



Desert Rivers Collaborative Spring 2022 Meeting
Wednesday April 27, 2022 10:00-12:00
Timberline Bank Community Room 649 Market St, Grand Junction, CO 81505
Coffee and light snacks provided

Key points:

- Send John any riparian treatment data you'd like to share
- Let John know if you need 2021 treatment or monitoring data from him
- Interest in adding your sites to the 2023 monitoring interns?
- Mesa County planning survey: mesacountysurvey.com
- What future meeting topics are you interested in?
- MOU:
 - What is the signing process for your organization?
 - Interest in helping review/update MOU?
- May 14-Riverfest in Grand Junction

Objectives:

- Provide updates on DRC coordination, projects, and partnership status
- Outline steps needed to update DRC MOU and Restoration Plan
- Establish a timeline for future DRC meetings

10:00 Welcome, John introduction, Agenda (John, REW)

10:10 Attendee introductions

In attendance:

REW Staff: John, Rusty, Shannon, Cara, Christine, Everitt

Duncan- Mesa County Weed, Ty Jones- Clifton Water, Lisa- River Program Manager with CCA, Kyle-BOR, Ivan- CPW, Derek- CPW, Jeff- WCCC, Ross- Trails with Mesa County Public Health, Kathy-USWFS, Marlin- BLM, Elis- Two Rivers Wildfire Coalition/GJ Fire, Kamie- CSFS, Pete- CPW, Hilary Henry- Senator Bennet, Trent Prall- GJ Public Works

10:25 DRC background and current status

- DRC history (John, REW)
 - Formed in 2012, collaborative approach to improving and maintaining riparian areas
 - Colorado River and main tributaries in Mesa County and the Gunnison from the City of Delta to confluence with Colorado River
 - Coordinate projects with multiple partners
 - If anyone has riparian treatment data they want to share please share with John
- Colorado Parks and Wildlife and DRC (Pete, CPW)
 - Strengthens partnerships
 - Shared resource: spray rig for herbicide application currently stored at Fruita, also have an irrigation pump and a tank that goes in the back of trailer = this has allowed CPW to move away from contractors and continue to support weed management
 - Information sharing:
 - BOR provided Utah State 2019 study on Russian olives

- Reclamation of upland sites using rough soil surface (Piceance basin restoration study from 2020)
 - CMU reference success of seeding at Connected Lakes
 - Weed inventory completed by REW interns in 2016, by CPW in 2019
 - Leveraged resources
 - Personnel and equipment
 - WCCC
 - REW- technical expertise, strike teams, recruitment of volunteer labor
 - Leveraged financial support
 - CPW wetlands grants and operating dollars
 - REW- closer to \$300,000 in support since 2012
 - Two Rivers Wildfire Coalition- improve public safety and protect structures
 - One Riverfront- efforts to enhance natural condition of river corridor
- Recent projects(John, REW)
 - Riverbend Park in partnership with Town of Palisade and WCCC, treated 7 acres of TRO, planted native plants and had 20 volunteers
 - Rimrock Adventures: cleared 5 acres
 - Fruita State Park- cleared 10 acres
 - Walter Walker SWA- over 300 plants
 - Monitoring interns- see storymap, in partnership with WCCC, REW would like to continue this program and continue to collaborate, if interested in adding sites for 2023 season let John know
 - Three protocols: main point/polygon, passive reveg, rapid monitoring- upper canopy cover and how is that changing over time
- DRC Memorandum of Understanding and Restoration Plan (John, REW)
 - Keep the momentum going
 - MOU is nonbinding, symbolic and shows commitment as a group, helpful in fundraising
 - Restoration Plan is not prescriptive- more about guidelines, prioritizing projects and best management practices, shows outside parties how we operate and what we are working on
 - Interest in increased recreation and riverfront use- helpful to have a Restoration Plan for community awareness
 - Make sure this plan is consistent with where we are actually as a group
 - Last plan was written in 2014

10:55 Related and complementary initiatives – 2 initiatives that have grown recently

- Two Rivers Wildlife Coalition (Ellis, TRWC)
 - Formed officially in November of 2019
 - Evolving for a few years- focused on wildfire risk
 - Valley floor is one of the biggest wildfire risks
 - Had a lot of different groups working in mitigation, response, recovery = not at a landscape scale
 - There are a lot of interest groups involved from view shed protection to clean air
 - Group differs from DRC as it focuses on upland areas
 - Learning network, mitigation outreach, neighborhood ambassadors (piloting in Glade Park), coordinated mitigation
- River Corridor Initiative (Rusty, REW)
 - Broader than riparian habitat
 - Joel Shoeltes with CMU is helping to drive this effort
 - Group hopes to address what our river corridor is going to look like and how it will be managed well into the future
 - Group completed listening sessions to gather stakeholder values
 - Currently have a grant to complete fluvial hazard zone mapping

- End product is yet to be determines, hope is to have local municipalities and the county to have placeholders in their plans with river management strategies
- Looking to pursue a larger grant from the State of Colorado or the Colorado River District for larger planning
- REW is going to eventually be a participant to ensure all stakeholders and interests and at the table
- Take the survey with Mesa County to express concerns and interests- Duncan to share the link (John to put link in the minutes)
- Trent- see the RCI being a master plan that draws in all interests, perhaps Mesa County is eventually the point

11:15 Outline next steps for MOU and Restoration Plan

- Who is missing from this conversation?
 - State Forest Service was missing from the list
 - City of GJ should figure out how they are going to participate in this
 - Look internally into your organizations to figure out who should sign
- Verify or update the role of your entity in the MOU
 - Not signing does not preclude you from working with the group
 - Can recognize federal agencies as advisory groups
- Interest in being part of an MOU working group
 - Hoping to get signatures in the fall or winter
- Other initial comments/suggestions for new MOU
- Preference for meeting frequency
 - No one against a fall meeting
 - Typically met twice a year in the past
- Other opportunities:
 - Workshops, trainings, site visit
 - Send John thoughts on what would be helpful to you
 - Cross visits- can go outside TRO for learning and sharing

11:35 Grand Valley Volunteer Resources and Opportunities (Cara, REW)

- REW is expanding our volunteer and education program
- Value in maintaining projects and nice way to connect with members and donors
- Looking to hire part time folks to help with these programs
- If managing properties with volunteer needs or have private land projects let Cara know
- Connected Lakes Volunteers will meet once a month on the first Tuesday
- If have other projects and REW gets a request- Cara will connect you with the volunteers
- Good to know if you have capacity limitations, what level of involvement you would like to have
- Would like to move the volunteer group around the valley
- REW can cover insurance liability or associated organizations can cover if volunteers sign up through CPW for example
- Expanding education program as well- continuing Wellspring Project (summer camp for middle schoolers) – if know of any middle schoolers who would be interested let Cara know or if you are interested in being a guest speaker
- May 14th- River Fest – REW is hosting a rubber ducky race

11:40 Additional partner updates or announcements

- Kamie is working with CPW on fuels mitigation projects locally
 - DNR is funding the program to provide the Department of Corrections SWIFT crews
 - Looking for shovel ready projects
 - Kamie will confirm if funding can go towards WCCC
 - Fuel reduction near homes is the main focus
 - Pete can share the application he submitted

12:00 Adjourn

DRC Memorandum of Understanding:

https://riversedgewest.org/sites/default/files/files/2017_01_11_MASTER_DRC_MOU.pdf

DRC Restoration Plan:

https://riversedgewest.org/sites/default/files/files/2015_06_03_DRC_Plan_Final_V1.pdf

River Corridor Initiative:

<https://www.riversedgewest.org/services/grand-valley-river-corridor-initiative>

Two Rivers Wildfire Coalition:

<https://www.tworiverswildfirecoalition.org/>