
Dolores River Restoration Partnership Transition Plan for Monitoring & Maintenance 2015 - 2019

~Protecting our Shared Investments in Riparian Restoration ~

Last Updated on March 15, 2017



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~Photos courtesy of The Nature Conservancy and Tamarisk Coalition

Background and Plan Overview

The Dolores River Restoration Partnership (DRRP) is a public-private collaborative of partnering individuals, organizations, and agencies working to restore the plant communities in the riparian corridor of the Dolores River, which flows from the San Juan Mountains of southwestern Colorado to eastern Utah, where it meets the Colorado River. Since 2009, the DRRP has worked to remove non-native, invasive plants whose extensive growth has displaced native plant communities, impaired wildlife habitat and forage, hindered access to campsites and other recreational opportunities, and increased risks associated with wildfire in the riparian corridor.



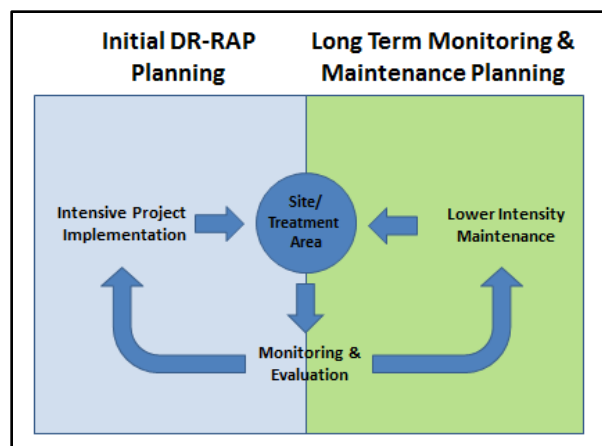
This broad community of partners, working along over 200 miles of the Dolores River and its tributaries, has been guided to date by the Dolores River-Riparian Action Plan (DR-RAP). Developed by stakeholders in 2010, DR-RAP provides a shared vision and set of goals that have guided the DRRP through its

formative years of restoring the riparian corridor of the Dolores River. In addition to helping inform on-the-ground decisions, this five-year strategic plan has also guided broader decisions towards the partnership's ecological, social, economic, and management goals.

While DR-RAP has been instrumental to these dynamic years characterized by highly intensive, active implementation work, it does not articulate how to plan beyond this initial five-year phase of the partnership. A collaborative solution for the next stages of the partnership was initiated in 2012, to address the long-term monitoring and maintenance strategies for the DRRP.

Fundamentally, this transition plan answers the following questions:

- How do we protect our investment of dollars, social capital, time, and capacity in the Dolores River watershed?
- When does the DRRP cease to exist and/or transition its management of a project to another entity for continued monitoring and maintenance (M&M)?
- What does this transition to M&M look like?
- How can the partnership be successful in achieving its long-term vision?



Updated Partnership Goals

Goals & Objectives:

The partnership goals listed below (updated from DR-RAP; see Appendix A for background), provide important guidance to the partnership as we complete the heavy lifting of intensive DR-RAP implementation work and transition into long-term M&M.

Ecological Goal: enhanced plant communities¹

- Increase the number of acres of sustainable, healthy riparian and floodplain plant communities in the watershed while reducing those dominated by tamarisk and other invasive, non-native plant species.
 - *Objective 1: Live tamarisk will be reduced to less than 5 percent of the vegetation cover within the DRRP project area*
 - *Objective 2: Other prioritized invasive, non-native plants will be reduced to less than 15 percent of the vegetation cover; the remaining percent vegetation cover will be composed of desirable or native species within the DRRP project area.*
 - *Objective 3: Total vegetation cover within the DRRP project area will be greater than or equal to 30 percent (if less than 30 percent, ensure that vegetation has been deemed to be adequate for the site).*

Social Goals: youth, public safety, and aesthetics

- Increase opportunities for the next generation of stewards with regional conservation and youth corps programs that support underserved young adults.
 - *Objective 1: Between 2015 and 2019, create at least 100 opportunities for young adults in conservation corps programs.*
 - *Objective 2: Maintain consistent education and support for these young adults by providing at least 120 hours of training annually for each individual crew member.*
 - *Objective 3: Between 2015 – 2019, support crew members collectively to earn over \$95,000 of AmeriCorps education awards.*
 - *Objective 4: Between 2015 – 2019, corps members will provide over 70,000 hours of service.*
- Increase public safety both by reducing wildfire-related risks with strategic fuel reductions as well as by improving highway safety with increased sight distance along state and county roads.
 - *Objective 1: Maintain fuels reduction around 45 prioritized river-side camping areas, 1 wastewater treatment plant, and other infrastructure on public and private lands.*
 - *Objective 2: Maintain clear sight lines along 25 miles of Highway 141 that trace the Dolores River in Mesa and Montrose Counties.*
- Improve aesthetic enjoyment for recreationists and create a positive framework for them to interact with restoration work by pairing tamarisk control with intensive active restoration at sites frequented by the public.
 - *Objective 1: Maintain scenic vistas along 25 miles of Highway 141 that traces the Dolores River in Mesa and Montrose Counties.*
 - *Objective 2: Maintain accessibility to 45 river-side camping areas and four boat launch sites.*

¹ In 2016, partners identified a growing interest in developing new ecological goals and metrics associated with the avian and fish community; once more baseline data is collected, appropriate goals and metrics towards evaluating success of restoring fish and wildlife habitat will be added to this plan.

- *Objective 3: Maintain the DRRP Interpretive Trail and educational signage in Gateway, CO.*

Economic Goals: employment, local investments, efficiency, and recreation

- Increase employment opportunities for contractors and youth in the Dolores River area.
 - *Objective 1: Between 2015 – 2019, develop at least 30 contracts with regional businesses.*
 - *Objective 2: Between 2015 and 2019, create at least 100 opportunities for young adults in conservation corps programs.*
- Invest in the local economies of the Dolores River Area.
 - *Objective 1: Between 2015 – 2019, invest at least \$3,000,000 of funding and in-kind support into the health of the Dolores River and the communities that depend on it.*
 - *Objective 2: By 2019, earn at least 15% of DRRP’s annual income through private donations.*
- Improve effectiveness and financial efficiency of our riparian restoration efforts by identifying and promoting cost-saving methods.
 - *Objective 1: Hire and train at least one Conservation Corps strike team each year to perform monitoring and maintenance activities efficiently.*
 - *Objective 2: Document anecdotal evidence of improved restoration strategies at annual meetings of the DRRP Implementation and Monitoring Subcommittee.*
- Enhance recreational opportunities (e.g., rafting, hiking, hunting, and wildlife viewing).
 - *Objective 1: Maintain accessibility to 45 river-side camping areas and four boat launch sites.*
 - *Objective 2: Maintain the DRRP Interpretive Trail and educational signage in Gateway, CO.*
 - *Objective 3: Annually document anecdotal evidence from user groups of positive recreational experiences.*

Management Goals: learning, sharing, and improving

- Facilitate communications between land managers and partners to help coordinate treatments, share lessons learned and increase treatment effectiveness/efficiency by sharing resources and crossing administrative boundaries.
 - *Objective 1: Between 2015 – 2019, coordinate 30 site visits to support partners’ planning and problem solving; develop and distribute 3 new informational resources to support adaptive restoration work along the Dolores River; and host annual subcommittee meetings to share and build on lessons learned.*
 - *Objective 2: Between 2015 – 2019, present restoration lessons at 20 educational events (e.g. workshops, conferences) to support restoration work in other watersheds.*
 - *Objective 3: Share DRRP lessons learned in at least four publications.*
- Incorporate educational and interpretative practices to enhance public understanding and appreciation of riparian restoration actions.
 - *Objective 1: Between 2015 – 2019, install at least two new interpretive signs along the Dolores River that highlight the importance of riparian systems*
 - *Objective 2: Between 2015 – 2019, host at least 15 community events to promote stewardship.*

The Shift to Monitoring and Maintenance

Since 2009, the DRRP has initiated and advanced active, intensive restoration on dozens of sites on public and private lands across the Dolores River towards accomplishing our partnership goals. As of December 31, 2016, we have treated 1,607 of the 1,775 targeted acres of mature stands of tamarisk prioritized for control, treated dense swaths of Russian knapweed, and planted thousands of native grass plugs, shrubs, and trees. Initial treatments of tamarisk are projected to be completed on all prioritized public lands and most of the participating private lands by the end of 2018.

While active, high-intensity implementation efforts for many sites are still ongoing, across the watershed we are beginning to see sites where ecological goals have already been met. In 2012, for instance, 30 percent of our representative watershed-wide monitoring sites where active treatment had been initiated had already met our partnership's ecological goals. On sites like these, land managers are now shifting to a less intensive 'maintenance mode,' which can mean a number of changes in terms of planning, labor forces, equipment, and training needs.²

Defining Success

While the partnership's watershed-wide ecological goals described above on page 3 provide the partnership's milestone for restoration success, the partnership has also developed a shorter-term objective to determine when a particular restoration site can transition (e.g. in terms of planning, equipment, and project capacity) from highly intensive project implementation to a less intensive but steadfast M&M mode:



Definition of Objectives Met Through Active Management: *Native or desirable plants are restored on a given site to the extent that, assuming appropriate long-term maintenance by the private landowner or public land manager, it is reasonably foreseeable that natural plant recruitment and succession will progress toward DR-RAP's long-term vision.*

Long-Term Vision (as stated in DR-RAP): *The Dolores River watershed is dominated by native vegetation, where the threats from tamarisk and other associated invasive species have been mitigated and the riparian areas of the watershed continue to become more naturally functioning, self-sustaining, diverse, and resilient over time.*

The point at which each individual site meets restoration objectives and transitions into a long-term M&M mode is occurring at different times across the watershed, based on a variety of

² This transition plan is a living document, which the DRRP will update as it embarks on transitioning into the stage of monitoring and maintenance and when new information becomes available.

factors (e.g. when a project was started, what site-based constraints exist). Based on 2016 progress reporting (see Appendix B) by several public land managers and private landowners, a number of sites totaling over 760 acres are beginning to display trends of natural recruitment and plant succession, while others are projected to be several years away from this critical milestone.

The partnership has predicted through long-term project planning that by 2018, more than 70 percent of restoration sites are anticipated to have transitioned from active, high-intensity implementation to less intensive M&M. Achieving the partnership's watershed-wide ecological goals (see page 3), however, will take significantly longer, but will be achieved through multiple years of continued maintenance activities as well as natural recruitment.

It is anticipated that the DRRP will need to continue maintenance at some level after 2019. Regular evaluation will lead not only to updates to this transition plan at annual partnership meetings, but also identification of needs, gaps, and opportunities in 2020 and beyond for achieving the partnership's project-wide ecological goals.

Monitoring

Monitoring is being conducted on all actively treated sites throughout the watershed to track success towards the partnership's project-wide ecological goals as well as individual land manager goals; to document and help plan for transitions from active, high-intensity implementation to less intensive M&M; to determine the effectiveness of different restoration methods used; and to inform adaptive management.

To date, monitoring efforts have focused primarily on tracking changes in the quantity and quality of vegetation on the riparian corridor resulting from invasive species control and revegetation efforts (see Appendix C for background).

Watershed-wide monitoring, which used a statistically valid data collection protocol on representative transects, was implemented between 2010 and 2014 to track progress and effectiveness of different restoration methods. Findings from watershed-wide monitoring, which will be published by University of Denver, have informed our understanding of progress towards DRRP's ecological objectives and guided adaptive management.

Pilot-project monitoring, which also used a statistically valid data collection protocol, tracked the effectiveness of unique restoration treatments between 2010 – 2014. Findings from this monitoring will be published in a forthcoming USGS Open File report and have informed new restoration approaches (e.g. methods for tamarisk removal, types of native species planted) along several reaches of the Dolores River and other semi-arid rivers in the American West.

The DRRP is currently conducting two types of monitoring:

- **Rapid Monitoring** – Site inventories are conducted on an annual basis on actively treated sites to inform ongoing project implementation/maintenance efforts and to help track progress towards ecological objectives. Inventories include taking ocular estimates of vegetation based on cover classes, updating series of site photo points, evaluating natural recruitment of several riparian plant species, and assessing the presence/absence of wildlife species of interest.

- **Bird Monitoring** – Surveys are conducted using the using methods consistent with the Integrated Monitoring in Bird Conservation Regions (IMBCR) program; surveyors monitor 60 grid cells, each of which has four point count stations, to enhance DRRP’s understanding of the avian community and how restoration work may enhance habitat for specific species.

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Purpose for Future

Monitoring Efforts: Working with Conservation Corps partners, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, BLM, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, the DRRP Implementation & Subcommittee will continue to implement the monitoring efforts already in place



(described above) to track progress and inform planning efforts.

Expected Monitoring Products: Annual rapid monitoring reports completed by Southwest Conservation Corps and bird monitoring reports completed by Bird Conservancy of the Rockies will be provided to the DRRP Implementation & Monitoring Subcommittee. Forthcoming publications highlighting the results of watershed-wide monitoring and pilot-project monitoring will also be shared with the subcommittee and the larger partnership.

How Monitoring Will Be Accomplished: The DRRP Implementation & Monitoring Subcommittee will ensure that monitoring remains relevant and effective to support short-term and long-term goals for the partnership.

- Southwest Conservation Corps (SCC), Tamarisk Coalition, and BLM will coordinate annually to plan rapid monitoring, which will be carried out by SCC technicians.
- Bird Conservancy of the Rockies will coordinate with BLM and private landowners annually to plan and carry out bird monitoring.
- The DRRP Implementation & Monitoring Subcommittee will continue to coordinate with researchers conducting ongoing studies in the watershed (e.g. Colorado Dept. of Agriculture’s study of biological control agents; The Nature Conservancy and Colorado Parks & Wildlife study of fish habitat and geomorphic processes; University of Utah Rio Mesa Field Station plant genetics studies) to ensure that emerging knowledge is appropriately shared and guides future restoration work.
- The DRRP Stewardship Subcommittee will evaluate opportunities for citizen science and coordinate with the Implementation & Monitoring Subcommittee to ensure complementary and effective outcomes.

Maintenance

Purpose for Long-Term Maintenance: The DRRP will rely on a variety of maintenance practices to remove stressors of invasive plants so that the riparian corridor of the Dolores River becomes increasingly more self-sustaining, diverse, and resilient over time:

- Conducting follow-up treatments on herbaceous weeds (e.g. Russian knapweed, hoary cress, Musk thistle) as well as tamarisk resprouts;
- Utilizing the tamarisk beetle and Russian knapweed gal midge as biocontrol in areas prioritized for passive treatment;
- Continuing targeted seeding and planting of native grasses, shrubs, and trees in areas prioritized for active revegetation as well as caging select cottonwood trees; and
- Initiating active revegetation in select areas where passive/natural recruitment was anticipated but has not materialized

Expected Maintenance Products: The Implementation & Monitoring Subcommittee will continue to meet annually to vet site-based plans, share lessons learned from the field, and document adaptive management strategies. The Implementation & Monitoring Subcommittee will also produce annual maintenance plans to guide specific activities for the upcoming year. These plans, modeled after the current process of implementation planning, are expected to be completed by February of each year.

How Maintenance Will Be Accomplished:

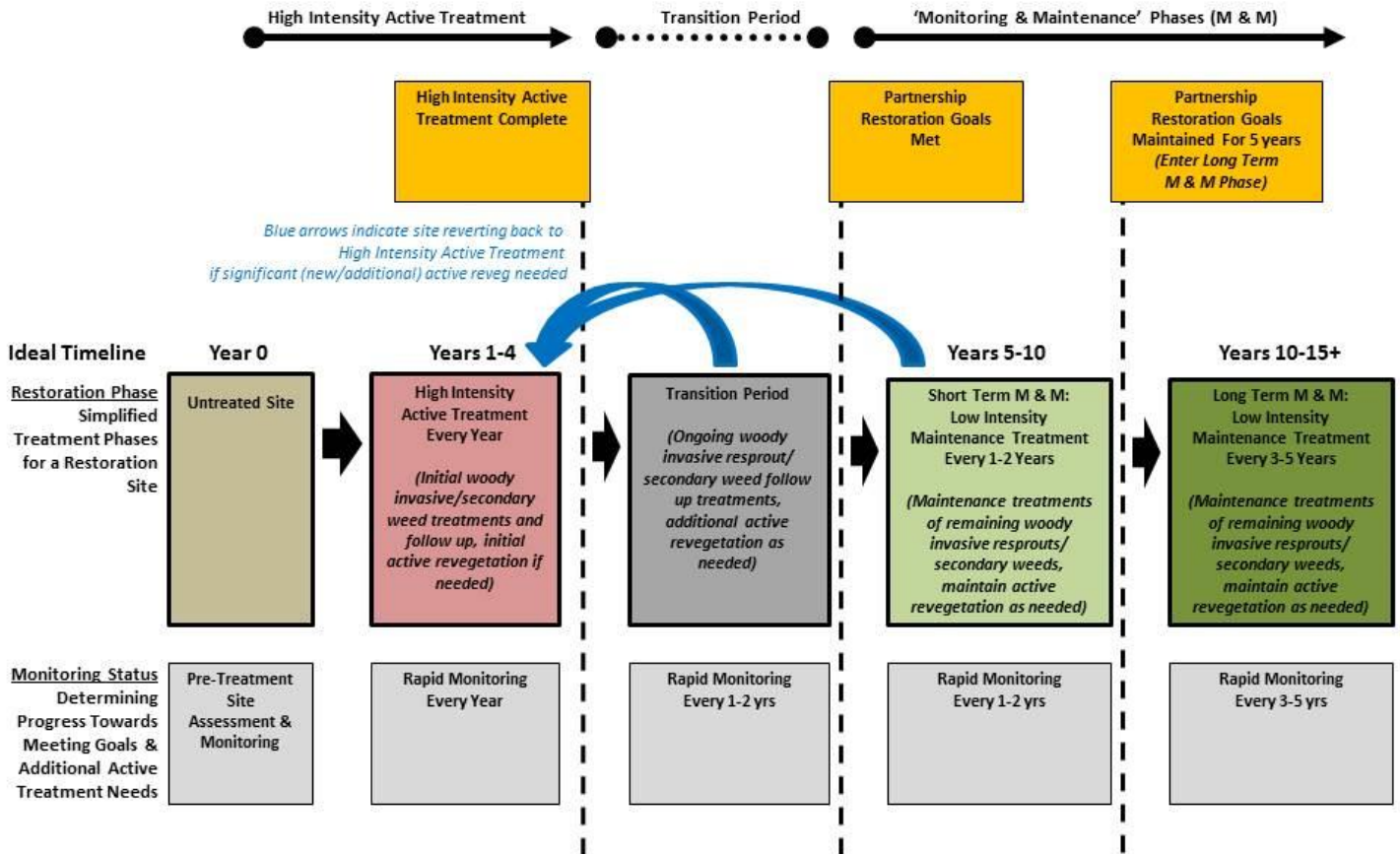
Maintenance across the watershed will be coordinated largely by TC and SCC, with the guidance and support of the Implementation & Monitoring Subcommittee. A variety of partners will conduct on-the-ground maintenance activities:

- **Conservation and Youth Corps “Strike Teams”** comprised of 2 – 3 technicians, these teams will conduct a variety of tasks, from retreating woody and herbaceous weeds, to installing temporary fencing, and doing small-scale plantings;
- **Private landowners** will steward and maintain their lands through a variety of methods; in-kind, long-term stewardship is accounted for in Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW) contracts with landowners, many of whom have already made great investments in their riparian lands (e.g. treating knapweed with a backpack sprayer, using a bulldozer to clear tamarisk, and/or assessing the impacts of restoration treatments);
- **Contractors** will continue to aid in treating secondary weeds;
- **Volunteer groups** (e.g. the Dolores River Boating Advocates & local students) engaged by the Stewardship Subcommittee will assist with plantings and manual tamarisk treatments at campsites below the Dolores-San Miguel River confluence;
- **Conservation Corps** crews will complete treatments of tamarisk, Russian Olive, and Siberian elm, assist with fencing, and aid with large-scale plantings; and



- **Local, state, and federal agency staff** such as county weed managers, as well as resource specialists from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and PFW, will continue to provide technical assistance, along with the Tamarisk Coalition (TC).

Dolores River Restoration Partnership Restoration Phases & Transitions Diagram



Private Lands Engagement

To date, the DRRP has collaborated with more than two dozen private landowners to restore over 600 acres of riparian habitat between Disappointment Creek and the Dolores River's confluence with the Colorado River. Coordinating partners include PFW, NRCS, BLM, county weed managers, TC, TNC, and the Conservation Corps. To ensure future access for continued maintenance work (e.g. for a strike team to conduct follow-up Russian knapweed treatments for a private landowner), the partnership, on a case-by-case basis, will enter into either informal agreements or more formalized contracts with private landowners to complete work.



In addition to past work, the DRRP has initiated conversations with several private landowners that have yet to work with the partnership, but whose circumstances have evolved such that they are now more eager and/or able to engage in restoring their riparian lands. Based on the conversations, the DRRP plans to begin project implementation on two additional private properties, comprised of approximately 150 acres, by the end of 2018. In addition, the partnership will continue holding conversations with three other private landowners who presently are not focused on riparian restoration, but who remain open to future discussions to assess opportunities. The anticipated 150 acres on private lands are accounted for in the projected implementation and maintenance costs outlined in the budget below, based on the current status of promising conversations and connections with these landowners.

Capacity Needs

Protecting the restoration investment made in the Dolores River watershed will fundamentally require the continued commitment and collaboration of partnering individuals and organizations. From the decision-makers that rally their staff, to the non-profit grant-writer, to the private landowner working remotely on a patch of Russian knapweed, this effort requires people's time. The partnership will continue to rely on trust, reciprocity, and good working relationships to meet capacity needs.

Current projections of capacity needed for partnership coordination and planning by Tamarisk Coalition, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation Legacy (formerly known as Southwest Conservation Corps), and contractors from 2016 to 2019, in total, is approximately \$200,500. This does not include substantial in-kind contributions from private landowners and agency staff.

After 2015, organizations represented on the Core Team anticipate increasingly scaled-down roles and have made these commitments:

- Bureau of Land Management Field Offices will have primary responsibility for restoration on their respective lands; administer GIS progress reporting for public lands; and continue to provide funding for implementation as well as M&M work.
- Tamarisk Coalition is committed to partnership coordination, implementation and maintenance planning, fundraising, and overseeing science and monitoring.

- The Nature Conservancy will support linkages between DRRP’s riparian restoration work and other watershed health initiatives through communications with the DRRP Core Team and presentations to other initiatives.
- Conservation Legacy/SCC will fundraise, coordinate initial treatment and strike-team maintenance workforces across corps programs, and coordinate volunteer events.

Numerous partners have offered to provide important contributions, such as: monitoring, volunteerism, funding to support M&M, technical assistance, contracting and administrative support, training volunteers, conducting secondary weed treatments, and hiring Conservation Corps crews, strike teams, and interns. The specifics of these roles have been outlined with the 2015 DRRP Memorandum of Understanding.



Budget

The following budget provides projections for all activities associated with this plan. Details for each activity are provided in the subsequent sections. Please note the following:

- A set of calculated assumptions relating to decreasing size and density of infestations for follow-up treatments was used to predict the cost for re-treatments of Russian knapweed and tamarisk;
- The below costs reflect an important assumption that the DRRP will continue to expand relationships with private landowners in the watershed; based on current relationships with volunteering private landowners, \$180,000 of anticipated project implementation and maintenance is included in the following table.
- These tasks include partnership capacity (projected cost of \$347,100), active project implementation (projected cost of \$380,000), less-intensive maintenance (projected cost of \$365,200), and monitoring (projected cost of \$165,000) between 2015 – 2019. These projected cost estimates reflect cash expenses and not the important in-kind contributions (e.g. volunteer and agency staff support totaling more than \$100,000/year) that will be garnered by partners.

- The current cost projections for on-the-ground M&M for 2020 and beyond at sites warranting additional restoration treatments is estimated at \$75,000 per year. These costs will be refined during implementation of the Transition Plan.

Table 1: DRRP Needs from 2015 - 2019

Year	Task/Description	Approx. Cost (Cash)	Funds Raised to Date
2015	Implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Completion of initial tamarisk treatments on public lands ▪ Intensive active revegetation ▪ Initial treatments of Russian knapweed and tamarisk resprouts ▪ Initiating new projects with volunteering private landowners 	\$255,000	Secured: \$415,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BLM Assistance Agreement ▪ Hendricks Family Foundation ▪ NFWF-AGO ▪ Walton Family Foundation Pending: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BLM Healthy Lands Initiative ▪ Colorado State Forest Service Grant ▪ NFWF-PTI
	Maintenance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spot treatments of woody and secondary weeds on over 750 acres 	\$85,700	
	Rapid Monitoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conducted across a sub-set of actively treated sites in the watershed 	\$15,000	
	Capacity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Partnership coordination and planning 	\$146,600	
	Total for 2015	\$502,300	
2016	Implementation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continued treatments of dense Russian knapweed and tamarisk resprouts ▪ Advancing new projects with volunteering private landowners 	\$125,000	Secured: \$50,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BLM Assistance Agreement ▪ Hendricks Family Foundation Pending: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BLM Healthy Lands Initiative
	Maintenance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spot treatments of woody and secondary weeds ▪ Active revegetation in areas where passive revegetation is not occurring 	\$86,500	
	Rapid Monitoring: same as previous assessment	\$15,000	
	Bird Monitoring: conducted at 60 representative sites	\$40,000	
	Capacity:	\$78,500	
	Total for 2016	\$355,000	
2017	Maintenance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spot treatments of woody and secondary weeds on over 750 acres ▪ Active revegetation in areas where passive revegetation is not occurring 	\$90,000	Pending: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BLM Healthy Lands Initiative
	Rapid Monitoring: same as previous assessment	\$15,000	
	Bird Monitoring	\$40,000	

	Capacity:	\$63,000	
	Total for 2017	\$168,000	
2018	Maintenance: same as previous year's prescriptions	\$60,000	Pending: ▪ BLM Healthy Lands Initiative
	Rapid Monitoring: same as previous assessment	\$15,000	
	Bird Monitoring: same as previous assessment	\$40,000	
	Capacity:	\$37,000	
	Total for 2018	\$152,000	
2019	Maintenance: spot treatments	\$43,000	Pending: ▪ BLM Healthy Lands Initiative
	Rapid Monitoring: same as previous assessment	\$15,000	
	Bird Monitoring	\$40,000	
	Capacity:	\$22,000	
	Total for 2019	\$80,000	
Total for 2015 - 2019		\$1,257,300 total cost	\$415,000 total secured

Note: All costs in Table 1 reflect 2015 dollars and do not include inflation.

New Approaches for Fundraising

Since 2009, the DRRP has raised \$3.9 million in private and public funds (primarily through grants and the BLM Assistance Agreement) for project implementation (e.g. contractors using excavators, or trained crews equipped with chainsaws clearing daunting stands of tamarisk). Challenges remain to secure financial resources for the partnership, but a mixed approach of new and old tactics will be used.

The DRRP will continue to utilize available grant funds; however the partnership recognizes that many of the needs outlined in this transition plan are challenging to support through grant monies alone, due to the short-term and often restrictive nature of grant funding. Thus far, the DRRP has been able to balance the project-specific nature of grant funds with the utilization of the BLM Assistance Agreement, which has been much more flexible in terms of what the monies can be used for and when (i.e., it helps to fill gaps not covered by grant dollars).

To meet our **remaining fundraising goal of approximately \$842,300**, the DRRP's Funding Subcommittee is focusing on the following three main components of the DRRP's fundraising plan (see Appendix D for more details on the fundraising plan):

- 1) **Apply for grants:** The DRRP will maintain their traditional approach through the funding subcommittee to apply strategically for grants. For example the subcommittee utilizes existing relationships with grantors for select work (e.g. Colorado Water Conservation Board, Utah Watershed Restoration Initiative).

- 2) **Renew the BLM Assistance Agreement:** DRRP is working with BLM to secure additional funding (e.g. perhaps through the Healthy Lands Initiative) that would populate the Assistance Agreement with additional funding.
- 3) **Create a “Partnership Fund”:** The fund will be comprised of multiple funding inputs, managed by a third party community foundation, and will be spent as needed by the DRRP to cover relevant monitoring and maintenance needs. The fund will differ from the traditional approach of utilizing grant money in that it will be able to house individual and corporate donations and other more discretionary funds that can then be used as needed by the partnership. It will function similarly to the Assistance Agreement in that it provides flexibility, accessibility, and responsiveness to the needs of the DRRP (see Appendix D for more details).

Complementary strategies to support the fundraising plan include:

- Keeping the Funding Subcommittee active and engaged in DRRP fundraising efforts
- Work with federal and state agencies to sustain larger investments in DRRP project work (e.g. Colorado Parks & Wildlife Species Conservation Trust Fund).
- Build and cultivate sustaining relationships with both existing and new funders
- Developing a campaign that leverages multiple sources of funding and major donations to establish the Partnership Fund
- Identifying a list of viable, interested donors
- Integrating these funding efforts with the communications initiative (see page 13)
- Increasing local capacity (e.g. in the form of staff or volunteers) to help implement some of the more involved fundraising strategies (e.g. donor outreach, organizing events) that the Funding Subcommittee develops

Progress Tracking and Annual Reporting

The DRRP will continue to produce annual reports (see Appendix F) to track progress towards our shared goals. Additionally, with restoration work occurring across two states, four BLM field offices, and six counties, the DRRP will also begin utilizing a Geographic Information System that will (1) spatially and more consistently track restoration treatments that have been conducted across the watershed and (2) report progress towards meeting key milestones for restoration success (see Appendix B for more details). BLM and TC will play a leading role in maintaining this tracking system.



Communication Plan

The original content created in 2014 for this section has been removed. A 2015 DRRP Communications Plan outlines four goals, each with associated strategies and objectives.

Goal 1: Garner financial support from existing and new funders

Goal 2: Bolster the lasting constituency of local stewards and advocates for the Dolores River

Goal 3: Share lessons-learned to enhance restoration outside the Dolores River Basin

Goal 4: Keep DRRP partners motivated and engaged.

The Communications Plan and DRRP marketing materials developed in 2016 address the needs and opportunities originally identified in this section of the Transition Plan.



Governance and Partnership Commitment

At its inception, the DRRP was developed as what some scholars (e.g. Imperial & Koontz 2007) refer to as an “inter-organizational network”. In such an arrangement, this network of partners does not possess regulatory power, but relies on trust and good working relationships to make decisions and respond to emerging challenges, needs, and opportunities. Those roles and relationship, in turn, were formalized with a DRRP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), signed and completed in 2010. A second MOU was signed in 2015. Several topical subcommittees and an advisory Core Team, comprised of the subcommittee chairs and BLM leadership, assist the overall partnership in reaching its restoration goals. Subcommittees are created, streamlined, and merged based on annual evaluations completed during partnership meetings and Core Team retreats.

Across the board, DRRP partners believe this current network arrangement, which represents substantial years of building social capital, can and should be sustained. Additionally, partners have articulated a commitment to meeting—through subcommittees, workshops, and at annual meetings—for years to come.

- The Implementation & Monitoring Subcommittee, Funding Subcommittee, and Stewardship Subcommittee, as well as the Core Team have been identified as critical for implementing the Transition Plan.
- The 2015 DRRP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) affirms and renews 30 partners’ roles and responsibilities for advancing this transition plan.
- Cooperative agreements, assistance agreements, and other mechanisms will continue to be implemented and/or explored to support M&M work.
- A forthcoming DRRP Stewardship Plan will outline additional partner commitments and complementary strategies for education and community engagement that will protect and build on the shared restoration investment in the Dolores River riparian corridor.



Conclusion

Implementing this transition plan will provide important opportunities for self-appraisal, refinement, and learning that will be shared not only within the DRRP, but also with other restoration partnerships.

The DRRP also recognizes that the implementation of this transition plan will impact people and organizations in various ways. As such, this plan seeks to be transparent and timely; informative and based on feedback from all partners; as well as comprehensive and responsive to emerging challenges and opportunities.

With these values and the long-term monitoring and maintenance strategies outlined here and in the accompanying appendices, the DRRP is confident that we have the right set of tools and commitments to protect our shared investments in the Dolores River.



Appendices A – E

See enclosure for appendices that provide background and additional details related to this plan.