

WCRC Minutes

May 7, 2003

Intro of members: JB Alexander, Creede; Leigh Ann Vradenburg, Watershed Coordinator; Zeke Ward, Chairman WCRC; Jim Matush, Creede; Don Gant, Creede/Trout Unlimited; Mark Walker, CDPHE; Erik Sandvik, Creede; Kim Eggert, Creede; Steve Russell, USDA/NRCS; Kathleen Reilly, CDPHE; Marvin Reynolds, CSU Coop. Ext.; Jim Mietz, SLV RC&D.

Approval of minutes: Motion to approve the April minutes was made by JB Alexander; second made by Kim Eggert. Motion carried.

Additions/corrections to the agenda: SAP approval was added as Old Business D. A discussion of Jim Erdman's proposed leaf study was added to Old Business A. USACE report. A summary of the TAC meeting was added to the Coordinator's Report.

In-Kind: Forms were provided in hard copy for volunteers to track time and other expenses. Leigh Ann encouraged monthly submission of these forms so that records could be kept current.

Coordinator's Report:

Leigh Ann informed the committee that the WCRC, as a project of the SLV RC&D was awarded a computer from IBM Corporation. This equipment grant was made possible through Don Gant. Leigh Ann said that a special thanks to Don and to IBM would be posted on the WCRC website soon.

Leigh Ann gave a presentation and tour to Catherine Phipp's charter school class from Lakewood. Ms. Phipp's family owns La Garita Ranch, and she spoke with Leigh Ann about the potential for her giving a presentation to La Garita guests this summer.

Leigh Ann read a letter from Joe Burkett regarding his departure from Creede and return to Texas. The committee appreciates all of the help that Joe provided as a liaison between the WCRC and Wason Ranch.

At the end of April, Leigh Ann posted in-kind donations totaling \$82,248.35 for the 319 grant and \$17,881.75 for the 104(b)(3) grant. Pending approval, this posting will put the WCRC over the requirements for the respective grants. Leigh Ann thanked everyone for all of the work that they had done and for helping to keep track of it all. She acknowledged the tremendous amount of time and materials that Ken Wyley, Jerry Wintz, and others put into building the lo-key.

Leigh Ann suggested that the committee do something in the way of volunteer appreciation. Her suggestions were shirts or some sort of event. Zeke suggested that everyone could come up to Red Mountain Ranch in July for fishing and a cookout. This could coincide with the meeting so that hopefully everyone could attend. Zeke asked Leigh Ann to send out an email for thoughts on this, and to put it on the agenda for the June meeting. Steve Russell noted that he had received approximately 15 mugs for the committee in recognition of their work as Earth Team volunteers. He would get these to Leigh Ann to distribute.

Kathleen said the NonPoint Source council would be in the valley June 16th and 17th and she would like them to tour Creede. She will keep everyone updated with their plans.

Zeke updated the committee regarding the underground work. On Tuesday May 6, Dan Bench with the EPA and Joel Tankersly with MSHA went underground in the Amethyst 5 with Jim Herron, Jeff Graves, Leigh Ann Vradenburg, Al Amundson, Ken Wyley, Jerry Wintz, and Kirstin __. The purpose of this visit was to investigate the alleged presence of a transformer in the mine. It was believed that this transformer was potentially leaking PCB's. Dan confirmed that there was no transformer in the cited area. There was no substantial evidence of a PCB spill, and Dan took several pictures and soil samples. The air in the Amethyst was oxygen poor in areas, indicating the need for more suitable ventilation if the committee plans to conduct further work in there.

CDMG has been working during this week to remove powder from the Commodore Mine for transport and disposal at an active mine site. Dan Bench conducted further investigations of the Commodore Mine and did not find any transformers. Again pictures and soil samples were collected.

As a summary of the TAC meeting, Leigh Ann discussed the reclamation plans for the summer. Jeff Graves and Jim Herron plan to have the bid packages ready by the June meeting. Leigh Ann asked Jim Mietz if the RC&D had any adopted rules for the bidding process. Jim Mietz said that they required that it be an open and advertised process. The committee discussed that it should be posted on the website and in the local papers. The bid packages will be reviewed at the June meeting.

Old business:

USACE Report/Erdman: Leigh Ann informed the committee that she had received a draft of the USACE report regarding the five new wells and the pile core. The USACE requested that the Technical Advisory Committee review the report before they release a final copy. The report will be reviewed by Mark Walker, Kim Eggert, and probably Bob Kirkham, who was recommended in his absence.

Leigh Ann said that the TAC had discussed the vegetation study that Jim Erdman proposed to evaluate the plume in the floodplain. The TAC thought that this was a worthwhile venture given the small cost of the feasibility study. They suggested that we propose an additional study area

near the Rio Grande seep below the La Garita Bridge (discovered in August 2002). Zeke said that he was skeptical that the method could determine groundwater influences that could be isolated from leaching from contaminated surface sediments. The committee generally agreed that there were some questions, but given the cost and the outstanding ambiguity of the plume, such investigations were worthwhile. Mark said that the TAC recommended that we appropriate \$200 for the two study areas (below the Emperious Tailings and on the Rio Grande). Zeke asked if there was funding for this. Leigh Ann suggested that an appropriate task to draw from was 2.4 Surface Soil Testing, and that there was enough money to cover the committee's cost for this investigation. Motion to approve the TAC's recommendation to proceed with the preliminary investigations at two sites with a cost not to exceed \$500 made by JB Alexander. Second made by Kim Eggert. There was some discussion regarding the choice of plants used and the cost for analyses. Jim Mietz explained that Erdman was a knowledgeable scientist that was interested in pursuing this for the research. Motion carried. Kathleen commented that portions of this work could be counted as match.

Kirkham's report: Leigh Ann previously emailed Bob Kirkham's summary report of the deep wells along with the May agenda. Copies were also provided at the meeting. Leigh Ann suggested that since Bob was not at the meeting and not everyone had had the opportunity to read the report, discussions should be postponed until the June meeting.

Water sampling: Water sampling will be on Thursday May 8. Leigh Ann asked that everyone participating be at City Hall at 8:00am. This would allow everyone to go over the protocol and get everything organized.

SAP approval: Motion to approve the revised Sampling and Analysis Plan as recommended by the TAC made by Mark Walker. Second made by Kathleen Reilly. Motion carried.

New business

Coordinator salary: Zeke prefaced the discussion of coordinator salary with an update on the Mineral County Fairgrounds Association (MCFA). The MCFA is in the process of acquiring approximately 46 acres near Airport Corner. In the near future, they will request that the WCRC participate in any necessary characterization and clean-up of the property. Currently, the MCFA has approximately \$2,000 available for grant writing to fund these activities. If possible they would like to work with the WCRC and compensate it for time for Leigh Ann to write grants. Kathleen suggested that GOCO would be an excellent funding source for this type of project. Zeke said that the MCFA has the same objectives as the WCRC of cleaning up contamination and reclaiming the land. Steve suggested that the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation could be a funding source. Jim Mietz asked if the WCRC's mission of improving water quality was different from the MCFA's. Zeke said that the property was part of the watershed and floodplain, and cleanup was in line with the objectives of the committee. He estimated that grant writing would take approximately 5% of Leigh Ann's time. Leigh Ann thought that grant writing for the MCFA would provide beneficial exposure to GOCO and Brownfields for the WCRC.

Leigh Ann has been with the committee for over one year, and she will be moving into her new contract in July. She prepared a statement to the committee discussing her work and accomplishments during the last year and requested a raise of \$1500 to \$2000. She supported

this with documentation of funding sources. The committee discussed the raise and other appropriate means of compensation. Steve Russell suggested that if funding were available, then an appropriate raise would be \$4000. Motion to raise Leigh Ann's salary to \$32,000 per year starting with the new contract (July 1) made by Steve Russell. Second made by Kim Eggert. Motion carried. Leigh Ann thanked the committee.

Tree planting: Steve and Marvin said that the re-veg committee has 20 cottonwood poles, 30 potted bristlecone pines, and 150 assorted shrubs. Marvin can get polymer slurry for the plantings. The idea of the re-veg committee was to focus plantings in the area of the lagoons, the walking trail, and the western stretch of the highway along the floodplain. Tree planting will occur on Friday, May 23, and everyone will meet at the sewage lagoons at 9:00am. Leigh Ann will post and email this date. She will also arrange permission and contact the school about participation. JB suggested that we look at the previous plantings and document/map survival. This survey will be held on Tuesday, May 20th, starting at 9:00 at the fence on the Hatchery Road. Mark told Steve and Marvin the Kim had told the TAC about compost that she has. They will contact her in the future to look at it.

Reclamation bids: This was discussed under Coordinator's report.

Philanthropy days and Days of '92: Leigh Ann informed that committee about Philanthropy Days, a function geared toward exposing non-profit groups to potential funding sources. Kathleen said that she had participated in that in the past, and that it was a worthwhile event. Leigh Ann said that she would be attending a preliminary training in May and that event was in June. Mark suggested that she report back to the committee about the training, and at the June meeting they could develop a strategy for the main event. Leigh Ann said that there was a \$75 fee to participate in the trainings and events. Motion to approve the \$75 Philanthropy Days fee made by JB Alexander. Second made by Kim Eggert. Motion carried.

Leigh Ann said that she had thought that a good opportunity for outreach would be the Days of '92 celebration in Creede around the 4th of July. She suggested that we could have a booth with brochures about our efforts. Kathleen suggested that the MCFA and WCRC might have a booth together. Zeke suggested that we could give away drinks of water. Mark suggested that the committee have a banner made. Marvin said that he had just had one made in Alamosa, and it was \$56 for a 2'x5' banner. Jim Mietz said that there was also a shop in Del Norte. Marvin said that they had a display board that they could lend to us. Motion to appropriate up to \$300 for the production of brochures and a banner made by Marvin Reynolds. Second made by Erik Sandvik. Motion carried.

303(d) meetings: Leigh Ann said that she had received notification that meetings were going to be held regarding the methodology and 303(d) listings. She asked the committee if they thought that we needed to be involved in this process. Kathleen suggested that we keep informed to make sure that nothing was going to change that could affect us without our knowing. Leigh Ann said that the methodology would be available July 1, and she would send it out to the committee then. We could have discussions at the July meeting if necessary.

Other:

Zeke said that he had received notification from Les Dobson (USFS) that the Office of General Council had determined that reclamation at the Outlet would no have to go through CERCLA. Les is currently putting together information from the Amethyst for their review.

Ken Wyley's lo-key passed MSHA inspection and was very successful in its underground uses so far.

The next meeting will be June 4, 2003.

Meeting Adjourned 4:22 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Leigh Ann Vradenburg