

# QQ Meeting Summary

June 15, 2022 at Crested Butte Town Council Chambers (and virtual)  
Summary sent out July 12, 2022



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## River Recreation in QQ Region

As QQ members know well, river recreation is of central importance to the region's economy, and American Whitewater and other stakeholders are looking at expanding the suite of tools currently available to ensure adequate flows for recreation, especially during key times of year.

At the QQ meeting, Hattie Johnson, Southern Rockies Stewardship Director for American Whitewater, discussed the recent legislative efforts to identify a Recreation In Channel Values Reach (RIVR) for beneficial recreational use without requiring construction of an in-channel diversion structure.<sup>1</sup> QQ members learned about Crested Butte's recent efforts to develop new river access for the Slate River through Town, including the opening of a new public boat launch. Lisa McDonald and Lisa Tasker with the Pitkin County Healthy Rivers Board shared their recent experience in getting the Pitkin Co RICD constructed and the opening of their new whitewater part (Figure 1).

QQ members voiced a general interest in continuing the conversation about the value of river recreation in our region,

### Help us refine our QQ meeting format!

We are considering hosting a longer in-person meeting once a year, with other QQ meetings being fully virtual. But we want to hear from you!

Take the survey [AT THIS LINK](#) or contact Torie ([tjarvis@nwccog.org](mailto:tjarvis@nwccog.org)).



Figure 1: (L) Pitkin County RICD, photo courtesy of Pitkin County Healthy Rivers Board.

(R) Changing rooms and staging area at new Crested Butte Slate River Access courtesy Janna Hansen, CB Parks, Rec, Open Space, & Trails Director

<sup>1</sup> A "recreational in-channel diversion" or RICD is a constructed diversion that can receive an accompanying water right that may be decreed in water court for local governments only. Because RICDs require some construction in a stream channel, they don't reflect all types of recreational use of rivers and streams (e.g., wading, fishing, boating, standup paddleboarding, etc.) that take place on existing river channels.

flow-related challenges, and possible ways to address those challenges. Hattie Johnson offered that she's available anytime to discuss these concepts one-on-one: [hattie@americanwhitewater.org](mailto:hattie@americanwhitewater.org) or 970-456-8533.

QQ is planning to support these efforts by hosting two follow up sessions for late-summer and fall:

1. **FLOW-RELATED CHALLENGES:** We will convene interested QQ members and American Whitewater will invite interested commercial outfitters for a discussion of what sort of flow-related challenges various communities' recreation economy face. *Estimated timeline: early September TBD.*
2. **BRAINSTORMING TOOLS TO HELP:** once we characterize the challenges, we will convene a group to brainstorm possible ways to address the challenges through legislative or other approaches. *Estimated timeline: October TBD.*

### Want more background on Recreational In Channel Diversions (RICDS)?

View a new QQ Member Summary, produced by Sullivan Green Seavy's summer associate Sarah Jean Rodger, [available by clicking here.](#)

Stay tuned for these follow ups on strengthening our recreation economy!

## NWCCOG Continues to Update its Regional Water Quality Management Plan ("208 Plan")

NWCCOG, through its Watershed Services program, is updating the Regional Water Quality Management Plan, otherwise known as the "208 Plan" as Section 208 of the Clean Water Act provides for a coordinated regional approach to water quality management. The Northwest Colorado Council of Governments ("NWCCOG") 208 plan region consists of the area within Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Pitkin, and Summit Counties. NWCCOG is the designated regional water quality management agency responsible for water quality planning within this region. The primary goal of the 208 plan is the protection and enhancement of the existing water quality and designated uses of waters in the region.

At the June meeting, QQ Members discussed new draft policies and implementation strategies, emphasizing such elements as integrating climate change into permitting and the importance of 1041 permitting and watershed protection in mitigating local impacts from water projects. These policies become regulatory requirements when local governments in the region include 208 Plan compliance in their municipal or county codes. Thank you for your feedback!

## QQ UPDATES

- This QQ meeting was held as a hybrid in-person and virtual meeting. Those who were unable to travel to Crested Butte were missed—we had lunch at the new public boat launch in Crested Butte, then five of us launched standup paddleboards for an afternoon Slate River adventure (see Figure 2).
- **Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) Updates.**
  - o QQ participated in the Gunnison Basin Water Quality Standards Rulemaking (Reg. 35) in partnership with Gunnison County, Crested Butte, the Upper Gunnison Water Conservancy District, and High Country Conservation Advocates. The joint party helped negotiate future



Figure 2: QQ Members paddleboard the Slate River after the June QQ Meeting.

work on a discharger-specific variance for Homestake Mine in the Marshall Creek watershed in lieu of pursuing removing a water supply use on the creek, and supported removing several temporary modifications on Coal Creek. Contact [abembenek@nwccog.org](mailto:abembenek@nwccog.org) for more information.

- The WQCC has scheduled a hearing to revise statewide molybdenum standards for human water consumption at the request of Climax Molybdenum, following a [new toxicological profile](#) for molybdenum from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry in 2020. A hearing for a new standard is scheduled for June 2023, and QQ anticipated teaming up with interested other parties as we've done in the past.
- **Bridging the Gap Project in Partnership with Sonoran Institute, CWCB, Northern Water, River District, and Trout Unlimited.** With our partners, QQ is helping to develop a stakeholder process to identify issues and lessons learned from water supply projects that seek to transfer water from one area of the state to urban growth centers, with an eye toward increasing collaboration between water supply planning and land use planning in both the area where the water is needed and the area where the water originates. The Sonoran Institute held the first of two convenings of a diverse stakeholder group with expertise in these projects in April. The convening began to reflect on past experiences that supported effective partnerships, with an emphasis on early consultation on local land use and water supply planning in the face of increasing water scarcity. QQ will keep members apprised as this project progresses through 2022.

Thank you and, as always, please reach out with questions, concerns, or issues QQ should know about.

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