

July 7, 1999 Minutes

WCRC Meeting

Meeting held in the Creede Town Hall
 Called to order by Chairman Zeke Ward at 1:05 PM

Those attending:

Name	Affiliation	E-mail
Larry Bussey	SLV Trout Unlimited	none
Perry Alspaugh	Div. of Water Resources	perry.alspaugh@state.co.us
Chuck Barnes	Resident	chwagon@amigo.net
Diana Hammer	EPA Region 8	hammer.diana@epa.gov
Jim Mietz	SLV RC&D	jmietz@co.nrcs.usda.gov
Kathleen Reilly	CDPHE	kathleen.reilly@state.co.us
Les Dobson	Forest Service	ldobson/r2_sjrg@fs.fed.us
Ken Wangerud	EPA Region 8	wangerud.ken@epa.gov
Vince Spero	Forest Service	vspero/r2_sjrg@fs.fed.us
Mark Stromberg	ITASCO (Homestake)	mwsberg@kcnet.com
J.B. Alexander	Resident	none
Steve Russell	NRCS	russel@amigo.net
Dave Suhr	Creede Resources	dsuhr@hecla-mining.com
John Howard	Resident	jhoward375@aol.com
Glen Miller	Resident	miller@amigo.net
Bence Close	M.F.G.	bclose@mfgenv.com
Rex Sheppard	Resident	none
Zeke Ward	Resident	redmtn@fone.net
Hugh Kendrick	CDMG	hugh@wavecom.net
DW Smoky Barker	NRCS	dbarker@co.nrcs.gov
Brent Woodward	Resident (CDOW)	none
Eric Twitty	Consultant Historian	twitty@flash.net
Sandra Wright	Resident	none
Carl Miller	State Representative	
Mr. Parker	Resident	

Introduction of Carl Miller

Carl stated that he is very interested in what is happening in Creede. He has worked in the mining industry his entire life prior to going into politics and is a director of a national mining museum (in Leadville ?). He has been a Lake County Commissioner (12 years) and is in his second term as State Representative. His family roots go back in Leadville to 1893.

He spoke of his commitment as part of the state legislature to see that what happened in Leadville does not happen in Creede. A quick and casual summary of what happened there is as follows....

1980,81,82 there was an accidental discharge from a historic mine drainage tunnel. Leadville residents knew they must remedy the situation. The EPA came in and designated several hundred acres at the mouth of the Yak tunnel as a project site.

No one argued about that. They turned it into superfund. Then within the next 17 years they proceeded to add 20 square miles including every square inch of the City of Leadville. And that is very tough on a rural Colorado Community.

With the exception of the two drainage tunnels (one under responsibility of the Federal Government and the other by the Community), EPA probably studied the Leadville site for 15 years and spent around 100 million dollars. The Community fixed one tunnel and the Federal Government was slow to proceed but finally did something about the other. The last two years of the EPA project consisted of doing remedial work. That work was not what was wanted or needed. EPA destroyed the integrity of the historic mining district and "they didn't need to do that because there were other remedies."

In contrast to Leadville, Bonanza was studied for 15 months, EPA observed, but the work was done by mining companies, the community, county, and state and federal agencies. This work was and is being done the way that environmental cleanup work should be done.

He stressed that with Bonanza and Creede; it is ok if EPA wants to look over our shoulders, but we don't want them calling the shots. The community knows much more about what is needed and can get help and support from the State and other entities.

Carl pointed out that "he is here to offer his support and that we (State Representatives) want Creede to survive and to thrive. We do not want to destroy the historic mining district." He re-emphasized that he, many-many of his colleagues at the state legislature, the attorney general, and the governor can be mustered for support to make sure that Creede is protected and preserved. He intends to keep in touch with what is happening and offer what help he can.

(Round of applause and Carl leaves the meeting)

Zeke thanks all individuals and agencies for the good work of the past month.

Glen apologizes to those not having e-mail, for not (as yet), getting them the minutes to the last meeting.

Everything will be up and running on the Web before the end of July

and those not interested in the internet, will get theirs in the mail.

I) Committee Organization Jim Mietz wrote a statement as follows...

The SLV Resource Conservation & Development Council/ Willow Creek Reclamation Project Committee (Greater Committee) may enter into Cooperative Agreements with other parties (consultants, agencies, non-profits, and other groups) that have similar goals/objectives as the Committee. The purpose of cooperative agreements are to

enable the Greater Committee to progress towards its goals in an expedient manner.

The Committee has elected officers (Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary, Treasurer), and this group comprises an Executive Committee. The Executive Committee has the authority to make non-contractual, non-policy binding decisions for the Greater Committee. The Greater Committee will make all contractual and financial decisions.

Zeke motioned that this be passed as an official by-law of the committee. Many seconded and all were in favor.

II) TAC Committee Report

John Howard reported about the meeting on June 24th. He stated that the TAC is to perform specific tasks asked of it by the WCRC Committee. Right now the low flow water sampling event is the priority.

Chuck Barnes motioned that we give the SAP (sampling analysis plan) and the QAPP (Quality Assurance Plan) over to the expertise of the TAC Committee.

Motion was seconded and all were in favor.

Glen advised that the TAC be given authority to study the Solomon Wetlands. JB Alexander motioned that this be so. Many seconded and all were in favor.

III) Status of funding proposals

A) Kathleen Reilly stated that the 319 contract is ready for signatures. She gave a partial history of certain difficulties regarding this proposal i.e., the historic preservation part, and that things have finally come through. She mentioned that the clock started ticking on this grant as of July 1st and that non federal matching funds for this started in March.

Zeke thanked all those that were involved in helping with this grant.

B) Les Dobson spoke of the Forest Service cash donation of \$50,450 and of the formal agreement that must be entered into for the cash to be released. Details of where and how the money is to be spent must be put into the agreement. Les pointed out that the committee is in control but that the Forest Service wants to know the particulars of how their money is being spent, without it becoming an accounting nightmare.

JB Alexander motioned that the executive committee be authorized to work out an agreement with the Forest Service and the SLV RC&D and have it ready for our next regular WCRC meeting. (Many seconded and all were in favor)

Zeke thanks the Forest Service and Les in particular for the spirit of cooperation that is being manifest here.

C) Accounting of in kind donations

Jim Mietz and Glen will put together some time sheets so everyone can keep track of their "in kind" donations. Non-federal people will back track to March 9th and the Federal part starts on July 1st. On the back of the time sheets, we will put what can be included as an in-kind match i.e., attendance at meetings, travel, etc.

Kathleen Reilly spoke of a software program available for the tracking of these activities.

IV) Status of the Re-Veg trials

Steve Russell clarified that the re-veg trials are not specifically NRCS but are a group effort of different committee people. We are not doing a rigorous scientific study but only want to find out what works. We have laid out two sample sites and will proceed with the planting tomorrow at 9:00 AM. Steve listed the species to be planted and the fertilization mixes to be used. A map, design, and project specifications will be available in the near future. There is a bill for seed that came to \$100.19 (as yet unpaid - joke ... Steve's watch is in hock). The topsoil will also cost \$105.00.

Chuck Barnes motioned that we redeem Steve's watch and pay the above bills.

(Many seconded and all were in favor)

JB noted that since we have money in the budget and that the Committee has already approved that budget, then we don't need to vote specifically on each expenditure unless we, for the sake of humor, find it desirable.

Steve produced a map with a preliminary creek meander design for lower Willow Creek (in the braided stream section) that flows with a general 1% grade and proceeds to the end of the natural braiding where the creek forms two main channels. There would need to be some drop structures as well as a diversion gate (vortex weir) for irrigation.

The stream needs to be designed to accommodate 200 CFS with a flood-plane drainage.

There would be an estimated 70,000 yards of material needed at \$4.00/yard. These figures could vary widely by the time actual construction decisions are made.

Zeke thanks the NRCS and states how nice it is to see things actually happening on the ground.

V) Historical preservation initiative

Eric Twitty is introduced. He speaks of his 7 years as a professional mining historian. He has a Masters degree in American History and specializes in mine sites. He appreciates this project because in this case, he is not just 1 or 2 steps ahead of the bulldozer. It is a priority to find out what sites might be eligible for nomination to the National Register. This project naturally divides itself into three areas, the Amethyst vein, the Solomon Vein, and High Country areas. He hopes to apply to the State Historical Society for a grant to do a larger study and have a publication printed of which a part of the proceeds would go to the committee.

John Howard said the contract particulars for Mr. Twitty are not yet completed.

From various questions it appears that Mr. Twitty's intent is to produce a cover document that shows the local mining in context to the overall State and National scene that accords with the historical times in question. He intends to produce a map and report with descriptions and photographs. A question was asked about the State level of investigation. Eric stated that he intends to do level 3 because you get better information with just a little more effort.

Ken Wangerud stated that level 3 is the way to go right up front, so that we are always prepared should remedial action be required. However, this was part of what made things go so slow in Leadville.

Eric commented that Creede has some of the best preserved mine sites that he has ever seen.

Zeke spoke of great work that the Creede Historical Society has done with very little money and that this is an opportunity for this society to accomplish objectives in conjunction with WCRC objectives.

Zeke motions that this committee authorize the sub-committee (John Howard, Vince Spero, & Glen Miller) to put together this contract with Mr. Twitty in accordance with money available from our 319 grant.

(Many seconded and all were in favor)

VD) Commodore Project

Hugh Kendrick reports on the Commodore. He has a preliminary draft that proposes solutions to the immediate problem. He says that it appears to be more plugged now than when he last saw it a month ago. His opinion is that it is in a slowly deteriorating situation and that the debris might actually be stabilizing the cribbing walls. His recommendations include....

1) To install Gabion baskets in order to stop the erosion of the road above the 30' drop below the flume.

(This is a temporary measure - 2-3 year fix)

2) Upper flume appears to be in pretty good shape so no recommendation is in order for that part.

3) Middle flume requires a long term fix that would isolate the stream from the tailings pile. Various solutions could accomplish this objective.

Ken Wangerud asked about the peak (10 year flow - 138 cfs). What would be the hydraulic force of that pressure?

Hugh stated that the exact force hasn't been computed, but it is considerable as is evidenced by the recent destruction of the chute, which due to luck, now blocks the stream from directly confronting the tailings pile. Hugh reiterated that Glen has been assigned to monitor on a daily or near daily basis any further failing of the cribbing structure.

Zeke spoke of the larger perspective of temporarily stabilizing the Commodore structure as an insurance policy until a complete fix in relation to problems that involve the entire West Willow watershed can be determined.

Ken stated that since he was the one that opened up the original concerns over the Commodore problem, that he would like to close the book on his concerns by going back up there and documenting the situation that has been described by Hugh and others, and make it a matter of record.

Zeke stated that we have reports from MFG as well as the Forest Service that include pictures, charts, graphs, bells, & whistles that adequately show and describe the present situation. Zeke would have to get permission from the owners for any additional evaluations. He spoke of the original committee policies that state that any information developed by this group are open to all other members of the committee.

Ken stated that his specific concern involves failure of the middle flume area (caused by an unusual hydrological event) that could potentially release concentrations of heavy metals (from the upper fill) into the stream. Other concerns i.e., the erosion of the road, are important but do not concern him or the EPA in a direct way.

Zeke suggested that Ken and everyone else wait for the final report from CDMG that will include specific recommendations for future action. At that point, committee members can make educated and reliable determinations concerning the nature of the problem and what should be done about it.

Hugh spoke of his peak water-flow study and of his conclusion that peak flows happen as a result of spring runoff rather than from thunderstorm events.

II) Report of MFG contract proposal

Bence Close spoke of and passed out the MFG contract proposal for this years characterization activities. This proposal is in accordance with the new 319 numbers and has been done in conjunction from conversations with Glen and Zeke. Prices are a "not to exceed value" but may end up being less.

Bence proceeded to summarize the proposal to the committee.

Ken asked if the EPA lab and other EPA services have been considered?

The answer from Bence and others is a definite yes. Tina Laidlaw is researching how the EPA lab may be of service and how our River-watch program might be augmented through EPA efforts.

Rex Sheppard motioned that we accept the contract proposal as long as the "not to exceed provision is clear." (Many seconded and all were in favor)

VIII) Riverwatch program etc.

Bence spoke of coordinating sampling teams and setting a time for a training session. (Possibly for the first week in August) for storm events and for a low flow sampling event in mid September.

Glen will be working with Bence, JB, Tina, Les, Kathleen, Dave Suhr, Laura Higgins, Barb Horn, Bob Kirkham, and others about scheduling these activities.

Diane Hammer proposed a course on the Clean Water Act, TMDL's, Wetland standards, etc.

Glen wants and needs the course but others were less enthusiastic. Glen has agreed to find what interest there may be in town or in the valley and get back to Diane about it.

Zeke advised that we put off a general WCRC meeting that was originally set for July 17th until some time in September. He thanks everyone for coming and for all their efforts in regard to this project.

Meeting adjourned around 5:15 PM.

Next meeting is scheduled for August 4th at 1:00 PM at the Creede Town Hall.

Submitted by:

Glen Miller
Project Watershed Coordinator
Approved and accepted:

Zeke Ward
Chairman