



## DWC Stakeholder Meeting Wednesday, Dec 4, 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

### Agenda - ZOOM link below

Time   Topic

Present: Nina, Amorina, Nick Mustoe, Duncan Rose - TU, James Dietrich - Montezuma County, Robert Meyer - Chicken Creek Coalition, David Sitton - Aspen Wallwood, Jimbo Buickerood, Steve Garcher - Dolores County, Caleb Schutes (sp?) - Dolores Ranger District, Doug Muscanell (sp?) - forest products retiree, Vince Mowery - FS, Kyle personnett - forester DPLO, Rowan Henke - MCD, Laura Lewis Marchino - ED Region 9, Cameryn Cass - Cortez Journal, Anthony Culpepper - MSI, John Rader - SJCA, Carly Pierson, Logan Davis - regional battalion chief DFPC, Laurel Smerch - PCC, Chauncey McCarthy - town of Rico, Tyler Corbin - BLM, Megan Maxwell - ED Colorado Timber Association, Johnathan (sp?) Ott - BLM, Marley Saunders (sp?), Emily Lockard

### 1:30-1:40     **Introductions**

### 1:40-2:10     **Southwest Colorado Business Development Zone Study**

- Guest presenter Laura Lewis Marchino with Region 9 Economic Development District
- Study around pulpwood, forest residues and sawmill residues, and looking at business opportunities across our region
- *Region 9 is a “generalist” responding to public/gov input - Dolores, San Juan, Montezuma, La Plata, Archuleta counties - same five counties as CDOT region*
  - *5 counties, 10 towns, 2 tribes, 9 private sector all repped on board*
  - *non-profit public/private partnership*
- *If something crosses county lines - Region 9 gets involved, make sure there isn't duplication, best utilize resources. Hence involved in regional transportation, broadband, housing*
- *work closely with state to filter programs down to local governments*
- *Business Zone study*
  - *increased activity around timber, fire mitigation/removal*
  - *business growth in timber, fire mitigation*
  - *how can we support market for woody biomass?*
  - *Can we keep woody biomass local?*
  - *biochar?*
- *What is the supply, where are there opportunities for woody products, what are timelines for this job sector?*
- *Potential for woody biomass?*
- **Megan Maxwell - can help facilitate a conversation with MFP**
- *Not showing much of a market of supply*
- *transportation - lots of loss of business/Ironwood*

- *public land contracting - inhibited by road system and staffing turnover*
- *scattered site businesses - not a centered space for wood processing*
- *Jimbo - scattered sites problematic?*
- *laura - not necessarily a negative, just something that keeps coming up that we have to ship materials to customers all over the place*
- *Megan Maxwell - spoke with consultant and can fill in some gaps.*
- *Laura - thank you*
- *Nina - lack of market of supply? what does that mean?*
- *Laura - lack of forest supply to sustain a market here. Idk if that means certain diameter or certain types. Overall that is what we have received feedback. Not accessible supply (lack of road). Five years or ten years out? Or never accessible? Bringing in supply from outside of area makes it hard to grow business.*
- *Nina - would study get at nuances of that supply? diameters, type of timber?*
- *Laura - that was my hope. We want this to result in info to inform our community. Will also result in a letter grade rating for the community.*
- *Megan has Montrose contact. Something to consider when forecasting forest products. Consider FS 5 year plan (beyond unprecedented budget issues).*
- *Kyle - talk to foresters, can connect you.*
- *Nina - we can certainly share contacts.*
- *Robert - Montrose stopped accepting pondo - gut punch bc biggest supply with best rd system.*
- *Kyle - that is changing*
- *Nina - complicated to integrate pondo with other products*
- *Kyle - it's a transportation issue. Montrose is back on board to process our forest products.*
- *Nina - David, thoughts or ideas for DWC?*
- *David - conversation around species and challenges, transportation costs/distance is always big piece. Also availability and road system. FS, and local gov are as big a challenge as FS. Communication issue between counties and FS and towns. Lack of resources for hauling - availability of trucks and drivers. A lot of resources to bring out pine from forest. But I don't have any green pine markets. I get very little benefit from pine. This product thing is both transportation and having local mills that can process. If mills are able to invest money it takes to process local timber, that would make a difference. Under current conditions, timber economy "not doable" without large financial investment. pondo not best timber to make lumber out of*
- *Laura - is there some product or business willing to expand here that could support supply chain and create connectivity in our markets?*
- *David - we often take timber we can't really utilize. We add equipment, which is ok. But we need something beyond biomass. Mills have to retool for small diameter in transportation and processing.*
- *Jimbo - I want to be sure that we're not only looking at right now. Transportation costs doubled over last couple years. Have observed wood products for 15 years. #1 driver is transportation. Montrose is back in game. I bet they may step out again if prices go up again because not sustainable. Dave's business is trying to use every piece of everything. We need to consider integrating all aspects but not just a snapshot right now. over time there is a lot of variability, booms and busts.*
- *Biochar - neighbors that didn't want industrial zoning for biochar. Doesn't seem like*

*anything is happening with that.*

- *Laura - some advocacy may help in that arena.*
- *Jimbo - It needs to work for everyone.*
- *Megan Maxwell - another factor influencing the cost of upgrading equipment for certain species if cost of training folks on new equipment*

## **2:10-2:20 Socio-environmental Trail and Camping Use Study - Brief overview**

- *Guest Laura Lewis Marchino with Region 9 Economic Development District*
- *This study is part of the Central San Juans High Alpine Resiliency and Recovery Roadmap Plan put on by Region 9 and Region 10.*
- *Link to the Roadmap Plan: <https://region9edd.org/roadmap>.*
- *Rural Roadmaps Funding - developed resiliency plan - roadmap*
- *Goals - we need to look at our high alpine areas - front range playground during covid*
- *public lands agencies having cutbacks and hard to manage these areas - and we are known for our public lands*
- *High alpine rec study - done my MSI - Just high alpine areas of region 9 and region 10*
- *rec infrastructure, trail use, strava data*
- *biodiversity priority data*
- *10 priority areas - lizard head pass, handies, sunshine and recloud peaks, cascade creek, blue lakes and mount sneffels, coalbank and molas pass, cunningham gulch, ophir pass, south mineral, upper hermosa*
- *stakeholders note there are places missing from the priority area list*
- *Next steps:*
  - *promote studies*
  - *follow-up federal partners and governments*
  - *look at funding priorities for rec study improvements*
    - *Next: most economical recommendations for site improvements*
- *Nina - what is process integrating these findings with land managers?*
- *Laura - priorities are from Region 9 perspective*
- *Nina - were public land partners involved?*
- *Laura- they were invited to table*
- *Nina - seems like rec coalitions will be collabs most directly involved*
- *Laura - did present to Montelores coalition*
- *Laura - next steps fall on local govts like county commissioners - budgets to chip away at these needs - defining highest and best use for these areas*
- *Laura - happy that multiple layers of rec, mgmt, veg, wildlife, watershed all integrated*
- *Nina - this would be a good focus for montelores coalition*

## **2:20-3:00 Wildfire Ready Action Plan (WRAP) Process**

- *Come to agreement on the process for developing our WRAP vision, goals, objectives and HVRAs*
- *Use January 2025 meeting to focus on this?*
- *Have contracted with CWCB for WRAP - working with Olsson, Wright Water Engineers, Round River Design, SWCCA*
- *Timeline: getting rolling with consultants and their scope of work.*
- *Will start on WRAP 1/1/25*
- *Data collection, post fire hazard analysis, susceptibility analysis, pre fire mitigation activities*

- *Periodic full stakeholder meetings at data collection milestones*
- *Jimbo - Olsson developed this timeline based on previous experience?*
- *Duncan - this firm has worked closely with Chris Sturm and his team for WRAPs and Hydrological modeling protocols*
- *Nina - hope to be wrapped up in about 14 months*
- *Let's focus on this first task - visions, goals, objectives, communication, agreements*
- *We should make sure this project is aligning with DWC*
- *2019 HVRAs work - still relevant? needs updates? Still a draft*
- *Start working on this in Jan 2025? Have til end of Feb to work on this piece*
- *Brad Petruszka may be able to help facilitate this*
- *Jimbo - maybe we can do something more bite size, user friendly?*
- *Nina - looking for process input*
- ***Jimbo - please send HVRAs doc for us to review and offer feedback***
- *Potential commercial timber - break out into veg type*
- *Robert - Cultural resources - ranked low bc difficult to protect those areas.*
- *Nina - don't want to share data on cultural resources sites to the public - sensitive data*
- *Nina - we could break into expertise groups on this*
- *Anthony - Don't fixate on number value, make sure sub topics under HVRAs are comprehensive and include values we want. how will weighting be used in this model? Could be different than model used by Brad for HVRA.*
- *Nina - we as collab have leeway to say what is important*
- *Jimbo - some detail on species (map?) would be good to have in HVRAs list*
- *Duncan - could reconcile CFLRP data with this*
- *Nick - could be based on suitable base/non suitable base and grey area between*
- *Kyle - different mgmt levels for suitable and non suitable base*
- *Nina - this is a CWCB project, so there is emphasis on fire effects on water resources but I am pushing for all HVRAs in this analysis*
- *Jimbo - they're thinking on getting ahead of fire impacts?*
- *Nina - yes and hydrologic and hydraulic impacts that impact our HVRAs*

### **3:00-3:10 Colorado Strategic Wildfire Action Program (COSWAP) WRAP application update**

- *House Creek site*
- *Applied Snowtopography component*
- *Did get invitation to apply. Have had several meetings - input says focus on House Creek site*
- *Working with David Casey and Joel Biederman on how to fit snowtopography*
- *This grant is focused on forest treatments that have some benefit to water resources*
- *our preferred alternative is to get funding to model data at our snowtopography sites to come up with forest treatment scenarios to hold snow and soil moisture and max fuels moisture*
- *DNR not enough \$ to support research and modeling. Looking for supplemental funding*
- *Plan to put implementation \$ into house creek projects*
- *Will let us use House Creek sale as match*
- *Nick - talked about that area as business as usual for comparison with experimental treatments*
- *Excitement from SJNF staff to have these experiments and some \$ to help implement*
- *Anybody know where we can find \$200k to supplement this research?*

- *Jimbo - sounds like an opp for a field trip*

### **3:10-3:30 Updates**

- Storymap preview - Amorina
- O&E committee update - Amorina
  - Emily and Abe Proffitt have expressed interest in participating
  - Stakeholder feedback on whether Abe Proffitt is a good partner for O&E committee. He is the partnership coordinator for the SJNF and also Amorina's husband - Want to run this by the stakeholders to address potential concerns about conflict of interest.
  - **Financial issues that can come up - look into that and what those are.**
  - Any other interest in participating?
- Robert - update on new Chicken Creek Coalition
  - had meeting with hick and bennett reps and UMUT and new county DA elect, plus standard stakeholder reps and sheriff and FS
  - Overwhelming sentiment was TY to coalition for getting fence down and moving forward with getting elected officials a view of local concerns
  - BEnnett - what we're seeing out of mancos community is inspirational
    - 100% landing in support of public lands
  - Could take all help we can get in public relations and communications - reach out to Robert with contacts
  - Case was filed Tuesday before thanksgiving - looming date of 12/15 when claim will be resolved forever
  - **holding public lands celebration at chk creek on 12/15 at 1pm**
    - **DWC have a table at this event? Amo and Duncan represent?**
  - tree ornament public lands testimonials
  - letter writing campaign at mancos River film fest - got 60 letters
  - As late as wed before case was filed gulliford did talk on history of public lands - 40 letters
  - Mailed over 100 letters to gov reps
  - Mancos art market table - TY letter to elected reps - 200 signatures
  - 52 day turnaround from first fence report to case filing
  - If you know people that can help out next 6 months -1 year, open to everybody and totally committed

**PARKING LOT** (Future agenda items)