

WILLOW CREEK RECLAMATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

Wednesday, May 7, 2008
1:00 PM, Creede Town Hall

Present: Zeke Ward, WCRC Chairman and Mineral County Commissioner; Don Dustin, Creede; JB Alexander, Creede; Merl Jennings, Creede; Phil Reinholtz, U.S. Forest Service; Laura Archuleta, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Jim Matush, Creede; and Carishma Gokhale-Welch, WCRC Director.

Approval of minutes: No corrections to the April meeting were proposed. Merl moves to approve the minutes from April 2, 2008, Don seconds. Motion carries.

Additions/corrections to agenda: "Highway cleanup" and "Cleanup" were added under "Old Business".

Reports:

Director's Report

Approximately 1600 willow cuttings were harvested on April 18 near the fish hatchery by WCRC volunteers. The cuttings have been placed in water and root stimulator, and will be replanted along the Amethyst mine when the site is accessible.

Carishma attended the Colorado Data Sharing Network System (CDSN) training in Alamosa. The Network is a statewide collaborative project that was envisioned by the CO Water Quality Monitoring Council, and is not a state or federal agency. The CSDN serves as an on-line state-wide water quality monitoring database, and also facilitates basin-wide networking opportunities by conducting system trainings. This system is potentially beneficial to the WCRC in organizing and manipulating water quality data.

Carishma attended a symposium at ASU. Three students presented posters with geo-chemical modeling of WCRC data that was sent to Prof. Benson. There were no significant findings, but it was beneficial to the students to use real data, and this process furthers the Committee's outreach and education goals.

The WCRC interviewing panel selected Kevin Hintz as the final candidate for the summer internship. He is a wildlife biology major, with a minor in chemistry at ASU, and will be starting work mid-May.

Chairman's Report

Zeke reported that the MCFA will be moving dirt on the property in the next few weeks. He informed the Committee that he recently sampled Windy Gulch, and is waiting for the results. Zeke updated the Committee on the status of the Wason Ranch lawsuit. The Board will be meeting next month, and there will likely not be an appeal to the judge's decision.

TAC Report

The TAC finalized the Sampling Analysis Plan, and scheduled spring water sampling for May 21. It was decided to sample points upstream and downstream of the Commodore to monitor if the proposed stabilization has prevented leakage into the pile. Carishma is following up with the EPA lab regarding availability and protocol. The TAC finalized the sample points along Miners and Rat Creek to be sampled in June.

The TAC discussed NT/Commodore pile listing comments that WCRC would be submitting to EPA. Don, JB, and Jim assisted Carishma in finalizing a draft. Carishma also shared Jeff Graves comments with the Committee, since he could not be present at the meeting. The Committee discussed the issue, and finalized the document after considering all the comments.

The TAC discussed revegetation at the Amethyst Mine site. Phil Reinholtz will assist and direct the Committee in planting the willow cuttings on May 16.

Old Business:

Water sampling:

This was discussed at the TAC meeting.

WCRC celebration:

Carishma has received several inquiries from agency people about the dates for the celebration. The Committee tentatively scheduled it on September 12 and 13. Merl has volunteered to be the point person for organizing the celebration, with assistance from Kevin Hintz.

Duck Race:

The Scouts are not interested in running a duck race this year, so the WCRC can organize it, if interested. JB volunteered to be involved with the duck race, with help from the rest of the Committee. Carishma will follow up about a booth and float for July 4.

Stream Restoration

Carishma updated the Committee about the land trade meeting that took place on May 1 in Creede, regarding the Hecla properties below town. Eric Heil, a lawyer from Centennial, was present at the meeting, along with Mark Walker. At the end of the meeting, it was decided to do another community survey to determine the land use for the 140 acres below town.

Carishma also discussed targeted Brownfields assessment for the flood plain area with Mark Walker, now that the Wason Ranch lawsuit is not an issue. He encouraged her to apply to CDPHE to carry out a characterization study.

New Business:

Highway Cleanup

The Committee decided to pick up trash along the section of highway 149 adopted by WCRC on May 28.

Cleanup

The Committee discussed cleanup, and the kind of machinery and equipment that would be required to conduct the cleanup.

Adjourn:

Don moves to adjourn the meeting, Merl seconds. Motion carried. The next meeting will be on June 4, 2008 at 1:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carishma Gokhale-Welch