

DWRF Meeting Notes- April 4th 2018

Attendees

Bill Baker – Retired Ecologist	Ryan Cox- Co. State Forest Service
Jimbo Buickerood- San Juan Citizens Alliance	Misty Fowlds-DWRF Assistant Coordinator
Derek Padilla- SJNF	James Dietrich- Montezuma County
Mike Preston-DWCD	Steve Garcher-Dolores County BOCC
Rebecca Samulski- DWRF Coordinator	Floyd Cook- Dolores County BOCC
David Sitton – Aspen Wall Wood	Rich Landreth- City of Cortez
Dewayne Findley- Findley Logging	Sonny Frasier-Dove Creek Town Manager
Duncan Rose- Trout Unlimited	

Introductions

The group did an introductions activity which involved describing a former experience with fire.

Updates

The Dolores Fire Department has had almost as many wildfire calls already this year as all of last year. Paul Hollar, Emergency Manager for the County, is moving to North Carolina. Mntezuma County is looking to hire out that position as a part-time position. Karen Dickson at the health department is one of the only other people in the County who is highly qualified in Emergency Management.

Becca has shared a DWRF Calendar to view all our events in same place. Everyone that has been invited has editing privileges. The group looked at calendar and went over a how to use it session. Some people said they did not have gmail accounts. Many in the group had accounts. For individuals that do not have accounts they could contact Becca to add events. Jimbo recommended participants should put their contact information in when adding an event to the calendar. Right now the calendar covers the entire region all the way to Pagosa Springs. Eventually we would like to get this keyed in to our specific area (may need to color code things).

Beetles workshops are scheduled for next week. A flyer was sent to the group to get the word out to the community. The workshop has two separate days; one track for professionals, the other track will be for general public. Living with Wildfire resource fair and fundraiser will take place April 28th at Mancos Brewing Company. A poster was passed around for people to hang at their places. If there are materials for this event you want to get out please contact Becca. Pat might bring Smokey Bear. FireWise is still in need of auction items so please pitch in there if possible.

The group looked at branding styles that HelloZark sent. The team agreed the logo should not be too busy, but also not too simplistic. The brand also needed to look sharp in grayscale. Becca said she wanted the brand to have Dolores Watershed Resilient Forest spelled out with the letters DWRF highlighted and did not want the logo to be vertical as that style is difficult to work with. Mike showed how the circular DWCD logo captured the acronym as well as their full name. We should have examples of the DWRF logo by the next meeting.

Dave Casey and Ryan Cox went up to Hay Camp Mesa to plan some thinning and treatment using the Good Neighbor Authority. Reserve Treaty Rights Lands projects are still in limbo. The State Forest

Service will be administering another sale in Groundhog this summer. Kent is leaving (retiring) the end of April. Mark Lovell will be taking his place.

David Sitton reported they have already started logging beetle kill pine (Cow Canyon). Currently there is a lot of interest in blue stain paneling. They are shipping big logs and paneling to the mill in Chama, and have been working towards developing markets on the less blue trees. There is some difficulties selling logs they can't make t&g boards out of and are seeing a lot of waste out of the older dead timber (5-6 year beetle kill timber is too old). The best logs come from trees that still have straw on them (needles). Three years is optimal. Dewayne had a conversation with Dudley Millard about making pallet stock with aspen. Pallet stock can use smaller aspen that you don't have to de-bark. The profit isn't great, but it doesn't cost you much to refine the product either. A place out of Utah takes pallet stock. Dewayne is moving off of Burnt Ridge just so he can service his equipment. The snow did not push them out this year. They could plow snow off and the soils dried immediately. He feels we are experiencing a 100 year drought. He's never heard of logging all the way through March up here.

Bill Baker who is a retired researcher is publishing a paper accruing all of the research on historical fire in ponderosa pine in this area. This paper is currently out for review and he'll share when it is published.

Floyd Cook said they are still exploring biomass generation. Dolores County hasn't heard anything back from Ellen Roberts yet.

Sonny said Dove Creek plans to meet with the Forest Service around what to expect about their watershed and how to manage logging and prescribed fire in that area that sits directly above their source water.

Mike Preston- Discussed article around Feds making FEMA money available so the FS doesn't have to rob money from all other departments to fund fire suppression. The fire funding strategy in the federal budget doesn't take effect until 2020, but congress has made other money (\$500 million) available to cover Forest Service during the years in between. Fire transfer is terminology they use for that strategy. Becca mentioned at the conference they talked about the fire funding strategy saying it is not a fix but a strategy.

DWCD- In regards to water they are still looking at barely meeting allocations. The storms that have been through are not leaving much precipitation. They could end up with a shortage to users in the 20% range. Ultimately we will probably see the biggest impacts to water supply in 2019 if we draw the reservoir down this year. Even when precipitation comes the soil is so dry it just soaks it up.

Duncan mentioned two types of drought categories and that the drought in our area has been changed to a severe status. He also mentioned that at the regional Trout Unlimited conference there was a presentation on flood and fire in Colorado Springs. Dick Snefferies talked about a group that was formed as a result of fire/flooding that has about 120 people involved. The group is working (like DWRF) to hammer out how to address these issues related to wildfire and post-fire impacts to the watershed. They are dealing with a huge magnitude of issues. What he took away from the presentation was when you create a collaborative pre-emptively, things go much better. The group agreed it might be good to have the Coalition for the Upper South Platte come give presentation to DWRF in the future, and Becca has contacts with members as well. They are regular participants in the Watershed Wildfire Protection Group which Becca also participates in.

The Forest Service has been doing some fuel moisture sampling. Vegetation is still relatively wet in areas like Hay Camp where potential treatments will be done, however the treatment windows will be short. There will be a Ponderosa Pine Symposium at the Public Lands Office sometime the first week of May. (That info will be shared once the SJNF solidifies their schedule.). Experts will share information with the public, followed by a releasing a scoping package of Lone Pine area (Lake Canyon to head of Narraguinne Canyon) to do thinning and timber sales (they will be working closely with the Counties and Montrose Forest Products. A public hearing will take place April 16th at 9:00am at Dolores County on their resolution to allow higher weight limits for logging on county roads (Dolores County approved this road improvement and allowance of overweight logging vehicles plan). Prescribe Fire EA closes on April 5th. The forest has received a little input but what they have received was good.

Misty gave an update on the Watershed Wildfire Protection Plan. At the Coordinating meeting the group mentioned that we still may need existing treatment data for BLM and FS. A meeting with Rachel and Doug at the County and Mike Znerold took place last week and Rachel agreed to input the existing treatment data and put together maps that could be printed off to finalize the data. The group also identified a possible way to break up the landscapes. The County is very busy with other priorities so they have decided to wrap up their loose ends with the project and leave analysis to another GIS person. Becca spoke with Anthony Culpepper with Mountain Studies and MSI will likely be able to take over the GIS Analysis portion of the mapping.

The Ag Expo outreach went well around fire education and being safe around fire. Over 600 mostly 1st graders were there. Becca asked what her son got out of it? He didn't say much but when they went camping he was nervous about the camp fire and she felt that maybe there was a message conveyed after all.

DWRF input and Forest Service Environmental Impact Statement-

The group then worked on the letter to Forest Service and went over values at risk of post fire flooding being added to EA, investigate tribal feedback around cultural sites and treatments, (Derek said they have received feedback from some tribes). The group also worked on the language around all ignition by FS personnel.

Two concerns Mike Preston referenced around SHPO and potential delays they might create. Derek said things have changed and they have a good relationship with SHPO. Also on smoke, parameters used to be a lot stricter, but now if they have a window, they contact the department of public health and sometimes are able to burn additional acres based on actual smoke dispersal and conditions. CDPHE has figured out that smoke is not as much of an issue in our area and things move more efficiently.

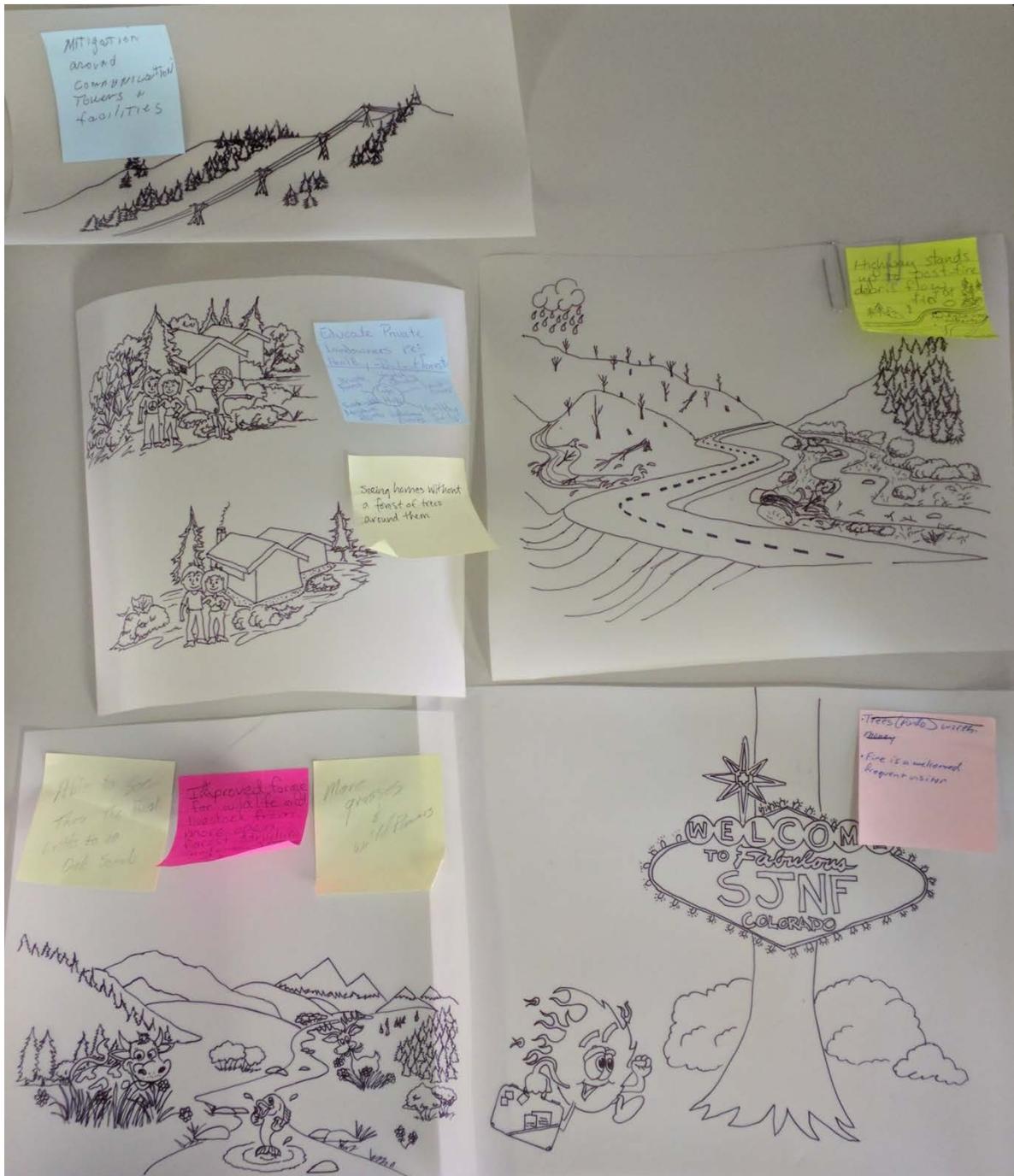
Jimbo put it out to the group that if anyone has an issue with this document and does not agree to everything in the document then individuals would make their own comments. Jimbo asked Bill if there was anything that stood out to him? He said not really, science supports most of what is here. Bill said he may do an individual comment on mastication (unnatural activity). It was mentioned the group could ask for more information/clarification on mastication. The group agreed. Maybe it is best to use information on a case by case area depending on criteria (wildlife etc).

Since there was little time left, the group agreed to do Troika Consulting another time.

In May there may be an opportunity to do a field monitoring tour (around forest health). The group agreed to forego the May 2nd meeting and encourage participation instead in the FS Pine meeting in the evening that gets scheduled for. The Field tour will take place at Joe Moore or Boggy area (where previous ponderosa pine partnership treatments were conducted). Raglands did the logging, Phil Kemp did marking, and Mike Znerold was there as well. It would be good to have them involved. Becca is working on getting a science class from Dolores High School out with us as well. A poll will be sent out to the group to select the best date.

If anyone has things to share, send them to Becca and she will pass them along. Also consider if you have auction items for the FireWise Living with Wildfire fundraiser. Any profits will go straight into wildfire preparedness education in Montezuma County. Becca is taking RSVPs for Beetle Workshops (feeding folks lunch).

The group looked at James Dietrich's progress on the illustrated vision. Following are some initial illustrations he's created to depict the DWRF vision:



With that the group adjourned.

Next Meeting

May 2nd DWRF Meeting cancelled – attend the SJNF Dolores District Ponderosa Pine meeting May 2nd instead

May 16th, Citizen Science Forestry trip in Boggy Draw area