

Review of Valley-wide Project Status Map (Shannon Hatch)

- Discussed results of 2016 monitoring efforts by interns hired by Tamarisk Coalition; see [posted presentation](#) for monitoring data
- DRC Goals Review (Hannah Holm)
 - *Ecological* - Restore and maintain native riparian habitat along the Colorado and Gunnison Rivers and their major tributaries
 - *Social* - Foster community pride and livelihood through improvement of passive and active recreational experiences and opportunities for engagement along rivers and associated tributaries
 - *Economic* - Provide the local community economic incentives and employment opportunities for removing invasive plant species on their own property
 - *Management* - Employ adaptive management strategies that facilitate communication and coordination between land managers, landowners, and partners

Partner Round Robin – Partners asked to provide update on current work in context of DRC goals listed above (All)

- John Rizza – Natural Resources Conservation Service/CO State University Extension
 - Current work - working to maintain work along Monument Road near Lunch Loops
 - Difficult to keep private landowners engaged, but looking pretty good
 - Upcoming work - using CWCB funding to work on private lands in the Redlands area
 - Have engaged a number of private landowners to remove Russian olive; will be starting work in 2017
- Pete Firmin – Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)
 - Ecological goals/challenges
 - Continued issue with beaver cutting down cottonwoods; removal of tamarisk and Russian olive clears a path for them to access trees better
 - Social goals/challenges
 - Engaging adjacent property owners and middle school students in work
 - Some property owners have a fear of ‘what’s next’ after tamarisk removal; e.g. will there be more trail users, hunting, etc.?
 - Pete thinks removing tamarisk/Russian olive helps with transient problem
 - Economic goals/challenges
 - Utilizing private contractors and Conservation Corps extensively, as well as CPW staff
 - Pete thinks if the quality of the park land is improved then the property value of adjoining private lands should increase
 - Management goals/challenges
 - Increased irrigation helping with restoration success
 - Sites are seeing increased fishing numbers, which has benefits and drawbacks
- Jim Free – Uncompahgre Partnership (UP)

- Working in Dominguez-Escalante NCA
 - Started at top of watershed working way down to the Gunnison
 - Russian knapweed most common invasive they are treating – 3rd year of treatment
- CWCB funded 8-miles of Russian olive removal starting at Pleasure Park along Gunnison River
 - Accomplished 70% of Russian olive removal using 4 weeks of Conservation Corps, plus Delta Correctional Crew (18 days with them – 3 chainsaws, 4 swampers; crew really enjoys work)
- UP Native Plant Program continuing to produce seed for revegetation
 - Seeds stored at CPW warehouse in Delta
- Julia Bowman - Western Slope Conservation Center
 - Recently completed Paonia River Park work
 - Working on river access and other information sharing with public
 - Completing plans on Smith Fork and other drainage
 - Work with Colorado Canyons Association
- Ryan McConnel I- Colorado Canyons Association
 - Mostly working on Ruby Horsethief section – 3 sites funded by CWCB, as well as some private lands work
 - Incorporate volunteer work with BLM efforts
 - Also coordinating monitoring on these sites
- Frank Watt – Town of Palisade
 - Working on treating various portion of Riverbend Park (105 acres total)
 - Great success with willow establishment, maybe less success with cottonwoods
 - Service road through park didn't take well to seeding efforts – will work to reseed this
 - Lots of festivals on east end, but on west end really want to try and keep/make that more native
 - High use with dogs, disc-golf, etc. – education about restoration efforts is a good thing
- Stacy Beough - Tamarisk Coalition (TC)
 - TC website finally updated, including Resource Center, which provides information for all land managers/land owners
- Daniel Oppenheimer - Dolores River Restoration Partnership (DRRP)
 - DRC and Southeast Utah Riparian Partnership (SURP)
 - Beneficial cross-visit in Utah; learned a lot – one example – biocontrol and soil chemistry links
- Melvin Woody – US Forest Service
 - New focus on wilderness in the last couple years; also focusing on improving riparian areas
 - Looking forward to meeting and talking with folks – new to DRC
- Teresa Nees - Mesa County
 - County line to county line river survey on Colorado River

- Still planning on surveying sections of the Gunnison but had to put it off until next year due to weather issues etc.
 - Teresa will follow up with DRC members next year for help next year if interested
- Teresa's funding is from County and Dept. of Ag; as this is state funding, she is Tabor limited.
 - Teresa is looking to expand to other funding sources that aren't Tabor limited
 - Looking to partner with DRC members on grants, cost-sharing, etc.
 - Her focus is invasive species control, less about revegetation efforts so could be a good partnership
- Purple loosestrife in Redlands area that is washing down to river
- Melissa Werkmeister - Bureau of Reclamation
 - Recently completed cottonwood thinning for wildlife habitat
 - Goals to open up trees to create other vegetation layers. Mostly for wildlife but also for passive-recreation (bird watching, etc.)
 - Removed 900 trees as part of project, including Siberian elm, Russian olive, some tree of heaven; project also include cottonwood fencing as protection against beaver
 - Conservation Corps helped with this along with other groups
 - Hosted several volunteer events to remove weed barrier
 - Weed barrier didn't break down the way it was supposed to
 - Orchard Mesa State Wildlife Area
 - Working with Grand Valley Water to remove 4-8 acres of tamarisk
- Ivan Archer – Colorado Parks & Wildlife
 - Irrigation water really enhances restoration success
 - Recently purchased new educational interpretive signs regarding wildlife, restoration work, etc.
 - According to Melissa Werkmeister, these are model properties for others in BOR to check out and learn from
 - Upland sites
 - CPW did some cheatgrass trials near Horsethief SWA
 - Spent a full year on chemical application (used Plateau)
 - The next year used a machine create divots in soil to trap sheet flow and other precipitation.
 - Seeded with typical upland mix
 - 4 plots total
 - 2 plots got polymer mixed in but didn't seem to help, however, may not have incorporated polymer deep enough in soil and with freeze-thaw it came up to surface. Did see good germination down in bottom of divots versus at top.
 - Danielle Johnson with CPW spearheading this effort.
- Derek Lovoi – Colorado Parks & Wildlife
 - Just completed 500 acres of work across 5 properties

- Revegetation results with cottonwood pole plantings varied
 - On sites where they thought the planting wouldn't work the trees did well, versus on sites where they really expected success they didn't get it – going to sample sites in an attempt to determine variability
- Now in secondary weed treatment phase
- Russ Knight - NRCS
 - Working to secure more funding over the next year for other DRC partners such as Pete Firmin
 - DRC members should keep NRCS in mind when trying to branch out and work with nontraditional landowners (e.g. hobby farmers, private landowners, etc.)
- Mike Lobato – private landowner in The Ridges
 - City doesn't have funding to maintain certain areas with elm, Russian olive and tamarisk and he is concerned about this and is working to figure out a solution
 - He would really like to tackle these sites/figure out a way to get City to deal with these areas
 - Has contacted City to find out how to send out mailings to private landowners with pictures so that they could help raise awareness
- Nic Korte – Grand Valley Audubon Society
 - Wants to focus more energy on properties adjacent to Connected Lakes
 - Matt Reddy of Ducks Unlimited came out to property provided ideas to improve habitat
 - Looking at possibility of applying for a small-NAWCA grant
 - Working with City to enhance water habitat and support irrigation efforts
 - He feels that BOR is doing a really good job with birding
 - He is realizing that there needs to be better communication with birders when other partners are removing TRO
 - Are often surprised by lack of cover after removal in areas where they used to bird
 - Working on efforts to remove caging that is choking off cottonwoods (installed several years ago)
- Jason Beason – Bird Conservancy of the Rockies
 - Bird monitoring work on the Dolores River initiated this year comparing different restoration treatments and bird presence/response
 - Will also be expanding to Colorado River in Utah (they do have some historical data on Colorado River)
- Betsy Bair - Senator Gardner's office
 - Outdoor REC Act, which quantifies how much money is coming in on recreation lands heading to President Obama's desk for signature; would quantify outdoor recreation within GDP
 - Water Resources Development Act – 25 projects for Army Corps – one on South Platte and one on Arkansas to stop transfer of invasive mollusks. Also includes money to go towards Gold King Mine spill. Hoping this will come through in this congress in next week and a half.
 - Able to secure Land & Water Conservation Funds – now working to permanently fund this program; money trickles back into state

- Working to address some head gate access issues in wilderness
- Tackling fire funding in watersheds – takes money out of conservation projects etc. when fighting fires – so looking for a fix for this
- Senator Flake – drought bill on Colorado River – some movement on this – will come back in next congress. They are watching this very closely.
- Any DRC projects with a federal nexus; please reach out to their office for letters of support – would be happy to help
- Gigi Richard – Colorado Mesa University, Hutchins Water Center
 - Conducting project monitoring channel change on Colorado River
 - Need to get out and monitor these sites next spring before high flow
 - Also conducting a GIS analyses where tamarisk has and has not been removed – hoping to hire a GIS student to do work
 - Also surveying channel change along No Thoroughfare Wash
 - Found channel changed a fair bit
- Jeff Roberts and Matt Jennings – Western Colorado Conservation Corps
 - Employed 126 young adults this year
 - Helped with Paonia Loop trail this year – Russian olive and secondary weed control
 - Great that DRC members are helping provide education to Conservation Corps members
 - Cost = \$7500 per week for Conservation Corps crew
- Sparky Tabor – Bureau of Land Management
 - WCCC worked on Ruby Horsethief section for 4 weeks
 - Working from Loma to state line
 - Really working to get rid of all Russian olive and purple loosestrife
 - A lot of secondary weed and cottonwood work also
- Nate Higginson - Middle Colorado Watershed Council
 - MCWC interested in doing some work between Debeque and Glenwood Canyon
 - Looking to collaborate with DRC members to work on upcoming projects

Other Successes

- Colorado Riparian Association – Riparian Excellence Award given to DRC member Pete Firmin; congrats!

Other Resources

- Robert Mock, Wagner Rents: rmock@wagnerequipment.com; 970-245-6546
 - Has rental equipment and materials available for projects
- Todd Croke, Nilex Representative: tcroke@nilex.com
 - Streambank stabilization tools/equipment that could be helpful for DRC projects
 - Concrete cloth
 - Erosion control blankets, coir logs – if submerged in water can double its life span
 - Currently work with BLM and USFS around the state and surrounding states
 - An example – Westerly Creek, Aurora

- Daniel Bramlett – High Desert Riparian Nursery, Whitewater Colorado,
Daniel@highdesertriparian.com, www.highdesertriparian.com, 970-618-7390
 - Daniel's [presentation available on TC website](#)
 - Has deeply rooted riparian natives for sale – sedges, rushes, grasses, forbs, shrubs, trees; grew 8,000 plugs this year
 - Can help with installation, delivery, contract orders; also has equipment to help with planting (some may be available for rent)
 - Also working with wife to develop their acreage to be better wildlife habitat and do experiments related to this
 - Daniel also works with a lot of private landowners who want to improve their land but don't want to 'expose' themselves to government funding, etc.
 - Currently experimenting with seed germination rates to increase germination time
 - Elevations at his two grow out sites – 5500' and 6100'
- [AloTerra Restoration Services](#)
 - Has crew that could be hired to help do restoration/weed management

Goals and Objectives

- Where are we hitting the mark on our goals?
 - *Ecological*
 - 29 Road (CPW property)
 - Rooted stock doing well
 - Caging entire clusters of trees (instead of just individual trees) working well
 - NRCS suggested transplanting sedges to other sites; while Pete has had survival, thinks he needs more water manipulation to get sedges to spread faster
 - Horsethief SWA
 - Waffle planting in depressions appears to be successful
 - Palisade Riverbend Park
 - Social and ecological coming together; facility very valuable to town
 - Segments of community want more development, other segments want less development so is an interesting challenge, however, Frank has support from Board to continue to restore habitat at Park
 - Monitoring
 - Monitoring interns are a good way to assess ecological trends
 - Geomorphic monitoring has provided valuable information
 - *Social*
 - Jim Free has heard a lot of good response from people on Gunnison as far as improved access and fishing goes
 - On North Fork and Lower Gunnison – more boat/rec access points opening up – exciting
 - As noted above, Riverbend Park improvements have been well received

- Non-profit events have been a great way to engage the community
- *Economic*
 - Providing jobs to the WCCC and various contractors has been highly beneficial
- *Management*
 - Semi-annual gatherings to share information via field trips and other meetings is valuable
- Where could we improve? Ideas to address provided in **BOLD**.
 - *Ecological*
 - Need more emphasis on upstream sources of invasives
 - Frustration with poor success of pole plantings
 - Don't have enough knowledge about the salinity in their soils as to why some plantings work and some don't
 - Missing mid-story/understory on several sites
 - Many sites need additional follow-up
 - **Continue to monitor sites for a minimum of five-years; complete maintenance work when needed**
 - **Ensure grant funding provides enough money to complete re-treatment and revegetation**
 - *Social*
 - Need more outreach and education
 - Better communication with partners and public about what projects look like while 'in transition'
 - Need to improve signage to try to get consistent message across different restoration sites
 - **See CPW signs for an example**
 - **A quarterly newsletter would help improve communication; as would more frequent website updates**
 - **Might be good to connect with Drought Response Information Project (DRIP)**
 - Need to address controversy about opening some areas up to increased recreation/access
 - Still mistrust from private landowners about ramifications of work
 - **Sign in sheets at trailheads/main sites could help to gather information about users' opinions**
 - Would be good to become more involved with Grand Valley Coalition for the Homeless/Homeward Bound to address issues with transient populations living in tamarisk
 - *Economic*
 - Need more opportunities to work with private landowners
 - Would be good to check in more with Outdoor Recreation Coalition
 - *Management*

- Continue to collect data about what is working and not working
 - Need to have better planning around irrigating restoration sites
 - Continue improved coordination and communication with contractors
 - Now that sites like Walter Walker are more open, need to think about how to support increased use like trash cans, etc.
 - Need a plan to maintain gains made to-date on all sites
- Other Challenges/Questions

DRC in the Context of Other Programs

- Colorado Parks & Wildlife Overview (JT Romatzke)
 - Have a lot of different programs that may be able to help partners
 - Cash funded agency – get a lot of Federal funding to state
 - Wetland grant programs – haven't seen many wetland grant programs come through his area – great opportunity to partner with different agencies
 - This next year trying to get a license fee bill to fund wetlands program, etc.
 - Working to develop Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) with Mesa County around Western Yellow Billed Cuckoo
 - Have a lot of different wildlife maps etc. that CPW could share if DRC members are interested – not necessarily currently released publicly
- Hannah Holm (CO Water Plan)
 - Riparian health being addressed in Colorado Water Plan, as well in more localized watershed planning efforts
 - Addressing flow needs as well as wetland and watershed health – a more integrated discussion than it used to be
 - CWCB and others trying to figure out how to keep momentum behind these plans with limited funding
 - To learn more about these planning efforts go to CMU Water Center
- Grand Valley Drainage District (Tim Ryan and Angie Fowler)
 - Find full presentation on [TC's website](#)
 - GVDD and SGM developing **Grand Valley and DeBeque Canyon Integrated Water Planning Initiative** (not just a stream management plan – expanding it to include ag, industrial, etc.)
 - Educate stakeholders on watershed health, water quality issues and upcoming TMDL process (e.g. selenium and *E. coli*)
 - Support long term collaborative water quality and storm water drainage solutions
 - Integrate local planning with statewide efforts
 - Colorado Basin Roundtable Stream Management Planning and Basin Implementation Plan
 - Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit Compliance
 - Upcoming Tasks
 - Survey stakeholders
 - Organize and facilitate two stakeholder meetings

- Develop a Coordination Plan
 - Obtain support/commitments
 - Describe roles and responsibilities for each cooperating organization
 - If role will include providing match dollars, describe how that will be accomplished
- TMDL component
 - Adobe and Leach Creek – water quality impairment issues for *E. coli* and selenium associated with these two areas.
 - In 2017 are collecting data, developing standards in 2018
- Other funding that is/may be supporting these efforts
 - CDPHE 319 Funds
 - CWCB Watershed Restoration Grant (submitted Nov 2016)
- Hoping to get common projects aligned with their effort in Grand Valley

Other Funding

- Riverfront Commission
 - Supporting Las Colonias Park development, etc.
 - Have been trying to get more creative with funding to help pay for continued maintenance of trails, boat launches, restoration efforts, etc.
 - Embarking on early stages of implementing a voluntary surcharge program in the Grand Valley – modeling it after other communities that have done this – e.g. Verde Valley in Arizona
 - Will help to raise money and awareness with the public.
- Tamarisk Coalition
 - Restore our Rivers campaign (\$2.42 million dollar campaign)
 - Goal to access more private foundations and donors to support capacity and other parts of riparian restoration efforts that are more difficult to fund
 - Tamarisk Coalition coordinating with 9 watersheds on this project
 - \$244,000 raised by partnerships to date of non-project money
 - Have reached 45% of fundraising goal.
 - 51,000 acres will be restored by these 9 partnerships; also employing lots of local community members
- Other grant opportunities
 - [Colorado River District grant](#) is open until January 31st, 2017
 - [Colorado Water Conservation Board](#) - Water Supply Reserve Account
 - [Small North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant](#) (see more below about potential projects)
 - [Temper of the Times Foundation, Inc.](#) (for advertising/outreach)
 - [Desert Ecosystem Analysis and Restoration \(DEAR\)](#)
 - Provides grants up to \$2000 to support education, etc.
 - Grant deadline Jan 15, 2017; final decision in approximately April

Prioritizing Future DRC Work (Shannon Hatch)

- See 'Decision Factors for Funding DRC Project Work' document that was handed out when thinking about how projects might fit into bigger picture
- Possible projects for small-NAWCA grant request (discussed at last DRC meeting per encouragement from Ducks Unlimited)
 - Audubon Site
 - Working with City regarding irrigation water to improve resources
 - Aerate some ponds so don't get fish kill; please let Shannon know if you have experience with this to pass along
 - Increase water to one of ponds
 - Focus is on public use and education
 - Have a lot of cool ideas from Matt Reddy, but have limited resources – so would really like to partner with others to get this done, and need funding
 - Shannon agrees that DRC seems interested in expanding to more wetland restoration efforts (rather than just killing TRO)
 - Matt Sturtevant (sp?) of BOR could help bring capacity and technical assistance help for this project
 - Possible Gunnison projects that may or may not tie in with NAWCA
 - Dominguez-Escalante Resource Management Plan should be released in Feb 2017 approximately. BLM will then work with partners to get on-the-ground work planned (also have NEPA paperwork in the works)
 - Conservation Center is interested in working with CCA and BLM to address issues on the lower Gunnison – working with private landowners. Historically they have served the North Fork but now expanding.
 - Other notes re small NAWCA grant
 - Reframe monitoring and maintenance verbiage, as well as possibly expanding what all we want to do on these sites – e.g. another layer of continuing restoration for wildlife etc.
 - Ability to manipulate water levels may be key piece of NAWCA
 - Can we really do this on many sites (as per Pete Firmin's question)?
 - Also may be water quality issues that Barb Osmundson was concerned about (e.g. wetland creation may increase selenium)
- Other possible projects
 - Clifton Sanitation/Nature Park – Teresa would love to come up with a new project in there – needs not only restoration but also a lot of clean up etc.
 - Additional work on the Colorado River downstream of Loma; Split Rock site
 - CPW has a project that they are working on with NRCS but want to be careful with getting overextended with maintenance
 - Potential to do some work on Colorado Riverfront Trail in Fruita; jointly owned by County and City of Fruita
 - Additional work on BOR sites?

- Work at Delta Confluence Park (per email to Shannon prior to meeting)

Other Miscellaneous

- When filing taxes, look for Colorado for Healthy Landscapes Fund check off that can help fund noxious weed management in Colorado – contribute!
 - **Could help fund wrap up restoration efforts on a project to help get things completed!! Really flexible.**

Next Steps

- Please send Shannon a list projects that need ongoing maintenance work so that a cohesive management plan can be drawn up
- Continue to send possible project ideas to Shannon; think in terms of DRC prioritization criteria
- Put more energy into pulling together possible NAWCA grant; may want to think about a WSRA grant as well through CWCB
- Send ideas about potential field trip sites/spring meeting topics to Shannon