



DWRF Stakeholder's Meeting
Wednesday, March 9, 1:30-3:30pm

Zoom online meeting
Login info at the end

This meeting was conducted via Zoom

Present were:

Sensa Wolcott (Mancos Conservation District), Danny Margoles (Dolores Watershed Resilient Forest Collaborative), Doug Muscanell (Retired from forest products industry), Bruce Short (Short Forestry LLC), David Casey (San Juan National Forest), Molly Pitts (CTIA/IFA), Pat Seekins (Dolores Ranger District), Dan Kaufenberg (Dolores Ranger District), James Dietrich (Montezuma County Natural Resources), Rebecca Busic (Montezuma Land Conservancy), Derek Padilla (Dolores Ranger District), Robert Meyer (Mancos Trails Group), Chris Garner (Mancos Conservation District), Duncan Rose (Retired – Dolores River Anglers, Trout Unlimited), Julia Ledford (Mountain Studies Institute), Anthony Culpepper (Mountain Studies Institute), Aaron Kimple (Mountain Studies Institute), Ryan Cox (Colorado State Forest Service), James Reimann (Montezuma Land Conservancy), Jimbo Buickerood (SJC Alliance), Travis Burch (San Juan Timber Broker Manager), Jason Lawhon (San Juan National Forest), Michael Preston (DWRF Coordinating Committee, RMRI Steering Committee), Phil Ayers (Wildfire Adapted Partnership, SWCO Cycling Association), Helen Katich (Senator Hickenlooper Staff), Brian Peckins (City of Cortez)

Introductions, Operating Principles, Agenda

Danny went over operating principles and agenda. Danny mentioned that it would be great if people would sign up to take notes. He requested that each stakeholder take notes for one meeting per year.

You can sign up here: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/13AMPGAg3ORsQU9y2jJ4vLvy2N-Z-5UytCB52PX8IKNk/edit?usp=sharing>

Stakeholder and DWRF updates by program area

- Community Education & Outreach
 - o Danny – great conversation with Dolores community & Dolores Town Board re. Merritt way, one of the scariest areas for wildfire, held an outreach event about some of the work happening cross boundary/cost share opportunities. DWRF got small grant from Fire Adapted Colorado to host a larger outreach event for more than just Merritt Way
 - o Sensa shared about MCD's Forestry workshop that is being planned in conjunction with CSU Extension office – April 7th – education and outreach about the importance of wildfire mitigation and how to get involved. Will send information as it develops.



- Sensa shared about the Recreational Opportunities on the Mancos River event at the Cidery on Wednesday, March 16th.
- Mike Preston shared that he co-authored a paper on San Juan mtns temp/precip/runoff addressing the last 30 years. Covers the San Juan, Dolores river basins, collected data and analyzes it annually, monthly and seasonally – shows changes over the last 20 years, hopes patterns help predict future – can get a copy from Danny or email Mike for a copy of the paper – will be online eventually and Danny will share a link when it is.
- Anthony Culpepper – MSI will be hosting forest learning in April – 2-3 virtual events, with an opening event that will be in person focusing on WUI – Danny will share when plan finalized
 - MSI is also working on developing a story map on the initiatives and collaboratives in Colorado
- Molly Pitts – forest health report – forest hearing for ag committees 3/31 with Senate Ag, House Ag will be 4/11 – legislative reception the night before – can join them in Denver reach out to Molly for details
- Collaborate with Land Management Agencies
 - Updates/directions/engagement opportunities
 - Derek Padilla– not much update on mixed conifer prescribed fire EA – working on developing criteria
 - David and Pat will present in April
 - Danny mentioned that conversations regarding prescribed fire on private land in collab. with **Trex** are happening – opportunities coming down the line and will update as more information avail.
 - Anthony Culpepper - San Juan **Trex** this spring – focusing on cross boundary stuff
 - Aaron Kimple - MSI hiring updates – Julia on board now, hiring monitoring coordinator as well
- Resilient Forests and Communities
 - RMRI updates – PODs activities meeting
 - Jason – POD strategy meeting to work on 4 PODS, notes will be forthcoming, follow up will be completed, drafting strategy in each POD, and then they will start looking at next steps and asking for feedback
 - Danny – thank those of you who participated in the meeting – will reach out with cleaned up thoughts and directions for larger groups
 - CFLRP Admin update
 - Jason – funding piece – looking highly likely that even under a continuing resolution we’re likely not going to have an approved budget. Moving to yearlong continuing scenario – Rio chama CLFRP may be a priority
 - Two chances – one if we pass a budget OR a line-item in Infrastructure Law that may provide funding – looking to develop a FACA committee that would work on providing more funding in 2023 (CFLRP and Infrastructure)



- Still may be \$ coming from Infrastructure law, we'd be first in line if Rio Chama gets funding through
 - Less likely to see funding this year...
 - Anthony Culpepper – asked would they be evaluating existing proposals or looking at something new? Jason doesn't know for sure, but his hunch is that they're looking at new.. will follow up.
 - Molly Pitts – will need to pass another CR, but may pass budget in next couple weeks, - deadline closed for new committee members to join FACA committee
- Forest Products Industry Development
- Collaborative Effectiveness and Sustainability
 - Grants updates
 - Action, implementation grant with MSI and WAP – haven't heard back if selected for full proposal
 - COSWAP conversations will continue
 - DWRWF getting another agreement through Forest Service
 - Fire Adapted Colorado Grant awarded – mentioned above
 - Collaborative trust opportunities
 - Danny talked to coordinating committee about holding in-person meeting with hybrid option – wondering if people want to react to that idea – would be at DWCD office – will be April 6th - we will pursue that idea – feel free to email Danny if you have concerns
 - Danny shared update about moving his office to MCD office – excited to have an actual office

Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program – Governance Conversations

- Discussion on current status of governance conversations and directions
- Danny introduced the CFLRP Governance structure draft process. The committee has been meeting over zoom, plus one longer in person meeting last week – making good strides in a structure. Focusing on a mission statement that will be refined, expectations of a stakeholder group and SJ National Forest, expectations of how we work together, beginning a draft structure – how does everyone fit together?
- Molly Pitts – great presentation from Dr. Kimberly Coleman on collaboration and she focused on trust. Danny will be working with Dr. Coleman and her students – will be presenting to DWRWF in April or May – should have a recording in your inbox
 - Molly encourages everyone to watch it – recognizes where people get their feelings from
 - Making progress with the group – taking a while, but moving forward with a fresh approach
- Jimbo – this group of about a dozen of us is a subset of stakeholders from wolf creek pass to Utah state line – diverse interest group – the work they're doing is to come up with a possible governance structure that everyone will have the chance to take a look at. Trying to come up with a structure



that is interactive and allows for input from various interests – staying away from hierarchical situation. It's a great group of people, lots of interaction and idea exchange.

- Molly added that Jimbo put ideas in an illustrated form – flow chart that really helped visualize it. Will send out as the graphic is revised.
 - o Anthony Culpepper saw a preview – states that it really aligns with visions we've had on how to structure collaboration – happy to see it's not taking some far off tangent
- Danny – conversations are focused on how our structure fits/works with other collaboratives like RMRI – don't create too many new things, but ensure they all work together

Montezuma Land Conservancy Community Survey Outcomes – Rebecca Busic

- Focusing on community views of wildfire and drought
- Community forums, one on one interview, survey
- Survey results – 23 questions – entire service area, home community, outdoor activities they enjoy, demographic questions,
- Rebecca shared slideshow –
- Talked about goals of survey – representative of age and ethnicity – 540 surveys – (future goal: aim for an over representation of some groups in order to get better view) – 33% were youth, lots of tribal youth surveys, schools were helpful plus they are diverse
- Key findings regarding water, wildfire and drought
 - o Water quality and quantity most important – scale of 1-4 – 4 being most important
 - o Concerned about drought, changing climate, wildfire
 - o Youth concerned about drought, but less concerned with climate change – most of youth surveyed here were born here, most adults surveyed were not born here
 - o Farmers and ranchers concerned with lack of water/drought
 - Lots of comments about sustainability of hay/alfalfa and perceived waste of irrigation water
 - o What should MLC focus on in next 5 years? Water quality and quantity, people moving in
 - o Fozzie's Farm – what would you like to participate in? Drought and water management
 - o Questions?
 - Jimbo – could you discern when you read or listen to people, when discussing wildfire were they thinking homes/private land or public land? Her perception was that it was public lands, but questions didn't specifically address it
 - Anthony – did you ask about public perception of work we're doing in the forest? Mechanical/prescribed fires? We did not ask that.
 - They tried to get people of all persuasions to fill it out – the majority of people who filled it out are people who support MLC – one online respondent clearly did not –
 - James – based on the results of this survey, MLC is using those results to incorporate some of those values into their practices



- Results were connected to the demographics of the people who responded.
- Danny - How is MLC going to use this information?
 - Looking at future conservation easements, promoting Fozzie's farm, helping landowners by having more in-person events, engaging with NRCS, helping people be the best land stewards possible, increase understanding of MLC's work, what can landowners do to battle these concerns – implement them in strategic vision and programming
 - From an outreach perspective, it was good to have people out in the community to create a sense of awareness of MLC, being in the public is a lot of work, but a few events a year can be really beneficial
- Molly – did you get thoughts on the timber industry? And thoughts of management? Did not ask about timber. Usually point landowners to NRCS or other resources – easements usually prohibit harvesting without discussion or notice, or it's prohibited all together – landowner specific.
 - Recommends forest management to be allowed – can be with a plan – if land burns you lose all conservation values, so allowing it is beneficial
 - Some landowners did mention that they would like more interaction from MLC for stewardship stuff – not just easements, but also the stewardships for those easements
- Danny asked the group – how does this jive with the conversations we've been having and the work you've been doing? See any recommendations for us or to change an approach?
 - Rachel – any work that anyone is doing on drought and water conservation should get that word out – there's community support, but the conservation world is sort of small. Share it in a language they understand
 - Robert – could be partnership between WAP and MLC – WAP does a fair amount of outreach and education, but it also feeds into the larger picture.
 - James Reimann – commercial logging banned, but wildfire reduction is allowed in most conservation easements – great to work with partners to educate landowners
 - Bruce Short – worked on large landholding by Groundhog – idea was to go into conservancy but wanted to do some commercial salvage – around Sudden Aspen Decline and spruce beetle – had a forest ag plan in the past which require some commercial – equip from NRCS doesn't require long-term management – may be better than forest ag plan
 - Anthony – could integrate this perception work into RMRI work as well.
 - Rebecca – not a lot of comments about wildfire etc., so could be an opportunity for education



- Robert – is there a lower size for a conservation easement? Depends on where it is... difficult to get funding for easement – usually looking for 600-800 acres, but if property value is really high, it could be down to 300 acres

Helen Katich – works for Senator Hickenlooper in Durango – not updates on infrastructure package, but will keep the group updated – will be sending out press release about CDS requests – hosting info sessions at end of the month – last week of March – hopefully integrate more federal dollars into forestry work

Status Update: Upper Dolores Stream Protection Working Group – Duncan Rose

- Update on program, current conversations, and potential approach
- Context – Now – Next
- Context - Dolores River Anglers – Trout Unlimited – focus on upper Dolores- 145 bridge to watershed boundary – conserve, restore and protect trout habitat for future generations
- Trout populations and streams will be increasingly challenged through 2100 – low flow, stream drying, wildfire, flash flooding, increasing stream temperatures
- Pops on smaller streams will experience greatest impact and lowest reach – habitat will be reduced
- Which streams are most vulnerable/which ones are most likely to survive? Looked at stream flow and ranked from least vulnerable to most vulnerable – relative to each other, not relative to climate change – mapped it – overlaid with temp sensitivity, - these findings lead to the development of the Upper Dolores Stream Protection Working Group –
- Group has some USFS, CPW, DWCD, TU – goal to coordinate protection efforts – framework to help share analytics and strategies
- Framework – Streams go through decision framework, then link it to the toolkit (state, local, and federal tools) → output strategy to help support that stream
- Doloresstudy.org – website with all this data
- Main message: soil moisture/groundwater and how they relate to drought – cumulative relationship – it’s not just about annual soil moisture depletion – the impacts carry over to the next year if a year is dry. GRACE satellites use gravity to measure the state of water in the soil in the US –
- 7 of 39 streams have been dewatered from 2017
- Mitigation should be focused on streams that have high survivability – don’t put big investments into streams that are super challenged
- Stick diagram – looks at temperature, barriers, flow rates,
 - Focus on streams that have headwaters that reach to high elevations; streams supported by large watershed that are at high elevation and at least 7km long (genetic diversity), native trout
 - Use elevation and precipitation to create “trout special management areas” – streams that reach up high in elevation - look to manage as a group
- What are we doing – in stream flow decrees – moved to “outstanding waters” – 9 proposed stream reaches in the upper Dolores – final stage of 3-year process – hearing on June 13-14 – water sampling being done on these streams –
- Moving forward
 - BDAs and Process Based Low Tech strategies are being utilized, including large woody solutions