

**Regional Water Planning  
PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY  
December 12, 2002**

The Planning Committee met Thursday, December 12, 2002 at 6:00 P.M. at McGee Park in the Multi Use Building Room A, Farmington, New Mexico.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Facilitator Shaun Bishop called the Planning Committee meeting to order at 6:00 P.M.

**PANEL MEMBERS:**

**PANEL 1**

Nick Ashcroft  
Dave Barr  
Michael Benson  
Tim Foster\*  
Robert Hays\*  
Elizabeth Kaime  
Randy Kirkpatrick\*  
Teresa Lane  
Keith Lee  
Paul Martin\*  
Bob Richards  
Steve Stevenson\*  
Becenti Wilson\*

**PANEL 2**

Robert Ahkeah  
Arlene C. Arviso  
Dwight James\*  
Andrea LeFevre  
Don Owen  
Bob Oxford\*  
Lynne Raner\*  
Hobson Sandoval\*  
Max Vigil\*  
Zang Wood

**PANEL 3**

Rob Ashman\*  
Lorenzo Bates  
Steven C. Begay\*  
Bob Browning\*  
Loren Linville\*  
Michael Nordstrom  
Evert Oldham\*  
Cas Ruybalid  
Lawrence Stock  
Michael B. Sullivan  
A.J. Yazzie\*  
Harry H. Yazzie\*

**PANEL 4**

Mike Belt  
Charles Blassingame  
David Brannan\*  
Carroll Crawford  
Mary Day\*  
Jiri Doskocil\*  
Jim Dunlap\*  
Richard Grimes\*  
Mike Hamman\*  
Ray E. Marley  
Norman Norvelle\*  
Jim Renfro\*  
Maude Grantham-Richards\*  
Jack Scott\*

\* Indicates: Absence of member

**OBSERVERS:** *Laverna Ahkeah, Amos F. Johnson, Mary Helen Follingstad, and Earl Hickam*

**WELCOME & OVERVIEW OF MEETING MATERIAL**

The facilitator Shaun Bishop, greeted the Planning Committee members, and introduced Rick Cox from Parsons Engineering.

The facilitator listed the contents of the meeting packet, as follows:

- Copy of the 'draft' November 14, 2002 Meeting Summary
- Copy of the Consideration of Alternative Recommendations - *Prioritized at the November 14, 2002 meeting*
- Copy of the Alternative Evaluations prepared by R. Cox Parsons Engineering
- Copy of the Discussion Outline for the December 12, 2002 meeting
- Copy of Comments and Responses - received as of December 11, 2002
- Copy of additional information that was distributed at the November 14, 2002 meeting

**CONSIDERATION OF THE NOVEMBER 12, 2002 MEETING SUMMARY**

There being no further changes to the November 14, 2002 Meeting Summary requested, the record was approved,

by consensus.

### **PANEL WORK SESSION**

Because of the small number of members in attendance, the facilitator had the members convene as one group, rather than breaking up into Panel groups.

The meeting was turned over to Rick Cox of Parsons Engineering. R. Cox and the Committee members engaged in an open discussion about the reconnaissance analysis and cost estimates he had prepared for the alternative recommendations the Committee members had prioritized at their November 14, 2002 meeting, for the individual watersheds and Region as a whole. Many issues were discussed including:

- Storage in NM
- Shallow ground water by river
- Crop leasing/options
- Small reservoir storage
- Navajo Dam operation improvements,
- Settlement of the Navajo Nation Water Rights
- Indoor/outdoor water conservation methods
- Global - Municipal solution *(during the November 14, 2002 meeting, a request was made for Evert Oldham to elaborate on this alternative recommendation.)*
- Agricultural improvements
- Groundwater exchange ~ NIIP/ Navajo -Gallup

The following recommendations were discussed but not evaluated by Parsons for this meeting:

- Remove non-native species
- Cloud seeding
- Increase of ALP storage
- Store storm water runoff
- Gallegos wash storage
- Treat saline water
- Enlarge Farmington Lake
- Challenge Endangered Species Act
- Blend ground water

The Committee members turned their discussion to the recommendations that were not evaluated and decided because all the recommendations merited consideration, that none of the recommendations would be eliminated. Before the meeting concluded, R. Cox reviewed the list of “prioritized” alternative recommendations, that the Committee wanted the reconnaissance analysis and cost estimates prepared for.

The following **ALTERNATIVE RECOMMENDATIONS** were identified and prioritized by the Committee during their November 14, 2002 meeting.

### **LaPlata Watershed**

#### **Priority #1 ~ Additional Storage Upstream - Panel 1, 4**

- a. No known sites identified
- b. Agricultural storage needed high in the watershed
- c. New small reservoirs(ponds) would help
- d. Available storage water limited to approximately 3,000 acre feet while shortages exceed 6,000 acre feet in ninetieth percentile year
- e. Pipeline from Ridges Basin to the State line

### **Middle San Juan Watershed**

#### **Priority #1 ~ Work with Agencies on Sensible Dam Operation and Administration of Flows - Panel 1**

- a. Low cost alternative
- b. Requires long term effort
- c. Alternative requires more focus on goals

### **General Broad Area Alternatives**

#### **Priority #1 ~ Need Quantification of Navajo Nation Water Rights - Panel 2**

- a. Responsibility of the State of New Mexico
- b. Requires long term effort
- c. Needed to adequately quantify remaining available water supplies

#### **Priority #2 ~ Global Municipal Solution - Panel 3**

- a. Acquire storage in Navajo Reservoir
- b. Share use of NIIP aqueduct for delivery to municipalities
- c. Cooperative effort with Navajo Nation
- d. Use of Navajo Reservoir will require environmental impact statement and congressional authorization
- e. The storage in Navajo Reservoir is fully allocated during drought periods
- f. Reserved capacity in Navajo Reservoir and aqueduct delivery systems for short term delivery during drought periods is costly

#### **Priority #3 ~ Improve Agricultural Irrigation Delivery Systems and Efficiencies - Panel 4**

- a. Reduce late summer return flows
- b. Reduces groundwater recharge and shallow aquifer
- c. Costly alternative, however, salinity reductions may pay for some costs
- d. Improves water quality for downstream users
- e. Requires cooperation of irrigation companies and individuals
- f. Small reduction in consumptive use

#### **Priority #4 ~ Provide Groundwater for NIIP and Navajo Gallup Pipeline Projects to Free Up Surface Water for Municipal Purposes - Panel 4**

- a. Requires additional groundwater investigations
- b. Requires Navajo cooperation
- c. Requires an environmental impact statement and Congressional reauthorization
- d. This option has potential for exchange during drought periods. In other words, development of groundwater for delivery to NIIP or Navajo Gallup pipeline as an exchange under state water rights law may not require items above
- e. Potentially low cost alternative for draft contingency planning
- f. Benefit includes increased flow in river for endangered species – Environmental community support

#### **Priority #5 ~ Challenge Endangered Species Act - Panel 2**

- a. Requires congressional action
- b. Low probability of success
- c. Requires long term effort

#### **Priority #6 ~ Groundwater Development - Panel 4**

Blend low quality groundwater with higher quality surface waters

### **DISCUSSION PERIOD:**

Rick Cox of Parsons Engineering will develop a summary report on the alternative recommendations that were prioritized by the Planning Committee. Rick Cox explained that the 'draft' water plan would be a reconnaissance level engineering analysis and cost estimate and that some of the summaries of the alternative recommendations might indicate a need for further study, before a more full assessment could be completed.

Facilitator, S. Bishop suggested that if a recommendation did require further study, beyond the current Scope of Work, that the Planning Committee consider it for a long-term recommendation. The facilitator announced that the next Planning Committee meeting would be held on Thursday, January 30, 2002, at McGee Park in the Multi Use Building, starting at 6:00 PM. S. Bishop said the Planning Committee would receive the 'draft' Volume I of the Water Plan which would include the alternative recommendations and evaluations before the meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

There being no further business, the facilitator adjourned the meeting at 8:30 P.M.