

Willow Creek Reclamation Committee Minutes
December 6, 2006
1:00 PM, Creede Town Hall

Present: Ali Morse, WCRC Coordinator; Mark Walker, CDPHE (Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment); JB Alexander, Creede; Jim Matush, Creede; Jeff Graves, CDRMS (Colorado Dept. of Reclamation Mining and Safety); Les Dobson, USFS (US Forest Service); Kelley Thompson, Monte Vista; Chuck Barnes, Creede; Don Dustin, Creede; Steve Vandiver, RGWCD (Rio Grande Water Conservation District); Steve Russell, RGHRP (Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project); Jim Mietz, SLVRCD (San Luis Valley Resource Conservation & Development); Steve Yochum, NRCS (Natural Resources Conservation Service); and Cindy Villa, NRCS.

Approval of minutes: There were no corrections to the November minutes and the motion to approve them was made by JB and seconded by Don. Motion carried.

Reports:

Coordinator's Report

Ali reported that she has mostly completed the move to Pappy's Place but is waiting for the phone and DSL to be hooked up. She and Kelley attended the Issues Formulation Hearing in Alamosa 11/13/06 and Ali attended the SLV Wetlands FAC (Focus Area Committee) in Monte Vista 11/6/06.

Kelley and Ali worked on bank stabilization on Nelson Creek at the Midwest Mine and cleaned debris from Willow Creek across from the Community Center. Kelley completed some earth moving and landscaping at the Windy Gulch culvert and surveyed the levee nearby.

The bill for the cost of repairing the Commodore Gate was submitted to Ben Poxson for reimbursement two weeks ago but Ali has not heard back from Ben yet. Ali also said Zeke had made a presentation of the Good Sam legislation at the national Brownfields conference and she had a copy if anyone was interested.

Chairman's Report

Zeke was out of town so will give a report at next month's meeting

TAC Report

Kelley explained that plans had been finalized for the Amethyst and Last Chance reclamation projects. The Commodore stabilization project has also been designed but the costs need to be recalculated in order to complete the project in phases. The wooden flume would be replaced with a concrete flume at a cost of approximately \$100,000. An additional \$100-300,000 would be needed to clean and stabilize the banks below.

Old Business:

Nelson Pilot Dewatering Project

Jeff stated that he, Ali, Ken Wyley, and Bob Kukuk went underground yesterday. All of the pipe has been hung in the West Drift and the bags of lime have been distributed to the location for spreading. The dewatering will take place in January but Jeff is reluctant to have volunteers from the committee. He will bring colleagues from CDRMS to assist with the actual dewatering. All those present will need to carry air sensors and self-rescue devices; WCRC has three of each.

Underground Installation of Water Level Gauge

Kelley said we need to build a wooden platform for the water gauge. It will enable us to take continuous recordings in the Berkshire shaft.

VISTA Position

Jeff reported that CDRMS would provide a \$5500 match and OSM intends to provide \$5000 the first year for administrative expenses. WCRC would provide supervision, training, and guidance of the VISTA. The VISTA volunteer must be at least 18 years and have some college and/or work experience. That person will work full-time for one year. Upon completion of their commitment, the VISTA receives a \$4,725 education award.

Stream Restoration

Steve Yochum stated that the final draft of his report should be completed by March. His proposal for restoration will include nine different options, each with a separate cost estimate. A morphological design can be completed from the report but Steve mentioned some missing some data gaps. The Wason area was eliminated from the plan, as Steve was unsure how to deal with it; however, Steve will distribute the report to both Hecla and Wason. It includes the area from the flume to the bottom of the fairgrounds. Steve stressed the importance of not beginning work on the floodplain until the West Willow Creek (particularly the Commodore) was stabilized.

New Business:

MSA life-saver warning

Ali informed the committee that she had received a notice from the manufacturer, warning of a possible heat problem with the devices. Jeff said he would inquire with DRMS about the severity of the potential malfunction to determine if they would be adequate for the Nelson dewatering project.

Time limits for agenda items

In the interest of those having to travel significant distances, Ali questioned the committee if they were interested in having time limits set on agenda items, to keep everyone on track and to limit meetings to two hours or less. The committee did not feel it was necessary to set time limits.

Parade of lights

Ali wondered if any of the local members were willing to help put a float together for Creede's Parade of Lights to take place Friday, Dec. 15. There did not appear to be much interest although Don said he would think about it and look into it.

The next meeting will be January 3, 2007. The meeting adjourned at 3:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Ali Morse