



1026 Park Ave · PO Box 99
Grand Lake, CO 80447
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Date: January 23, 2023
To: Mayor Kudron and the Board of Trustees
From: John Crone, Town Manager
Re: Designating Three Lakes Watershed Association as Town Representatives

Background

The Three Lakes Watershed Association presented a proposal at tonight's workshop asking to be named as official Town representatives with the various water clarity groups that are addressing Grand Lake's water issues.

Motion

If the Board would like to designate Three Lakes Watershed Association as an official representative of the Town on water clarity issues, it may do so by approving the following motion:

I move to designate Three Lakes Watershed Associations president and directors as advisors and alternate attendees to the Town of Grand Lake in the various Grand Lake water clarity meetings..

January 11, 2023

Mayor Kudron and Board of Trustees
Town of Grand Lake
1026 Park Avenue
Grand Lake, CO 80447

Dear Mayor and Town Board,

The Three Lakes Watershed Association (TLWA) is a Grand Lake based 501(C)(3) and has been working closely with the Town of Grand Lake's Mayors and Town Counsel's since 2005 to protect the scenic attraction and recreation and improve water quality and clarity in Grand Lake. TLWA has been instrumental in establishing the Three Lakes Sanitation District, keeping gambling out of Grand Lake, adding a filtering system for stormwater entering Grand Lake for the city center, and establishing the first ever clarity standard for a lake in Colorado. Mayor Kudron reached out to our President (Mike Cassio) right after the East Troublesome Fire and asked Mike to support the Town and area through the fire recovery. Mike attended many key meetings supporting Mr. Kudron and TLWA was added to the National Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Program (EWP) Executive Management Committee to oversee the funding and projects administered by the NRCS.

TLWA is managed by a volunteer Board of Directors and like the Town of Grand Lake which is also managed by a volunteer Board of Trustees, we believe it is beneficial to both to formalize our relationship to officially assign key Directors of TLWA to represent the Town in Grand Lake in water quality and clarity meetings with outside organizations including but not limited to Bureau of Reclamation, Northern Water, Grand County, Colorado River District, Northwest Counsel of Governments, and the Colorado Water Quality Control Division. TLWA is not asking for authority to make any final legislative decisions, but to have authority from the Town Counsel to speak on water quality and clarity on their behalf.

Grand Lake water quality and clarity has suffered since the Colorado-Big Thompson Project (C-BT) came online in 1956 and reversed the natural flow direction 75% of the year to move water through Grand Lake to the Adam's Tunnel to the east slope to over 1.1 million people and to irrigate over 615,000 acres for agriculture. This Federal legislation that governs the C-BT is Senate Document 80 and a key provision in the document is Primary Purpose 2, "To preserve the fishing and recreational facilities and the scenic attractions of Grand Lake, the Colorado River, and Rocky Mountain National Park." We believe that this has not and is not occurring.

To put into perspective, the Grand Lake clarity is usually less than 9 feet while Lake Tahoe is consistently 60 feet. The key stakeholders of Lake Tahoe have developed management plans to improve clarity in the short term (by 2031) to 78 feet and have a long-term goal of 100 feet by 2076. Like Grand Lake, Lake Tahoe is a natural lake that has been impacted by damming for purposes of water delivery.

Over the past 6 years the following initiatives have been implemented that have shown some improvement towards helping clarity: (1) the Colorado Water Quality Control Commission (CWQCC) enacted Regulation 33.56 updating the Clarity Standard for Grand Lake to 3.8M (12.5 feet) and no

less than 2.4 meters (10.5 feet); (2) West Slope and East Slope stakeholders signed a 5 year Grand Lake Clarity Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for peak tourist summer season with Operational Guidelines for pumping, accepted by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). The stakeholders established a “Grand Lake Adaptive Management” process for trying to meet the 3.8M (12.5 feet) and no less than 2.4M (10.5 feet) Clarity Standard. In addition, the BOR promised to initiate the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) process to develop alternatives for a true fix to improve clarity.

The system fix was supposed to be able to improve clarity for future generations. The NEPA process was never finished for a number of reasons, but the MOU was extended by the stakeholders keeping the status quo for another five years. TLWA and the Town of Grand Lake opposed the resigning of the MOU as is because it allowed for no further steps to be taken to do anything more than is currently being done. Neither the Town of Grand Lake nor TLWA were included in the extension discussions even though the MOU clearly states that local stakeholders should be involved. Most recently TLWA, alongside Mayor Kudron, presented to the Colorado State Sub-Committee on Water Resources & Agriculture to ask the State Legislature to intervene, and at a minimum, study the west slope of the C-BT on the health and sustainability of the Colorado River Watershed headwaters system. We have obtained support from the Colorado River District and are continuing to gather support from other stakeholders and partners.

The Directors of TLWSA and our close to 500 members have been involved for decades on efforts to improve Grand Lake Clarity. We were instrumental in achieving the above recent results. We have participated in 100’s of calls and meetings over the past 20 years. We have worked with Bureau of Reclamation, Northern Water, Western Area Power Administration, Grand County, Northwest Council of Governments, Colorado River District, EPA, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, U.S Forest Service, and the Town of Grand Lake regarding Grand Lake water quality and clarity. Some of our Directors have been involved since the early 1970s and others also have NEPA experience. Again, we are a 501(c)(3) and have no paid staff. Our website is www.threelakeswater.org

We respectfully ask the Town Trustees to Authorize the Mayor to sign the attached letter of support to designate key Director of Three Lakes Watershed Association as Advisors and Alternate Attendees for the Town of Grand Lake in the various Grand Lake Clarity Meetings. Examples are the BOR NEPA Process, CDPHE water discussions, WQCC Hearings and Presentations and the MOU Grand Lake Adaptive Management (GLAM) meetings.

Respectfully Yours,
Three Lakes Watershed Association

Michael Cassio
President

Jeffrey Metzger
Director

Kirsten Heckendorf
Director

Date: 12 January 2023

From: Mayor Kudron and Board of Trustees
Town of Grand Lake
1026 Park Avenue
Grand Lake, CO 80447

To: Three Lakes Watershed Association (TLWA)

Subject: Authority to Represent the Town of Grand Lake in all Grand Lake Water Quality and Clarity issues.

To whom it may concern,

The Town Trustees Authorize the Mayor to sign this letter of support to designate the following key Director of Three Lakes Watershed Association as Advisors and Alternate Attendees for the Town of Grand Lake in the various Grand Lake Clarity Meetings (i.e. the BOR NEPA Process, CDPHE water discussions, WQCC Hearings and Presentations and the MOU Grand Lake Adaptive Management (GLAM) meetings and any other conference, summits, seminars, meeting, phone/zoom calls, and events designated by the Board of Trustees.

- Michael Cassio, President
- Jeffrey Metzger, Director
- Kirsten Heckendorf, Director

Steve Kudron, Mayor of the Town of Grand Lake