

Context for the Basin Implementation Plan Updates

The completion of the *Analysis and Technical Update to the Colorado Water Plan* (Technical Update) marks the first step toward updating the *Colorado Water Plan* (Water Plan). These updates are in keeping with the timeline set forth in Chapter 11 of the Water Plan. The next step is updating each roundtable's *Basin Implementation Plan* (BIP), including the list of basin projects (sometimes called Identified projects and processes or IPPs). In keeping with Chapter 11, that process began in 2018 through a series of stakeholder engagement efforts that helped scope, fund, and plan this next phase of work.

Honoring the Stakeholder Driven Processes

In 2018, the Colorado Water Conservation Board (CWCB) initiated the BIP updates through a variety of exploratory efforts including the assembly of an Implementation Working Group (IWG) made-up of roundtable and Interbasin Compact Committee (IBCC) members. This group was formed to help the CWCB develop recommendations to be included in the Technical Update that provide an initial roadmap for integrating findings, updating project lists, and digging into BIP updates in the most effective manner. The IWG's recommendations are found in Section 5 of the Technical Update.

Creating Update Efficiencies

The IWG (along with the roundtables and CWCB Board) also expressed a clear desire for creating efficiencies that would reduce the time intensity (time; effort; cost) of future updates and streamline efforts for roundtable volunteers. Beyond the Chapter 11 goals, the scenario planning process in the Water Plan and the Technical Update requires regular check-ins to evaluate data, trends and adaptive measures. A streamlined process will be necessary for conducting cyclical updates to the Technical Update, BIPs and Water Plan. As part of this effort increased use of online tools such as a Project Database and Costing Tool as well as creating agreed-upon assumptions for statewide modeling are central to streamlining this and future updates. Additionally, a more straightforward mechanism for funding and completing the BIP updates themselves was desirable in order to better support the BIP update process.

Improved Process Support

While the first BIPs were developed with support from CWCB grant funds, that process was not consistent with current state fiscal rules. Additionally, as BRTs are not legally eligible to serve as fiscal agents, the previous process necessitated the use of third party fiscal agents that introduced additional management complications and added costs. To address these inefficiencies, to provide greater roundtable support and to provide greater consistency to the process, the CWCB utilized a general contractor (GC) model for developing a statewide RFP for the current BIP updates.

The GC will serve as the lead project manager of the BIP updates as well as the forthcoming updates to Water Plan. The GC will work with each BRT to hire a subcontractor (or Local Expert) to focus on providing local support. The Local Expert is expected to have with a rich understanding of basin issues in order to act as the chief facilitator for the BRT and principal liaison with the GC in order to complete the core duties (see below) identified in the RFP. The RFP scope was heavily informed by roundtable feedback and the recommendations noted above and a budget commensurate with meeting those objectives was established (see Core Duties in the section below)

Fiscally Responsible Budget

The established budget was meant to build on existing BIP efforts and Technical Update work and to use the recommendations from the IWG as a basis for streamlining the updates (and paving the path for increasingly streamlined efforts moving forward). To that end, basin budgets were set at 65% of the average cost of the previous BIP development efforts. While the majority of the funding (90%) was expected to meet core duties, roundtable input had signaled some desire to explore specific case studies. Commensurate with the case study budgets in the Technical Update, about 10% of the budget in each basin was set aside for developing a list of opportunities from which one may be explored in more

detail. In this way, the established roundtable budgets are intentionally lean with the goal of working on the highest priority issues first.

Building Capacity and Collaboration

All Local Experts will work on their roundtable's update and will also interact with other roundtable Local Experts to explore collaborative opportunities and make consensus decisions when needed. Through this process, the Local Experts and roundtables will gain an intimate understanding of the Technical Update, data needs, and modeling opportunities that will help streamline future updates.

Addressing the Gap and Refining Project Lists

Perhaps the most critical question that the BIPs address are the extent to which local projects can fill basin gaps. The measurable objectives noted in the Water Plan were based on data and gaps identified in the Statewide Water Supply Initiative 2010 (SWSI 2010). With the release of the 2019 Technical Update (which is still a statewide water supply initiative but no longer referred to as SWSI), basins will use and refine the new findings as they work to update relevant portions of their BIPs. As such, the ability to reduce or "fill" future gaps will be enhanced through refining project lists and getting better data for every project listed. This includes enhanced cost and yield data to help highlight basin funding needs, expected outcomes, and Water Plan progress.

In the inaugural BIP effort, compiling project lists was time consuming, and tools were not readily available to support the process. This resulted in partial and inconsistent information in each roundtable's project list, with limited accounting of project data such as cost yield, location, and other information that would be necessary for more detailed project analysis. This lack of project data made it impossible to model projects in the Technical Update. As such, gaps shown in the Technical Update do not include project yields that could help to address gaps. Enhancing project data is one of the highest priorities in the BIP update process.

Guiding the BIP Update

The 2013 guidance document for the creation of the first BIPs included a detailed list of content that each basin was directed to include. Because the BIP documents now exist and roundtable feedback suggests that a wholesale rewrite is not needed, this 2019 BIP guidance is focused on the update processes and specific opportunities that roundtable feedback has indicated can add value. While much of this is detailed in the recommendations shown in Section 5 of the Technical Update, this framework document seeks to summarize critical needs.

As noted above, the goal is not to be prescriptive with all aspects of BIP updates, but to support the strategic refinement of key data and explore additional opportunities. To that end, the primary focus of the updates will concentrate around basin goals and enhancing basin project lists. In addition, it is likely that updates may focus less on heavy revisions to the existing BIP documents and more on creating abbreviated, user-friendly summaries with enhanced online access. This may set up a two-volume approach (similar to the Technical Update) where Volume 1 aims to be a shorter BIP strategy document and Volume 2 serves to capture more lengthy technical memoranda, history and original BIP documents.

Once core goals are achieved, additional potential BIP content might include case study analyses (as long it complies with CWCB legal, policy, and/or modeling guidance that was explained when the board and legislature approved the original concept and funding). While each BRT may have its individual list of key concerns to address in their BIP update, the following items provide an overview of the core update goals that are most likely mission critical to supporting the ongoing local implementation of the Water Plan as well as those that may be more discretionary or fund-dependent:

Core BIP Update Duties

The Core BIP update goals build on the IWG recommendations and represent a simplified list of the main things the BIP should include in order to be a success. These items form the core tasks for the GC and Local Expert's scope of work which will be refined as basins coordinate with the GC and the Local Expert to refine their specific work plans.

1. **SCOPE BIP UPDATE WORK PLANS** - Coordinate with Basins to Identify Concerns and Opportunities
 - a. A BIP Update Work Plan will be developed ensure that the basin roundtable, Local Expert, GC, and CWCB have a consistent understanding of the work to be conducted in the BIP Update.
2. **IMPROVE PROJECT DATA** - Refine Basin Project Lists and Data
 - a. Refining basin project list helps support basin funding, Water Plan implementation and can refine gap numbers.
3. **REFINE TECHNICAL UPDATE FINDINGS** - Update Analysis and Input to Refine the findings in the Technical Update
 - a. Facilitate meaningful basin review of Technical Update assumptions and findings and establish approaches that help improve it.
 - b. Unpack the data and assumptions in the Technical Update and help refine data and modeling as needed.
4. **DRAFT BIP VOLUMES 1 & 2** - Update BIPs with a short Volume 1 strategy and supporting documents in Volume 2.
5. **INVEST IN PROCESS EFFICIENCY** - Identify where update processes can be streamlined; mitigate update intensity.

Other Potential BIP Update Goals

There are potential additional BIP Update Goals that the basin roundtables may have. A small amount of money and time (about 10%) has been set aside to explore these areas, to document them and to advance analysis on some subset of those areas. Examples of potential opportunities may include:

- **Project Modeling** – model a subset of projects to explore DSS functionality, project impact, etc.
- **Refine Data for Modeling Inputs** – provide enhanced data to use in modeling.
- **Case Study Development** – examine areas of interest (e.g. economic impacts), potentially cross-basin.
- **Other Study Areas** – per basin interest, should remaining funds be available.

As identified by the CWCB Board, the BIP updates are not intended to analyze or incorporate analysis from concurrent discussions regarding or related to compact issues (e.g. Demand Management). However, recognition of these efforts, implications and desire for future analysis may be articulated as is deemed to be consistent with the guidelines established by the CWCB Board and funding provided by the legislature.

Setting the Timeline

The BIP updates are expected to be realized in the next two years (from September of 2019 – September 2021). The Water Plan Update will happen concurrently, folding in the findings of the BIPs, and drafts will be circulated in 2022 for feedback prior to finalizing the Water Plan Update in late 2022.