

DWRF Stakeholder's Meeting NOTES

Wednesday, March 6, 2024, 1:30-3:30pm Hybrid Meeting

In person: Dolores Water Conservancy District – 60 Cactus St., Cortez, CO 81321

Agenda -

Attendees: James Dietrich (Montezuma County), Duncan Rose (TU) , Bruce Short (Short Forestry) , David Casey (USFS) , Robert Meyer (Mancos Trails, WAP Ambassador) , Anthony Cullpepper (MSI), Tara Harris (MCD) , Steve Garchar (Dolores County), Danny Margoles (MCD), Nick Mustoe (USFS), Lanea Donahue (Podunk's Ranch, FS grazing permittee) , William Smith (MSI) , Carly Pierson (NAU Grad student), Chris Sturm (CWCB) , Logan Davis (Div. Fire Protection and Control) , Lydia DeHaven (FS Archaeologist, City of Cortez) , Kevin Lindner (SJNF) , Ken Curtis (DWCD), Ryan Cox (CSFS), Dani Gregory, Doug Muscanell (Muscanell Mill), Leigh Reeves (Town of Dolores), James Savage (BLM), Nina Williams (DWRF)

Time , Topic

1:30-1:40 , Introductions, check-ins, meeting agreements, welcome

1:40-1:45 , Approve/amend agenda

Danny Margoles: notes on Salter AAR when we get there

1:45-2:15 , Colorado Water Conservation Board Wildfire Ready Watershed Restoration Grant

Opportunity [Colorado Wildfire Ready Watershed Grants](#)

Intro to Concept – Nina - Grant program to plan for and implement pre and post fire activities in watersheds, funds, capacity, hazard/risk assessments, engineering, implementation for creating wildfire ready watersheds. DWRF approached by County, held meetings with Mancos CD, Montezuma County, DWCD. Grants for single watersheds only, cannot combine Mancos and Dolores watersheds. MCD is applying for Mancos - does the stakeholder group want to consider an application for the Dolores Watershed? Coordinating team discussed it and wanted to bring it to full group. Nina presented to Town of Dolores Planning and Zoning and they are interested. End goal is to define projects in the watershed that could be completed pre-fire to minimize post fire impacts. Implementation money is available as well.

Presentation and Q & A with Chris Sturm, CWCB : Deadlines/Timelines: Short-term American Rescue Act Funding available now, needs to be contracted before the end of the year, needs an application by October, notice to apply by July 1. Once contracted, we have until the end of calendar year 2026 to spend grant dollars. CWCB has dedicated state funding source for implementation. Current funding is for planning and implementation. Only funds implementation if there is a plan available. Funds work on all lands, federal agencies cannot apply, but stakeholders can apply for work on federal lands \$6 million available currently. Chris also believes there will be more legislature around this program. Take advantage of the program now for planning. Used Forest Atlas initially to gather water data. Funding is applicable to flooding (i.e. flooding in Dolores.) Program is advocating for Fluvial Hazard

Zone mapping that will show you where your stream is likely to migrate during large flood events. How much analysis can be done remotely and how much needs to be on the ground with landowner commitment? Most can be done remotely. A lot of the modeling is desktop modeling. As we get to identification of mitigation projects, that requires more on-the-ground. If you have a CWPP, you will have a lot of Value at Risk data already in place. Look at your existing documents and determine what you are missing - if you don't have time for this build it into your scope of work and have the technical team do it

Discussion/Agreement on whether to pursue David Casey- USFS budgets are very limited this year. Bipartisan \$\$ not coming through the way it used to. Programs like this could be beneficial to replace such funding. Robert - Capacity of this group to pull together the proposal with all the data from all groups This could be an opportunity to tie our planning together better than it has been – Would County be the main applicant? DWRP can apply and it would build capacity. Funds 75% of cost, remaining can be cash and inkind match. Nina suggested asking LOR Foundation. Ken said DWCD could provide some match. James suggested coming to County for a request at the end. Dolores, Rico, Cortez, Montezuma Water, UMU should be approached. HIGHLIGHT: application is straightforward, it's almost filled out for you. You just need to tweak certain components. Scale and partners, who will take it on are the important components. The county will have to figure out how to make the cash matches work, but they have capacity/grant writer. Make a pitch to the commissioners to take this on. It would be great to get FHZ mapping done for Dolores. Leigh will bring this up to Town of Dolores Board on Monday. Llydia de Haven on call is on Cortez City Council, can interface. Nina's capacity to take steps forward: There is some bandwidth to do legwork and there is funding to hire an assistant for the collaborative. Agreed to pursue. Nina to present to Town of Rico in March to gauge their interest.

2:15-2:40 , DWRP CFLRP Priority Landscapes -

Nina reviewed priority fact sheets that are headed to the FS via the CFLRP Committees. Completed first round of project ID, Nina incorporated stakeholder input. Stakeholder input on Rico, Groundhog and Dolores Pumps Priority Areas. Do we want to spend time on this now or pull together a different process for these areas? Nina will be talking to Rico in a couple of weeks to get input from other stakeholders on these areas - build relationships in Rico. Incorporate Groundhog community members in discussions - most of this area is private USFS work in these areas is limited except for stream stuff. We are not ready to talk about Groundhog and Rico, so table this discussion for another time. Can we integrate these values into the CWCB process? Dove Creek Pumps: Sediment control at the intakes primary concern Groundhog: Primary concern is WUI Rico: protecting water drainage above the town. James Savage:Dove Creek Elk Production area on BLM, has had a lot of mitigation to protect sage grouse habitat. Nina asked do you feel like we have done justice for Tribal Representation? Was there inclusive engagement in developing the Desired Future Conditions and CFLRP Priority areas? Tribal reps were involved, but engagement was light. More engagement is always needed, make sure they see benefit in participating. Go to them

2:40-3:00 , Name Change

Stakeholder survey results here, make sure to click on Responses Tab [Stakholder Name Survey Results](#)

Review and Discuss - s Coordinating Team reviewed survey, no clear favorite, recommended stakeholders consider ***Dolores Watershed Collaborative*** as name. It is simple, includes forests, true to our Vision of “*A resilient and adaptive upper Dolores River watershed* ”. Folks generally like DWC. Dolores Forest Collaborative and Dolores Area Collaborative also mentioned. Mancos stakeholders present OK with name as long as we honor our work and stakeholders there. It is the year to update strategic plan, reassess geography of the collaborative. All present in agreement to move forward with DWC. Dani G suggested polling absent stakeholders. Nina will send out a poll to all collab members about DWC, see if anyone can't live with it

3:00-3:15 , Salter EA After Action Review -

Bruce Short Finalize and approve AAR Table discussion for next month Bruce will send the review to Nina

3:15-3:25 , DWRP and Partner Updates

Collaborate with Land Management Agencies

USFS (David) working on Lone Pine Monitoring

Nick Mustoe, working on FY25 projects

BLM (James) prescribed burns in May on the Dolores Rim, mechanical treatments there in summer

Montelores Coalition –several DWRP stakeholders attended kick off of new CPW/GOCO Coalition looking at recreation impacts and other conservation issues. Concern about overlap and duplication of efforts, to be addressed at CFLRP Coordinating Committee this month. One proposal is to have PCC put on some short term classes to train people for careers in Rec . They want this group to be long term. Can we prevent overlap with this group? How are we going to use the overlap? A sister coalition is starting in La Plata Overlap in areas of concern, maybe not for the same reasons, overlap in CFLRP goals

Community Education & Outreach

MCD Spring Wildfire Mitigation Event - Check in on tentative date of April 27, the day after Arbor Day

Resilient Forests and Communities

MCD and Pinyon Juniper - Tara requesting input on responding to landowner requests for management advice in PJ, lots of input given, including current BLM treatment research on the rim, Future field tours on BLM research plots James Savage Contact [-jsavage@blm.gov](mailto:jsavage@blm.gov)

Technical Monitoring Committee Mtg Set for March 13 10AM-12PM at DLPO office and hybrid

Forest Products Industry

FS met with Montrose Forest Products – could be issues with economic viability of ponderosa contracts

Local fermented biochar effort at Ironwood plant could be promising

3:25-3:30 , Next steps and adjourn

PARKING LOT (Future agenda items) - AAR