

WCRC Minutes

March 2, 2005

Intro of members: Leigh Ann Vradenburg, WCRC Director; Zeke Ward, WCRC Chairman; Jeff Graves, CDMG; Chuck Barnes, Creede; Jim Erdman, USGS Emeritus; Jim Mietz, SLV RC&D; Les Dobson, USFS; Mark Walker, CDPHE; Kathleen Reilly, CDPHE; Mike Wireman, USEPA; Matt Eyer, Versar; Steve Yochum, NRCS; Marvin Reynolds, CSU Cooperative Extension; JB Alexander, Creede; Jim Herron, CDMG

Approval of minutes: No revisions to the minutes were proposed. Motion to approve the February minutes made by JB Alexander; second made by Mike Wireman. Motion carried.

Additions/corrections to the agenda: A discussion of correspondence and the Colorado Watershed Protection Fund were added after the Director's Report. A discussion of creek stabilization at the Commodore was added as Old Business D. An update on the willow leaf report was added. A discussion of May water sampling on Willow Creek and with Lake City was added as New Business C, but was moved up before Jim Herron left. Steve Yochum's discussions on the NRCS workplan and well sampling were moved up.

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 said that she had had some problems with her email filters, and some emails were inadvertently deleted and erased before she realized that they had come in. She apologized for any inconvenience and said that if anyone had emailed her, but had not received a response, they should try again. She said that she had taken the filters off, so there shouldn't be a problem from now on.

Leigh Ann said that she had received all of the necessary materials for digitizing the historic reports and she had already completed the Holy Moses and posted it on the website. She said that she hoped to get the others up within the next couple of months.

Leigh Ann said that she had volunteered to be on the Conference Planning Committee for the Colorado Watershed Assembly. She has attended the conference for the last three years, and she thought that it would be good for the WCRC to get more involved. She said that she was going to push a discussion on Brownfields, because she thought that was something that many watershed groups could benefit from. Mark agreed, and said that he would be able to speak. Kathleen said that Leigh Ann should also participate in the stewardship committee meetings for CWA.

Leigh Ann said that she was going to be a judge at the San Luis Valley Regional Science Fair in

March. She said that she had an interest in getting involved, and she thought that it would be a good opportunity for her to network with some of the other scientific professionals in the community.

Leigh Ann and Clyde Dooley, City Manager, will be giving a presentation to DOLA on March 23 to fund part of the Windy Gulch flood control project.

Leigh Ann has been working on the Ben & Jerry's Foundation grant and hopes to get it in this month. She said that she was getting letters of support from the Mineral County Fairgrounds Association, Keith Siddel (as the owner of the Silver Moon), and from the Economic Development board that is addressing affordable housing in Creede. She said that she thought these entities exemplified the coordination of the WCRC with the community.

Leigh Ann said that the finance subcommittee would meet the next morning, so at the time, there were no updates.

Leigh Ann told the committee, for those who did not know, of the passing of Don Gant. She said that she wanted to recognize the contribution that he had made to the committee. Zeke added that not only was he a good volunteer, but that he was a good man who did a lot for the community. Mike commented on what a hard worker Don had been when we sampled the wells in the snow for several weeks. Leigh Ann said that she had also put a brief recognition on the WCRC homepage, with a photo of Don from the Rio Grande sampling. Leigh Ann expressed that she appreciated everyone on the committee, because they meant something to her not only as volunteers, but as her friends. She said that she not only appreciated their efforts from the point of the Director, but that much of their work helped her out personally also.

Leigh Ann said that she had met with Kay Wyley, formerly with the Creede Repertory Theater, to discuss fundraising strategies. Leigh Ann said that they had discussed several things that she would be covering with the finance subcommittee, but that she wanted to go ahead and bring up one fundraising event. Leigh Ann thought that they might do a duck race in coordination with the Days of '92 celebration. Interested parties could buy a numbered rubber duck to release into the flume, and the first to cross the finish line at the bottom of the flume would win a prize. She thought that it would be fun, and that she could take a few minutes at the beginning of the race to tell the contestants about the committee. Although it might not make a ton of money, it would be a good outreach effort.

Leigh Ann said that she might be moving offices due to space issues at the NRCS. She said that the NRCS had committed to finding a new office for her, potentially with the Forest Service. Leigh Ann said that she had not heard anything in awhile, but that she would keep everyone informed if things changed.

May water sampling/ Lake City: Jim Herron said that the Lake City group was planning a water sampling event at the end of May or the beginning of June on Henson Creek. They would like our help if we could provide a few people. They might likewise be able to send help over for our

sampling. Leigh Ann said that she thought that would work for her, and she requested that Jim get her more information as it became available.

Underground: Jeff and Jim recapped the dewatering pilot that will hopefully be completed with the next 319 grant. There was an interest in getting water levels in the Homestake or other private wells to see if there was a change due to pumping. Leigh Ann said that we could talk with Jerry Rowe to check on the possibility of accessing Homestake wells. Leigh Ann said that she would check with the mining museum to see if they had maps of the Homestake workings. Mike said that we should also look into getting isotope data for the mine water. He said that we could get O18 for \$40 and tritium for \$100.

Correspondence/ Colorado Watershed Protection Fund: Zeke said that he had received a letter from Patty Limerick from the Center for the American West. Enclosed with it was a draft report on the conference on abandoned mine land reclamation. He said that he would review it, and asked if anyone else was interested. Leigh Ann made copies for those interested.

Zeke said that there would be a meeting on March 10th in Monte Vista for Economic Development groups in the San Luis Valley. He said that it would be good if WCRC were represented.

Zeke said that he was on the board of Mineral County Economic Development Incorporated (MCED), the nonprofit formed by Keith Siddel. The first mission of the group would be to purchase the Silver Moon. He said that, despite the name, the bylaws of the organization focused on affordable housing. Mike said that he was concerned about the group, because the work that the EPA had done was with the understanding that the trailers would stay and there would be affordable housing. JB asked if there were performance standards that the Silver Moon needed to meet to keep the EPA happy. Mike said that at this point, Keith was to be looking at reducing the risk of exposure through BMPs. Zeke said that Keith was planning to do some work when the snow clears. The front part of the property has been rezoned. Mark asked if the MCED would be interested in hearing from the Colorado Housing and Finance Association. Zeke said that it would be good to hear from them at the April 30th MCED meeting. Mike asked why Keith did not go the route of the housing authority as originally planned. Zeke said that it would have taken too long. Mike said that he wanted to make sure to get a copy of the bylaws.

NRCS workplan/ well sampling: Steve Yochum brought draft copies of the NRCS workplan for the stream restoration project for review. He said that he would like comments by March 16th. Jim Mietz asked if wetlands would be incorporated. Steve said that as part of the stream restoration design, it would be beneficial to have groundwater levels in the floodplain wells for each month, which would help in the evaluation of wetland development potential. Leigh Ann said that she thought that would be fine, and that she would work with her volunteers to get it done. Mike agreed that the data would be valuable for the committee to have, and he said that he would like to incorporate some well sampling with the May water sampling. Zeke said that it might be a good project for the hydrology class to get involved with. Steve said that he was working on a plan for putting a data logger in Willow Creek. He asked where a good location might be. The committee expressed an interest in getting data at low and high flow. JB thought that a site on West Willow below the Commodore/Nelson might show the most changes over time, and that the influence of East Willow would be more in the form of dilution. Steve said that he would also like to get data from mainstem Willow, but that it could wait until later in the year.

They might deploy it then at the USGS gauge, also called W-C, so that flows might also be determined. Steve said that he would work with JB and Leigh Ann to get things set to deploy the sampler for high flow in West Willow.

Old Business:

Fairgrounds cleanup: Leigh Ann said that she had had the site visit for prospective consultants on the fairgrounds clean up on February 17th, and that today was the deadline for proposals. She said that there were 8 consultants at the site visit, and she had heard from two consultants that they would not be submitting a bid. She said that she hoped to have at least four or five proposals. She asked for volunteers to help review the proposals and select the top three. Jeff said that he would volunteer. Leigh Ann asked if it would be a conflict of interest for Mark to review. Mark said that it would not, so he agreed to help out. Leigh Ann said that she thought that Zeke should review on behalf of the MCFA since Jenny was out of town. Leigh Ann said that she would email the criteria by which to score the proposals. Mark said that he could set up a conference call for March 8th at 1:30 to discuss and select the top three.

Powell water treatment results: Leigh Ann said that the TAC had reviewed the analytical results from the recent Powell-treated samples. The TAC had two recommendations. First, the TAC would write a letter to Powell requesting a description of the treatments used. The TAC would also like to know the cost per gallon treated and how often the plates in the machine would have to be changed. If this information was acceptable to the committee, the TAC would next invite Powell to come down and do another demonstration so they could ask technical questions. Leigh Ann said that she would work with JB and Don Dustin to draft a letter.

Underground update/ Del Monte venting: Jeff said that they had gone underground the day before to get water levels and set some new spads for elevation measurements. They also checked airflow at the Del Monte to see if there was enough to vent the exhaust from the diesel pumps during dewatering. Jeff said that they did not measure enough flow to provide ventilation. He said that they would do more evaluations, and then they would take more measurements next month. JB said that airflow should change with the changes in temperature.

Creek stabilization: Jeff said that they had looked at the grizzly on West Willow at the Commodore to evaluate what could be done if problems arose at high flow. Zeke asked if we had the ability to pull it out if it got plugged by debris. Jeff said that the box design of the grizzly would allow it to continue functioning even if a couple of sides were blocked by debris. Zeke said that we should still have a procedure to clean it out. He said that he would talk to Poxson about making a plan. JB asked if the other sheets of metal in that area could be a problem. Jeff said that he would look at it again.

New Business:

River Rally: Leigh Ann said that there was a conference coming up in May that she would be interested in attending. The River Rally was coordinated by River Network and it was a very

popular national conference. This year it will be in Keystone. Leigh Ann read out some of the topics that would be discussed, highlighting the fundraising workshops. She said that she thought it would give her valuable tools for fundraising. She said that it would cost \$450 for the conference with lodging. Kathleen said that she thought that it would be a good opportunity for the committee, and that Leigh Ann might be able to defray some of the costs by staying with someone. JB asked if we would still have enough money in the budget to attend the other conferences that we regularly attend. Leigh Ann said that we would. Motion for the committee to send Leigh Ann to the River Rally made by Mark Walker; second made by JB Alexander. Motion carried.

May water sampling: Leigh Ann said that she wanted to schedule the annual May sampling event for Thursday, May 5th. She told everyone to put it on their calendars, and that she would have more information at the April meeting.

Willow leaf report: Jim Erdman said that the willow report had gone through two technical reviews at USGS. He said that he thought it would be out by the end of spring.

Other:

The next meeting will be April 6, 2005.

Meeting Adjourned 3:55 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Leigh Ann Vradenburg