#### Meeting Date: December 13, 2018

#### Time: 9-11 am

#### Location: Mesa County Central Services Building, 200 S. Spruce St.

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| **Meeting Attendance** | | | |
| **Last** | **First** | **Affiliation** | **Email** |
| Bloodworth | Ben | RiversEdge West | bbloodworth@riversedgewest.org |
| Cooper | Dawn | Colorado Canyons Association | dawn@coloradocanyonsassociation.org |
| Ewing | Amanda | US Bureau of Reclamation | aewing@usbr.gov |
| Firmin | Pete | Colorado Parks & Wildlife | pete.firmin@state.co.us |
| Free | Jim | Western Colorado Landscape Collaborative | jcfree2@msn.com |
| Freels | Eric | US Forest Service | erickfreels@fs.fed.us |
| Gay | Rob | Colorado Canyons Association | rob@canyonsassociation.org |
| Hatch | Shannon | RiversEdge West | shatch@riversedgewest.org |
| Herrman | Chris | Western Colorado Community Foundation | ChristopherHerrman@yahoo.com |
| Hodges | Mark | Colorado Parks & Wildlife | marks.hodges@state.co.us |
| Ireland | Terry | US Fish & Wildlife | terry\_ireland@fws.gov |
| Kate | Lunz | Interested Individual | Kate.lunz@gmail.com |
| Lidberg | Cory | US Bureau of Reclamation | clidberg@usbr.gov |
| Long | Kamie | Colorado State Forest Service | kamie.long@colostate.edu |
| Lovoi | Derek | Colorado Parks & Wildlife | derek.lovoi@state.co.us |
| Mittleman | Ross | Interested Individual | ross.mittelman@gmail.com |
| Moore | Martha | Colorado River District | mmoore@crwcd.org |
| Murphy | Molly | National Park Service | molly\_murphy@nps.gov |
| Musser | Justin | Montrose County | jmusser@montrosecounty.net |
| Nees | Teresa | Mesa County | teresa.nees@mesacounty.us |
| Nees | Alex | SGM | alexn@sgm-inc.com |
| Neubaum | Dan | Colorado Parks & Wildlife | daniel.neubaum@state.co.us |
| Neuhof | Joe | Colorado Canyons Association | joe@canyonsassociation.org |
| Patch | Courtney | Mesa County | courtney.patch@mesacounty.us |
| Paul | Doug | Upper Colorado Interagency Fire Management Unit | dpaul@blm.gov |
| Perovich | Carlyn | US Forest Service | cperovich@fs.fed.us |
| Rizza | John | CSU Extension/Natural Resources Conservation Service | john.rizza@colostate.edu |
| Roberts | Jeff | Western Colorado Conservation Corps | jroberts@mesapartners.org |
| Toolen | John | Retired Guy | jtoolen@bresnan.net |
| Varner | David | RiversEdge West | dvarner@riversedgewest.org |
| Wadas | Shannon | RiversEdge West | swadas@riversedgewest.org |
| Walker | Meredith | Grand Valley Audubon | gvas.executivecoordinator@gmail.com |
| Werkmeister | Melissa | US Bureau of Reclamation | mwerkmeister@usbr.gov |
| Wilson | Sarah | RiversEdge West/Natural Resources Conservation Service | swilson@riversedgewest.org |

## Project Updates ([see PowerPoint for specifics](https://www.riversedgewest.org/events/meetings) for REW and Audubon)

**REW (in collaboration with Mesa County and NRCS/CSU Extension):**

Tierra Creek and other Private Lands in the Redlands

* Mesa County, CSU Extension, and REW worked on several private lands parcels
* Mesa County initially involved along Tierra Creek because of difficulty accessing purple loosestrife along the creek

Mountain Island Ranch - Little Dolores River

* REW worked with contractor and Western Colorado Conservation Corps (WCCC) to clear about 6 acres of Russian olive
* Challenging due to the density/access

Maintenance

* Strike team completing resprout and secondary weed work on CPW, USBR, Mesa County, and Audubon properties
* Funded through CWCB and REW

Volunteer Projects

* Xcel Energy project this summer on CPW property; successful thanks to WCCC
* Clifton Nature Park
  + Public volunteer days last 2 years; local organizations sponsor a day to come out and work.
    - This year was with Colorado Baby.
  + Transplantation of native plants into area that was only kochia

Workshop

* BOR and REW hosted Wetland Ecology and Management Class; toured local wetland sites.

Monitoring

* REW worked with CMU to finish geomorphic monitoring this summer along the Colorado River.

**Meredith with Audubon:**

* Received Ducks Unlimited grant to do wetlands improvement on the property.
  + Including cautious invasives removal as part of grant.
  + In the near future, Ducks Unlimited is going to work on gravel pits and do some re-contouring and turning them into shallow water wetlands.
* REW and Patagonia grant money funded native plant installation on Earth Day
  + No irrigation on the site, so for larger trees installed large barrels from a car wash. Meredith would fill up the barrels once a week and the trees did fairly well. Fifty shrubs along the understory- used ollas buried next to the plants. Once a week volunteers would go out and fill the ollas.
  + Success rate from plantings- 7 out of 9 trees; 81% of shrubs survived.

**Melissa with USBR:**

* Cory has been working with the prison crews on wildlife areas
* GV Irrigation Company working on Redland power canal completing planting
* Cameo; working on logistics for a crew to spray secondary weeds

**Eric with USFS:**

* Wet Meadow restoration work completed with Wildland Restoration Volunteers
* Bull Draw Fire this summer; monitoring sediment load would be something of interest to collaborate on- not sure how sediment is playing in the Dolores. Working with BLM to minimize impacts.
* GMUG NF is in early discussions on what an Aquatic Nuisance Species monitoring program may look like for the lakes on the Mesa and evaluating the threats potential ANS issues would pose for the reservoirs and the watershed on the Mesa.

**Jeff with WCCC:**

* 100 youth served this year, 115 weeks of work, placed 30 individuals with BLM internships

**Jim with Western CO Landscape Collaborative:**

* Removing Russian olives along the Gunnison River
  + Utilized Honor Crew from Delta Correctional Facility
  + Burned piles
* Forest restoration project in the last year
* Take advantage of seed warehouse in Delta
* Million acres treated through invasive species projects

**Mark with CPW:**

* Tamarisk removal ongoing; youth corps came out for a week
* Weeds didn’t grow as much because of the drought
* Knapweed project going well with backpack spraying; also really great establishment of biocontrol

**Carlyn with USFS:**

* Sage grouse restoration project; monitoring side will get a scientific paper published

**Ben with REW:**

* Beetle down the last 2-3 years in entire region

**Justin with Montrose County:**

* San Miguel River- Follow up work and additional tamarisk and Russian Olive work
* Beetle releases in Montrose County

**Martha Moore with CRD:**

* Great to see so many projects

**Amanda with USBR:**

* Work with irrigation companies responsible for finding habitat replacement projects
* Trying to connect municipalities with REW and other entities regarding potential projects

**Joe with CCA:**

* Just started doing restoration work 2 years ago; mostly partner with BLM
* This year launched a river outfitting program and private science adventure camp on the river
* Worked on 6 sites on CO and Gunnison rivers with CWCB funding
  + 100 acres of weed work completed
* 5 volunteer events with 500 hours
  + Several volunteer events on private parcel
* Main goal is to get students out and on the river- ran 18 river trips with middle and high school students

**Pete with CPW:**

* Aquatic Nuisance Species program with CPW no longer gets severance tax- will have surcharges to fund this program starting Jan 1
  + Significant increase in inspections and de-contamination at Highline and elsewhere- growing threat
* Fire at Island Acres last spring, working with REW for reclamation
* Crew through REW and WCCC last two weeks
  + At 34 Road recently- private landowners concerned with slash piles and fire danger
* Difficulty with reclamation at Connected Lakes because of staff shortages
* Volunteer at Fruita clearing tamarisk and Russian olivef
* Flood irrigation has been successful at several sites; better than spray irrigation
* Hoping for funding for wildfire mitigation especially with transient camp issues

**Derek with CPW:**

* Planted 300 plants this summer on previously treated sites
* Wildfire at Horsethief; trying to keep ahead of secondary weeds

**Molly with CO National Monument:**

* Maintaining riparian area with invasive control
* New Chief of Resources- Laura Jones
* Anyone working with local youth- summer jobs are now open- encourage local kids to apply early and click Fruita as the location
* Exotic Plant Management Team (EPMT) - traveling teams based across the country.
  + Getting one here in the valley that will be run by a career seasonal position.
  + Program getting set up this year; following year will have a crew. These teams partner with BLM, BOR, etc.
  + Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks are also within our area, however, these areas don’t have a lot of off season work like the Grand Valley does – could be a good opportunity to get some work completed.

**Kamie with CSFS:**

* APHIS found a male gypsy month in town this year on 22 and H Road. Putting traps up this summer.
* Look out for Chinese lantern fly (spotted lantern flies)- mostly found on Tree of Heaven
  + Check out this great article by Meredith: https://entomologytoday.org/2018/02/26/spotted-lanternfly-states-urge-citizens-report-sightings-invasive-insect-hitchhiker/
* New building at research station- CSU Extension West Region staff will be housed there- diagnostic lab will have a new building as well. Building will be completed summer.

## Wildfire Coalition of Mesa County- Doug Paul

* Formed a year ago- Monument Meadows HOA work spurred conversation
* Mostly worked outside the Grand Valley but have recently become more aware of the fire danger in the Valley and a need for an increased focus.
* We (the DRC and the Coalition) are doing similar things even though we have somewhat different goals.
* While the public doesn’t see a rush to cut trees around their homes, many people became more aware of the need after the large fires in California.
* Next meeting we are putting together a mission statement; basically we are going to educate the public on fire risk, solutions, and achieve other goals for restoration and wildlife habitat.
* Other wildfire councils around the state are mostly fire people, however, we want the public involved along with other interests (realtors, Mesa County planning, etc.). Large goal is to educate our elected officials and decision makers.
* Small workshops periodically, targeted towards specific groups.
* Fire department is interested as well and they have a lot of equipment to bring to the table.
* River corridor is a high priority for emergency services but it is difficult to address with various landowners
* Money for fire mitigation is often an afterthought.
* Good resources
  + West Region Fire Council (includes Delta, Montrose, San Miguel, Ouray)
  + Southwest Region Fire Council

## US FWS Update

* Western Yellow-Billed Cuckoo
  + Listed species as threatened in Oct of 2014
  + Proposed critical habitat in Aug of 2014
    - Critical habitat is statement about areas being important for the bird.
* Fruita to Palisade critical habitat; however, any time you are doing a project in suitable habitat you should be thinking about the impacts
* Reasons for listing
  + Many threats to species
  + 90-99% loss of habitat
  + 680-1025 pairs range wide between US and Mexico
* Threats: hydrologic alterations, water management, ground water pumping, climate change, habitat loss, gravel mines, roads, non-native encroachment , pesticide effects
* Listing under ESA - have to be worried about “take”
* Habitat needs: overstory and understory needed (cottonwoods and willows mostly in CO), shrubs not as important but some cover is important, need further studies on habitat needs (most studies from CA and AZ).
* Overstory primarily used for foraging; understory for nesting
  + If tamarisk greater than 50% in an area, will typically not use
* Nesting - min. patch size is 12 acres with one area at least 100m wide
  + Within patch needs to be a very dense area for the nest
* Food items: in CA sphinx moths 45%, tree frogs 24%
* Riparian Restoration Measures to Avoid Take:
* See PowerPoint for specifics
* Partnering
  + FWS offers permit training
    - CPW does not need a permit but should still provide survey reports
    - Survey good for one year, since bird moves around a lot.
    - With grant projects that are phased over multiple years, it depends on what you are doing as to whether or not you would have to do a survey every year.
  + FWS-ES may occasionally have money for survey or research
  + FWS willing to discuss restoration
  + FWS willing to write letter of support for grants
  + FWS might even get out and help conduct on the ground restoration efforts
  + A season ahead of time is good to start talking about a project
    - Per protocol would need 2 years in advance.
* Birds do not use the same exact nest year after year, but they do like to come back to the same area. There has not been much research into nests specifically, so suggestion would be to leave a core nesting area untouched.

## Funding and Program Needs for Next Year:

#### Funding

* Missing a lot of people’s funding so please send to Shannon so she can create a more complete picture of funding for the partnership
* REW funding (secured)
  + A lot of funding in 2019 coming from ROR campaign
  + Alpine Bank, Grand Valley Water
* REW funding (pending)
  + REW put in $47,000 for CWCB
  + GOCO Stewardship Grant
  + Patagonia grant again for next year
* Teresa will be putting in for CO Department of Ag.

#### Program Needs

* Thanks to those who filled out the survey - it’s still open if you want to respond
* People know what they need to do; staff is the biggest resource missing
* Some interest in citizen science, heard today of interest in water monitoring
* GOGO grant will enable more comprehensive needs assessment
* Most people were interested in hosting volunteer events but didn’t think volunteer events were very helpful to maintenance.

#### Upcoming Grant Opportunities

* Env. Justice Grants
  + Community organization, mental and physical health
  + Can tie in benefits of Riverfront Trail, possibly use public health dollars. Look at open spaces as a community health asset.