

WILLOW CREEK RECLAMATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, August 6, 2008
1:00 PM, Creede Town Hall

Present: Zeke Ward, WCRC Chairman and Mineral County Commissioner; Jeff Graves, CDRMS (Colorado Division of Reclamation, Mining and Safety); Torie Bowman, WHWT (Western Hardrock Watershed Team); JB Alexander, Creede; Merl Jennings, Creede; Rex Shepperd, City of Creede; Mark Walker, CDPHE (Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment); Jim Matush, Creede; Erin Minks, Regional Representative, Congressman Salazar; Peggy Linn, USEPA; Kevin Hintz, WCRC Intern; and Carishma Gokhale-Welch, WCRC Director.

Approval of minutes: Mark recommended including the name of the adit sampled on July 1 along Miners Creek to the July minutes. Merl moves to approve the minutes from July 2, 2008, Mark seconds. Motion carries.

Additions/corrections to agenda: The TAC agenda items were placed under “Old Business”, since the TAC was cancelled.

Reports:

Director’s Report

The duck race organized by the WCRC over July 4 weekend raised about \$200. With more time, advertisement, and organization, this event could be a successful fundraiser. Kevin wore the duck suit, and JB and Kevin caught the ducks at the end of the flume. WCRC also entered a last minute float in the parade using Kevin’s truck. A special thanks to everyone who participated.

WCRC received a \$5,000 donation from Hecla. While this money can be used for general watershed management and reclamation expenses, Hecla has made a request that some of this money be used for the Biological Assessment event. They might also be able to help the WCRC with the expenses for the September celebration.

Carishma is working on the Roundtable grant (\$50,000 – Basin funds; \$200,000 – State funds), and has received the first set of comments from Tawney. The grant has to be approved by the Basin by January, and will be brought before the State for approval in March. She plans to present it to the Roundtable for approval at the September and October meetings.

MKX is currently working at the Last Chance and Amethyst Mine sites. Their work includes placing additional channel riprap, removal of the large boulder at the grizzly, re-vegetation, addition to the diversion wall, and building a Jersey barrier wall.

Chairman’s Report

Mike Wireman assured Zeke that the stabilization of the Commodore will be started this year. A reporter from the Colorado Springs Gazette recently published an article after interviewing Zeke, and other WCRC committee members. The article was not completely accurate, and some of the information was misrepresented.

Zeke reported that the Wason Ranch case attorney is currently in mediation to seek a settlement, and a settlement is expected to be reached soon. Some defendants have offered to pay for a release of liability.

ERP Update: Peggy Linn

Peggy reported that an action memo has to be signed by EPA and the contractor before work can begin. Funds are available for the project, the work plan for the project is almost complete, and the action memo is currently being finalized. The contractors should be on site in the next couple weeks. Peggy had mailed documents related to the listing and hazard ranking for the NT/Commodore site to the City, but reported that they were missing. She requested that if anyone had them, to return them so that they could be maintained at the information repository. Carishma assured her that the WCRC had not received any documents, but would continue to look for them. Peggy also mentioned that she will soon be conducting community interviews for the Community Involvement Plan.

Western Hardrock Watershed Team: Torie Bowman

Torie Bowman, Support Coordinator of the WHWT gave a brief overview of their program, which involves placing year-long OSM/VISTA volunteers with community watershed organizations like the WCRC. She presented program costs, hours, supervisory responsibility, reporting, etc. The main concern of the Committee was the supervisory role that it would play since the WCRC Director does not work out of the Creede office on a daily basis. No decisions were made. Additional information is available at the WCRC office.

Old Business:

WCRC Celebration: The Committee discussed the objective of the WCRC celebration, and finalized the celebration agenda. The speaker list was finalized, along with the stops on the site tour. Merl moves to keep the morning section of the celebration open to the public with a casual lunch; the site tours, and dinner would be by invite for the main funding agency representatives; Jeff seconds. Motion carries.

Mark moves to task Eric Heil with a 20-minute speech at dinner to discuss the past and future of the Willow Creek floodplain efforts, Rex seconds. Motion carries. One opposed. Mark and Rex agreed to discuss the content of the presentation with Eric.

Lower Willow Creek Stream Restoration - Re-vegetation plots: Carishma spoke with Cindy Villa (NRCS) about the possibility of carrying out re-vegetation on the five identified re-veg plots this year. She advised that it was too late to transplant willow, but WCRC could plant cattail and cottonwood in late August/early September. Kevin will follow up on procuring cottonwood saplings, etc.

Biological Assessment: Carishma is waiting for a price quote from ACZ labs to do 8-12 invertebrate samples for Al, As, Cd, Cu, Fe, Pb, Mn, & Zn. Laura needs at least 5 volunteers for the fish crew, and 2 for the invertebrates. The event is tentatively scheduled for the week of September 22.

New Business:

No new business topics were discussed.

Adjourn:

Jim moves to adjourn the meeting, Rex seconds. The meeting adjourned; the next meeting will be September 3, 2008 at 1:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kevin Hintz