

## **Dolores Watershed and Resilient Forest (DWARF) Collaborative**

Meeting 6

4-6-16, 1:30 - 3:30 at Dolores Water Conservancy District Office

### **In Attendance:**

Aaron Kimple, Kevin Heiner, Pam Wilson, Garrett Hanks, Scott Clow, Ken Curtis, Mike Preston, Derek Padilla, Eric Janes, Bruce Short, Ryan Cox, Jimbo Buickerood, Rich Landreth, Norm Birtcher, Duncan Rose, Greg Kemp, Doug Pickering, Celene Hawkins, Harold Ragland, Dewayne Findley, David Casey, Thurman Wilson, Pam Wilson, Rebecca Samulski (facilitating)

### **Announcements:**

The group will use the afternoon of the first Wednesday of each month as a regular meeting date.

Aaron and Becca submitted a Healthy Watershed Consortium grant (a combination of EPA and private foundation funding) application requesting \$132,500 per year for five years to support the DWARF Collaborative and the San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership. There is a lot of competition with 170 applicants for \$1.5M the first year, but they think we have a strong proposal. Our two groups and two other applicants (the Chama Peak Land Alliance and the Model Forest Policy Program) wrote letters of support for each other.

FireWise and the Colorado State Forest Service applied for a \$250,000 Community Assistance Funds Adjacent (CAFA) grant for forest treatments on private and state lands focused in the Summit Ridge/Joe Moore area. This grant, formerly known as a Stevens grant, is for work adjacent to National Forest System lands.

It was noted that these kinds of cross-jurisdictional projects help make us more competitive for other funding such as the Joint Chiefs (USFS and NRCS).

Jimbo suggested that we try to get all DWARF members to sign letters of support for future grant applications.

Aaron reported that the tour with Rick Cooksey, lead for State and Private Forestry in the USFS Regional Office, went well. He has asked for a refinement of some of the materials we provided him earlier and was generally very positive about our work.

Tony Cheng (Colorado Forest Restoration Institute), Mike Battaglia (USFS Rocky Mountain Research Station), and Jason Sibold (Colorado State University) conducted a spruce-fir workshop on March 21 in Fort Lewis College. They also visited with some of the members of the DWARF and the Headwaters groups, sharing some of the information coming out of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Project (CFLRP) on the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre, and Gunnison National Forests and gave an update on wildfire risk to watershed assessments happening in other parts of Colorado. They are also working on Gambel oak management, which is a relevant topic for our group.

There was a well-attended presentation by Jim Furnish, retired Deputy Chief of the USFS and former planner on the San Juan National Forest, followed by a panel discussion that included Kara Chadwick, Kyle Hanson, Jimbo and Aaron.

Mike Preston reported that J. R. Ford is currently doing some trials with biochar in Kansas and will then move that to the San Juan. J. R. requested to be on our mailing list and seems to have some interest in looking harder at the Dolores area after his Pagosa Springs projects are better established.

It was reported that Western Excelsior is testing the use of ponderosa pine for excelsior and also working on biochar. They are developing a mobile biochar unit using funding from a USFS biomass utilization grant.

The regional biomass working group has met again. We will stay connected with that effort.

The eastern chapters of the Navajo Nation need more firewood and a better way to supply it to remote homes. There is some movement on that that may create biomass utilization opportunities in our area. The Montezuma Board of County Commissioners expressed interest at their Monday meeting in supporting forest industry. They also expressed interest in biomass heat for the new courthouse.

Senator Roberts' biomass bill didn't pass. Mike Preston expressed interest in working with others down here – Jimbo, Aaron, J. R., etc. - on biomass incentives. Jimbo said he would try to dig into this more. There was also some discussion of the sales tax incentive on beetle-killed wood. It is still in effect but is proving hard to track. The Biomass Working Group has identified broadening the sales tax exemption for wood products regardless of beetle kill status as a major opportunity to support.

### **Values at Risk**

The risk assessment working group met yesterday (Ken, James, Thurman, and Becca present) to refine the matrix from the previous meeting. Brad was out of town and couldn't attend but had sent an email with comments. The working group reduced the primary values to four: municipal drinking water collection sources, residential and commercial structures, infrastructure, and vegetation commitments. They also refined the secondary values, the overall importance rankings and the relative importance rankings.

Those in attendance today seemed to agree that this version was an improvement over the earlier one. There also seemed to be agreement that we should add a primary value back in that addresses ecological values. The inventory that Trout Unlimited is working on could be an important tool for that, but won't all be compiled until next year. Celene, Duncan, and Garrett will think more about how to incorporate fisheries data and other important ecological values. The revised matrix without covariate and Fire Intensity Level details is included on the next page.

The values matrix is a work in progress. We will continue to do iterations between the working group and the full DWARF membership. It would be helpful for Brad to do a model run with what we have so far so that we can see what the output looks like at the May 4<sup>th</sup> meeting. Several people said they would like a better understanding of how the model worked and requested a presentation on that at a future meeting. Specific questions centered on how the overall importance and relative importance values interacted with each other and how fire effects on vegetation composition and structure drove the model. Harold suggested that a better understanding of historical fire results, such as how the Missionary Ridge Fire affected water, would be helpful in understanding this process.

### **Potential Field Trips**

May is probably too early for a field trip given weather and road conditions; June would be better. If we wanted to look at spruce-fir, we could visit Taylor/Stoner to look at a new proposal. Haycamp could be a good area to contrast treated and untreated areas. The Weber Fire area could be a useful field trip, both for post-fire effects and the influence of pre-fire vegetation treatments. Becca suggested that FireWise could do another Weber Fire tour independent of the DWARF Collaborative, but make sure this group gets the invitation. It was suggested that besides vegetation treatments, it could be helpful to look at some of the things listed as secondary values in the risk assessment such as communications sites and water diversions.

Kevin mentioned that Headwaters was good about getting other affected people out on field trips and generating political support. He suggested that we also think about public field trips.

David offered to work with Becca on a simple survey about people's familiarity with different topics and choices of things to look at on field trips.

### **Next Steps:**

**David** will draft a field trip topics survey for **Becca**.

**Ken** will see if **Brad** can do a model run with the current version of the values worksheet. Brad's availability may drive the assessment work timeframe. The **Assessment Working Group** will try to meet again before the next meeting.

**Celene** will work with **Duncan**, **Garrett**, and potentially others on fisheries values for the assessment.

**Next Meeting: May 4 from 1:30 to 3:30.** We will shoot for a field trip either in place of or in addition to a June meeting.

VALUE RANKING FOR WILDFIRE RISK TO WATERSHED ASSESSMENT				
Primary Value	Secondary Value	Overall Importance 1-10	Relative importance .1-1	Notes
Municipal Drinking Water Collection Importance	Low Importance	10	0.4	Work with Shauna to clarify how this is done for post-fire impacts. (F2F IMP1 0-47) (F2F IMP1 48-64)(F2F IMP1 65-100) Use something other than Forests to Faucets
	Moderate Importance		0.6	
	High Importance		1	
Residential and Commercial Structures	Low Density (1-2/ 40 acres)	9	0.6	Want to focus on structures with occupants, Include RV parks out of town as High Density
	Moderate Density (3-13 structures/ 40 acres)		0.8	
	High Density (>= 14 structures/ 40 acres)		1	
Infrastructure	Exposed Utility Lines	8	0.9	Post-fire concern for this Infrastructure. Use service levels and surface type
	Communication Sites		0.9	
	Municipal water infrastructure (diversions, tanks, Rico Well)		0.9	
	Agricultural water infrastructure		0.3	
	Snotel Sites/RAWS Sites		0.4	
	Developed Recreation Sites		0.4	
	Trails (buffer for tree blow down) 150'		0.1	Shauna can get this
	Roads - closed		0.2	
	Dirt roads		0.4	
	Gravel roads		0.6	
	Paved roads		0.8	
	Highways 145		1	
	Wetlands & Fens		0.5	
Vegetation Commitments	Contracted/ Sold	7	0.8	
	Prepped/not sold		0.6	
	Suitable Base		0.1	
Ecological Values	Trout Strongholds			

Notes by Thurman Wilson with Becca Samulski edits