the Rio de Flag that are being restored with an Arizona Water Protection Fund grant (approximately \$300,000). The regulatory requirements were discussed for the project which consisted of restoring the alignment of the Rio to its original meanders. The City has agreed to maintain a minimum flow in Picture Canyon and keep Francis Short Pond full. The City also pays State Land \$100 per year for weed control. In exchange, the City has received ownership of Bow & Arrow Park which was previously owned by Game & Fish. Three acres have been set aside for a watchable wildlife area. Ron Doba indicated there will be a presentation to the CPWAC next month on the *Conserve to Enhance Program* that ties in well with this project.

##### **B. Presentation on Formation of a Non-Profit Tax Exempt Entity – Ron Doba**

Ron Doba discussed the current status of the CPWAC and some of the pros and cons of becoming a non-profit tax exempt corporation. Ron reviewed his experience taking the Northern Arizona Municipal Water Users Association through the process along with the costs and timing. Carl Taylor indicated an additional "pro" to becoming a non-profit tax exempt corporation was a perspective that an organization managed by a group of elected officials could be viewed as negative due to a concern that the commitment may not be as strong for funding the organization. Handouts were provided that compares all the tax exempt organizations authorized by the I.R.S. Celia Barotz indicated the most important differences between a 501 (c) (3) and 501 (c) (4) are the tax deductability of donations to the organization and the allowed political activity. Carl Taylor shared some of his experiences with non-profits that participated in educating legislators on the impact of specific legislation but did not go as far as lobbying in support or opposition. Brenda Smith expressed interest in finding out what types of organizations some of the other water planning groups in the state have formed and asked Ron to see what he could find out. Celia indicated her concern that water issues may become more legal than legislative in the future so it may wish to consider this when determining what type of organization to form. Leslie Meyers indicated in the past the WAC has sent groups to DC to advocate support for legislation and this should be considered as well. John Davison indicated that one of the values of incorporation he viewed as important is indemnification of the members. He is also concerned about how decisions made by the board are perceived as decisions by the member's organizations. Don Bills asked if the CPWAC would eventually be the entity that would operate a major water project. Leslie did not believe the WAC would be the operating agency. The organizational structure for this is unknown at this time. Carl indicated he believed incorporation would also indemnify the member organizations. Celia asked about the cost to form and operate a non-profit and Ron indicated he was working on a budget that included this for next month's meeting. Brenda suggested the discussion be continued at the next meeting and Ron should provide the additional information that has been requested. Carl indicated he believes we should go ahead and form a non-profit when we have the information and determine whether a 501(c)(3) or (4) should be formed. Brenda asked that the item be placed on the agenda for next month with additional information on the differences between a 501 (c) (3) and (4). Pete Shearer asked for information whether an annual audit is required or

not. Ron will check into this. The current bylaws and information regarding IGAs that were executed by the WAC members was also requested.

## **5. Committee Reports**

### **Technical Advisory Committee**

**Leslie Meyers, Chair**

Leslie Meyers reported the TAC did not meet this month. Rural Water funding was limited this year and the amount for the study was appealed by the Commissioner. Leslie's understanding is the feasibility study has been awarded \$1.4 million for this year and next year. This is more than was anticipated. Carl asked that clarification be provided on the matching funds that will be required. The TAC is working on the scope of work for the study that should be ready to bring back to the WAC at the next meeting. They are also trying to meet with the USGS on the groundwater flow model. Leslie also has more information on the WaterSmart Program funding available to fund the watershed coordinator position (up to \$50,000). The anticipated due date for the application is May. It was suggested that the CPWAC apply for something less than the \$50,000 to improve our opportunity. Carl asked for the name of the grant so it could be placed on the Board agenda as a placeholder.

### **Public Outreach Committee**

**Amanda Acheson, Chair**

The Committee met today. The brochures have been updated and are available. Don also printed the poster for the water ethics contest. Amanda indicated we will be having a booth for Earth Day on Saturday April 21<sup>st</sup> at City Hall from 10:30 till 4:00 pm. The committee needs help staffing the table and a sign-up sheet was passed around. Amanda will send Ron an email requesting volunteers and Ron will forward it to the full member distribution list.

The Flagstaff Festival of Science theme this year is "Making Waves." There is an opportunity to sponsor at several levels and the Executive Committee recommends a \$1,000 scholarship. Carl indicated there may be funding available as a community initiative grant (Coconino County) in lieu of tapping the CPWAC funding. If funding is available we will set up an email vote by the Executive Committee. The Festival of Science in the Park is Saturday, September 22<sup>nd</sup>. If we are a sponsor it is free, if not it is \$25.

John Davison addressed his proposal for the Youth Council. He indicated he needed to make a correction and would be sending the corrected copy to Ron for distribution to the WAC. It is possible that the Youth Council could be in place by this Fall.

Carl asked where we stand with the water contest. Forty schools received the packets. The only response came from Knoles School.

## **10. Roundtable Discussion**

Those in attendance provided updates on events that have been taking place in their respective organizations.

## **11. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned approximately 12:15 P.M. The next meeting will be April 27<sup>th</sup>.