



DWC Stakeholder Meeting Wednesday, Nov 6, 2024, 1:30-3:30 PM NOTES

In person: Dolores Water Conservancy District – [60 Cactus St., Cortez, CO 81321](#) **Virtual:** Zoom info at the end of agenda

Attendees

Present: Nina Williams, DWC, Amorina Lee-Martinez DWC, Gerrish Willis Town of Rico, Tara Harris Mancos Conservation District, Brooke Mancos Conservation District, Rowan Henke MCD, John Rader San Juan Citizens Alliance, Anthony Culpepper Mountain Studies Institute, Logan Davis Div Fire Prevention and Control, Julia Ledford MSI, Nick Mustoe SJNF, James Deitrich Montezuma County, Kyle Personett SJNF, David Casey SJNF, Doug Muscanell forest products industry, Marly Saunders National Forest Foundation, Laurel Smerch Pueblo Community College NR Dept, Bruce Short, Short Forestry, Duncan Rose Dolores River Anglers/TU, Robert Meyer Chicken Ck Coalition, Emily Lockard CSU, Steve Garcher Dolores County, Megan Maxwell CO Timber Ind Assoc, Shauna Jensen, SJNF, Celeste Moore Wildfire Adapted Partnership, Danny Margoles MCD

1:30-1:40 Introductions

1:40-1:55 Chicken Creek Fencing/Land-ownership dispute - Nick

- *moving forward on resolving long-term, passed on to DOJ. Have received broad support across and beyond agency. engaging as much as can with community. responding to all phone calls and emails.*
- *wants relationship with community and that fence to never come back up*
- *Nick's goals as District Ranger: ecologically hold onto pieces, protect communities, keep support for public lands*
- *Now is a good time to express support for public lands. We don't want copy cats of this incident*
- *Robert Meyer - Inspired by the community of diverse public land users coming together to keep public lands in public hands - Chicken Creek Coalition newly formed to work on this issue. Have engaged in public awareness campaign - sent over 60 letters to local and fed representatives, informational page on Mancos Trails Group website <https://www.mancostrails.org/illegal-land-grab-at-chicken-creek.html>*
- *Robert requested coordinating committee sign a letter supporting use of public lands and that private lands claims are contrary to mission of DWC*
- *Steve Seconds that motion. Concern that Dolores County is next*
- *James - this seems outside of our realm because forestry is our focus. Forest cutting off road access may have precipitated this. I want to stay on our mission, this seems off our mission. Forest Service has this under control.*
- *Nick - what is scope of collaborative?*
- *Community is part of our scope - and community has spoken that we want to protect public lands*
- *Danny - I'm hearing a direct request for support from CCC, and we are built on supporting community. DWC has focused a lot on chicken creek landscape in past that*

we have expressed commitment towards.

- *Following discussion, consensus to request Coordinating Team write a letter*

1:55-2:05 Rx Fire Outreach/Celebration event - Nick

- *Introduce idea and gauge interest in a *springtime community event, food, education, engage youth. Expand public perception of RX fire beyond smoke. Move to different locations in area? Education and celebration of Rx Fire. MSI can support through fire learning network, MCD, WAP support. Maybe combine with it with PJ Symposium**
- *DWC can take lead on organizing a planning group*

2:05-2:15 MixedCon Rx Fire NEPA Pre-Scoping

- *Burro Fire Field Trip De-brief - Notes [HERE](#)*
- *[Shared Research Folder](#)*
- *From team: Good learning trip, good notes*

2:30-2:40 Wildfire Ready Action Plan (WRAP) Update

- *Grant awarded and in contracting stage*
- *Contractor selection - Team of Olsson, Wright Water, Round River, SWCA*
- *Overview of Project Area, Project Tasks and Timeline*
- *Targeted end-date? 15 months once contracted, Marchish 2026*
- *Website with information: <https://www.wildfirereadywatersheds.com/actionplan>*
- *Next steps for collaborative will include agreeing on vision, goals and objectives for WRAP and to review our highly valued resources and assets for additions/updates*

2:45-3:10 Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP) WRAP Invitation

- *DWC has been invited to apply for a 3-year \$1M COSWAP grant for forest projects in our WRAP footprint that will benefit water and water resources.*
- *70% implementation, 20% planning and personnel, 10% indirect. 25% match (either fully in-kind or mixture of cash and in-kind). Application Due Dec 6*
- *Discussion of potential projects*
- *How do we ID projects and at risk areas by 12/6/24?*
- *We can generally describe projects that will come out of WRAP, and ask for \$ for other forestry projects that are already NEPA cleared, might come to fruition with a categorical exclusion, or on private lands.*
- *3 years with option for 1 yr extension. Implementation should at least be well underway in that timeline*
- *Can't use on water or infrastructure projects. All veg: RX fire, mechanical, monitoring ? (we will ask about that option)*
- *Landscape, forest, water connection expected. In Dolores watershed.*
- *Would this tie into prepping landscape for RX fire with dozer lines?*
- *We have flexibility to be experimental*
- *\$700k could accomplish ~ 500 acres (\$1000/acre) Helicopter logging \$15K/ac*
- *Contractor capacity? Absolutely have contractors to implement*
- *Silver Creek - want careful planning for something that could happen later*
- *Where is most challenging to fund work to address, we have flexibility on using this \$ to get at places that are hardest to manage*
- *Snowtopography - want more informed implementation that enhances soil moisture*

- *Some opportunity to apply some snowtopography lessons on the ground*
 - *How do gap size, BA and aspects influence soil moisture, runoff?*
- *NEPA ready projects*
- *WRAP identified projects*
- *ASCC sites - has snowtopography - doing implementation to test different methods?*
- *Aspen Tx? District aspen EA*
- *\$ for contracting out Rx Fire - additional burn boss, Underwood*
- *Private land in West Fork, Lost Canyon, Dolores mainstem*
- *Boggy - thinning Tx*
- **House creek** *looks like a good priority area for snowtopography*
 - *already have snowtopography site*
 - *Has a SJNF Watershed Assessment, priority watershed*
 - *Water quality in McPhee is a priority*
 - *Recreational use*
 - *Bug trapping*
 - *Potential treatment acres - NF can produce a map*
- *Does not include Beaver Creek drainage*
- *Questions developed for DNR*

3:10-3:30 Updates and viewing of FIREFOREST - see [trailer here](#),

- *Haycamp Smoothing Iron Old Growth Recruitment Area NOV 7 [Itinerary here](#)*
- *PJ Symposium - Amorina - Mesa Verde interested in hosting with field sites for field trips, \$30 per vehicle, but can figure out funding to get people into park*
- *Dust On Snow Symposium - Amorina, Emily gave update. Could be potential for collaborative involvement*
- *PCC - chainsaw training certification Dec 2-6, reach out to PCC go zone for details - 16 student capacity*
- *SJCA is hosting a community update on the Village at Wolf Creek at Wild Edge Brewing 7pm Friday 11/8*
- *BioChar - Wade reached out to come to our next meeting. Haven't heard from him. Wade may no longer be with BioChar. Need to reach out to find out more.*

DWC coordinating committee will write letter of support for Chicken Creek Coalition

DWC will take lead on organizing "Rx Fire Festival" spring 2025

Nick to look into parameters for categorical exclusions for potential COSWAP projects

Nina to follow up w DNR on COSWAP questions

PARKING LOT (Future agenda items)

December meeting - presentation from R9 on BOD grant/designation