

DWRF Meeting Notes- July 18th 2018 (DWCD)

Attendees

David Sitton - Aspen Wall Wood	Misty Fowlds - DWRF Assistant Coordinator
Ryan Cox – Co State Forest Service	Shauna Jensen – Forest Service
Mike Preston - DWCD	Steve Garcher - Dolores County BOCC
Rebecca Samulski - DWRF Coordinator	Floyd Cook - Dolores County BOCC
Matt Cook – MSI	Rich Landreth - City of Cortez
Sonny Frasier - Dove Creek Town Manager	Eric Janes - Retired Forest
Ashley Downing – FireWise SWCO	Aaron Kimple - MSI
Sophia Simmons - TNC	Ken Curtis - DWCD

DWRF Accomplishments

The group discussed DWRF accomplishments, specifically how its participants have been critical in bringing folks together to focus on Forest Health and Economics. The group noted the following accomplishments:

- Taking legislative action
- Building new relationships, including stronger relationships with USFS staff
- Key in reconfiguring Aspen Wall Wood
- Created opportunities for winter logging on SJNF
- Obtained the WaterSMART grant
- Expanded landowner outreach on wildfire risk reduction, especially in Dolores County
- Compilation of values at risk and associate wildfire risk assessment
- Post-fire watershed modeling
- Opened access to winter logging
- Good information is shared by knowledgeable partners, increasing the knowledge base for decision making and broadening views of forest health and resilience
- Enabled joint projects in Joe Moore Area through leveraged funds and coordination
- DWRF has been critical in vocalizing need for more action forest watershed
- Support and recommendations for landscape prescribed fire EA on Dolores Dist. of SJNF
- Shared info to contribute to fire management and post-fire response in the watershed
- Have engaged in and continued discussions on wood utilization
- DWRF has brought approximately \$260,000 toward Upper Dolores Watershed protection
- “DWRF has been a great venue for discussing regional forest health initiatives with friends in social settings.”

Updates

The Bureau of Reclamation has been awarded the WaterSMART grant which should give us over \$50,000 over the next year and another \$50,000 the following year to broaden our capacity and planning efforts, including outreach efforts, source water protection planning, monitoring planning and GIS work. To take DWRF to the next step to see phase two of the grant ultimately getting action on the ground.

Becca was just in Rico doing outreach and also did site visit with Dunton, Groundhog Vista (saw a lot more beetle kill). The DWR Forestry intern wrote a letter to property owners with beetles identified to help show them the next steps to dealing with their properties. This needs to be sent out.

The group discussed how we should handle emergency management, stating the county ultimately has jurisdiction. Becca has sat down with Mike Pasquin to give him an overview of how it all comes together. He should be at the DWR Meetings.

David Sitton sat in on the Montezuma BOCC meeting today to paint context around Timber Industry needs in the region.

Mike with DWCD included forest health in the Southwest Basin Roundtable agenda. Aaron and Becca presented. Animas River and South Platte folks were also at the meeting. The goal was to bring a good clear message to the front and center to bring forest health a higher profile among water managers and users. Water Congress is trying to form a "Forest Health Alliance", an advocacy group that would include Club 20, Colorado Water Congress, The Nature Conservancy, Colorado Timber Industry Association, and the Colorado Ag Water Alliances. They are having a meeting this year in Vail. The political advocacy piece is taking shape and it would be good for us to put a message together from DWR to show our needs. We should have this cohesive message with other groups as well. Mike will try to talk to Travis from RWEACT. They are hoping to connect with many other groups. At the Denver meeting in Conservation Financing Strategies the message for the need to re-capitalize the industry successfully got across. These foundations are willing to take a lesser profit if it shows public good. Anthony Madrid, the Natural Resource Officer for San Juan National Forest was there.

Shauna Jensen reported on the Burro Fire Burn Area Emergency Response team, who had their first meeting this morning. They are currently in assessment mode, and looking at treatment possibilities. BEAR focuses on immediate emergency threat including debris-flows and sediment run off. There is already revegetation happening in places. The Burro fire has proved to be a nice mosaic fire. Matt Cook with Mountain Studies Institute was able to pull together values at risk from DWR map and share them with Shauna. She looked at the model for Bear Creek and looked at data which had a 2-3 fold increase in flows (we didn't experience this with Burro). After some fires, debris-jams can occur, creating a pulse, but they are not anticipating huge increases in flow or a high likelihood of such pulses from the Burro Fire. The team has looked at BAER Assessment Map (satellite imagery), and next step will be to go out to field validate this map and assess soil burn severity. They look at trails, roads, life, property, and cultural resources. Shauna will share the outcomes of the assessment at the next DWR meeting. AGWA is a finer model (more sophisticated model) than what model Shauna will run. But she will share that data as well. This process usually takes 7 days – two weeks. The end product is a report that includes expected relative increases in sediment and flow amounts and looks for values that may be negatively impacted by the expected increase. Ultimately this report will help in assessing treatment needs and address the need for the amount funding necessary for emergency treatment.

The debris flows coming off the 416 fire are right in line with work Shauna is doing (models debris-flow mapping). Up until two days ago debris flows were low to moderate, then Highway 550 was closed yesterday because debris flows were heavy after the heavy rains. There is evidence of fish dying in the Animas (river is thick with ash and mud) and there is some property damaged (including the train tracks). Butch Knowlton, La Plata County emergency manager, lived through Missionary Ridge had already set up gauges, and other things. He was on top of things and able to give people enough

warning. The group talked about when you get a fire on private land how do you implement this kind of action (Private Land BAER teams).

Trout Unlimited has been putting in temperature gauges throughout the watershed. Between SJNF and Dolores River Anglers, they have placed 20 plus sensors in various tributaries in addition to 8 in the main stem. They expect to get about 6 to 8 more in next week (the final group).

DRWF action items include, getting a group coordinated around pre-emptive effort. DWRf has identified what assets DWRf has. This is a good starting point. We also need to streamline a way to present to someone who doesn't know DWRf (such as outside fire management teams) while being clear about what it is we can provide and how to present that. We should add to the WWPP Watershed map data post fire debris flow for Bear Creek, along with any other fires that might spring up in the watershed. Data will include things like; is there a debris fan there, channel types, and channel storage.

Ken Curtis mentioned he would like to see a list of cooperating agencies (ask Derek). Shauna said this is on Shauna and Derek's agenda over the next couple week (to figure out cooperators) it is a part of the Forest Service post-fire response.

The group talked about connecting Butch to knowledge share with our Dolores County (Keith Keesling) and Montezuma County (Mike Pasquin) emergency folks.

Outreach for DWRf

The group discussed the August tour and encouraging DWRf members to bring a friend. DWRf and the Forest Service will go look at a couple projects that have been thinned. One area had a prescribe fire treatment while the other area has not (which is on the other side of road). This is a good area to compare and contrast no treatment vs treatment. Dave Casey is working on the agenda for that. We will invite the press (free press and journal and Dove Creek press) as well as Colorado Parks and Wildlife, and San Juan Headwaters. We will be spending some time in the car, so organize people into certain cars who want to talk about certain topics might be a good idea (prescribed fire, hydrology or timber etc).

Other outreach -group did exercise to get outreach ideas and topics. Directed at the general public in both Rico, Dove Creek, and Dolores). The group discussed an outreach event in the forest, possibly in September, that might include a community potluck, with the audience being varied but including private land owners, fishermen, and bicyclists. The big question we will need to think about is how to get people there. K

The group also discussed capitalizing on venues where people already are. Focus on homeowners, mountain bikers, rotary clubs, recreational users, hunters, grazers, trail riders, etc. That said though the Beetle workshops were a good turnout. Someone mentioned the National public lands day FS, BLM have plans (find out what is being planned) that takes place Sept 29th.

Next Meeting

September 5th 2018