

WILLOW CREEK RECLAMATION COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, December 3, 2008
1:00 PM, Creede Town Hall

Present: Zeke Ward, WCRC Chairman and Mineral County Commissioner; Don Dustin, Creede; Rex Shepperd, City of Creede; JB Alexander, Creede; Bruce Van Haveren, Consultant; Mark Walker, CDPHE (Colorado Dept. of Public Health and Environment); Peggy Linn, USEPA; Laura Archuleta, FWS (Fish and Wildlife Service); Melissa _____, VISTA Kerber Creek; Steven Way, USEPA; Charlotte Bobicki, Regional Representative, Senator Ken Salazar; Jim Matush, Creede; Kathleen Murphy, VISTA WCRC; and Carishma Gokhale-Welch, WCRC Director.

Approval of minutes: November minutes will be presented at the next meeting for approval.

Additions/corrections to agenda: Stream Restoration was added under New Business.

Reports:

Director's Report

Carishma presented the Lower Willow Creek Stream Restoration project to the Rio Grande Roundtable on 11/11. Kelley and Zeke were also present at the meeting. Roundtable members voted to approve the project, with the exception of one dissenting vote. The dissenting voter's main objection was that the project hadn't considered a liner as an option. Zeke, Kelley and Carishma tried to explain the reasons as to why a liner was not a feasible option, but were not able to convince the dissenting voter. It was later established that there wasn't quorum at the meeting, and another vote would be required at the December meeting. Mike Gibson later informed Carishma that there had indeed been quorum at the November meeting, and that he was sending the project on to CWCB.

The results from the biological assessment have arrived from ACZ Laboratories. Laura has a copy and will present results and conclusions at the January meeting.

Chairman's Report

JB inquired whether a Wason Ranch representative planned to attend the WCRC meetings, now that the a settlement had been reached. Zeke said that he would follow up.

ERP Update

Steve Way: the diversion pipe is in place, and water is flowing through the diversion. The spillway goes into the original channel in case of increased flow. Debris have been taken out of the channel and from near the portal. The dumps have been re-graded for access and the stream channel has been widened. Steve noted that the design is being re-evaluated; whether to use the grouted rock option or articulated concrete blocks, with the major concern being cost. The Committee discussed the two options. Mark Walker inquired if Wendy Naugle from the State had been consulted about design concerns.

Peggy Linn: EPA sent out access letter agreements for remedial investigation and the ERP after looking at claims, etc. Peggy informed the Committee that due to oversight, the letter and access agreements went out to more owners that intended, including property owners along East Willow creek. She apologized for the oversight and reiterated that the EPA is not looking to enlarge the footprint of the Superfund site.

Old Business:

VISTA Volunteer

Carishma introduced Kathleen Murphy, WCRC's newly hired VISTA volunteer. Kathleen shared her educational and professional background with the Committee. She will be staying at the USFS bunk house in Creede. CDRMS will be partly sponsoring the VISTA.

TBA update: Mark Walker

The purpose of the sampling efforts was to give the City of Creede a better understanding of the extent of contamination in the floodplain area. Based on Steve Yochum's aerials, 25 samples were taken every 100 feet on the west side of the floodplain. Mark shared the results of the sampling effort with the Committee. In short: no hidden banks of tails were uncovered, but numerous sample locations had stratified lenses of tailings, none in excess of 12" thick.

New Business:

Stream Restoration

After considering the effectiveness of the functioning of the stream as a geo-morphological unit, the installation of a liner and the economics involved, after much discussion the WCRC considers that a liner is not a feasible alternative. Mark moves, Laura seconds. JB abstains. Motion carries.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned; the next meeting will be January 7, 2008 at 1:00 PM, with a TAC meeting preceding it at 10:00 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carishma Gokhale-Welch