Grand Valley Listening Tour Agenda

Date: December 4th, 2017
Time: 9 am – 4 pm
Location: Western bathroom at Canyon View Park (720 24 Rd)
*Please bring lunch; coffee and snacks will be provided*

Purpose of Listening Tour:

- Provide Desert Rivers Collaborative coordinator and participants feedback on:
  - Ideal bird habitat in the Grand Valley,
  - Where riparian restoration has been successful, from an avian perspective,
  - Where riparian restoration hasn’t been successful, from an avian perspective,
  - Where restoration efforts should currently be avoided, due to avian concerns,
  - Where restoration could be of benefit for birds, and
  - Timing, size, impacts of removal and revegetation efforts
- Inform Best Management Practices document pertaining to riparian restoration outcomes for birds

Tentative Agenda:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Land Manger/Owner</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00-9:20</td>
<td>Drive to Corn Lake</td>
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<td>9:20-10:30</td>
<td>Discuss/tour Corn Lake &amp; 29 Rd Complex</td>
<td>Pete Firmin, CPW</td>
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<td>10:30-10:50</td>
<td>Drive to Connected Lakes</td>
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<td>10:50-11:50</td>
<td>Discuss/tour Connected Lakes</td>
<td>Pete Firmin, CPW</td>
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<td>11:50-12:00</td>
<td>Drive to Watson Island/Las Colonias</td>
<td>Traci Wieland, City of Grand Junction</td>
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<td>12:00-1:15</td>
<td>Lunch; Discuss/tour Watson Island/Las Colonias</td>
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<td>1:15-1:30</td>
<td>Drive to Walter Walker</td>
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<td>1:30-2:15</td>
<td>Discuss Walter Walker</td>
<td>Derek Lovoi, CPW</td>
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<td>2:15-2:40</td>
<td>Drive to Horsethief SWA</td>
<td>Ivan Archer, CPW</td>
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<td>2:40-3:40</td>
<td>Discuss/tour Horsethief SWA</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:40-4:00</td>
<td>Drive back to Canyon View Park</td>
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Grand Valley Listening Tour Site Descriptions

**Corn Lake/29 Rd Properties – Owned and managed by Colorado Parks & Wildlife (CPW)**

**Corn Lake** was formed when groundwater was allowed to fill a former gravel pit. Tamarisk and Russian olive removal has been completed at the park, as has revegetation work. Colorado Parks & Wildlife faces several unique challenges for weed management at this park. The history of disturbance in this area is reflected in the presence of extremely poor soil, which creates high cost for reclamation, limits options for revegetation, and increases the chances of invasion by noxious weeds. Second, Corn Lake is located near privately- and publicly-owned properties with differing management. For example, the parcel immediately west of Corn Lake is located adjacent to an unmanaged field dominated by noxious weeds including spotted knapweed, chicory, and field bindweed. This perennial source of weed seeds adjacent to the property means that parks staff must manage weeds on the park’s property in addition to resisting the influx of weed seeds from nearby properties. Situations like this create a need for the park to partner with neighboring land owners and local weed management officials to extend weed management beyond the boundaries of the park in order to create a climate conducive to successful weed control.

The **29 Road Property** is part of a larger complex of publically held lands near the eastern end of the Valley. 13.5 acres are currently being treated for tamarisk and Russian olive, with native plant species revegetation ongoing. Volunteers have been used at this site to harvest and plant willows and other species.

Approximately 13 acres of this site (Phase 1) were cleared and revegetated in 2015, and other areas have been treated in the past. This site is located adjacent to the Mesa County Wetlands Mitigation Bank – Pickup Ponds site.
Connected Lakes
The goal of the Connected Lakes project is to restore a total of 48 acres of wetland, riparian, and upland habitat at the Colorado Parks and Wildlife owned and managed site. Smaller-scale restoration efforts were completed in 2011 and from 1999-2001 at the site (see map). In 2013, 24 acres of TRO were removed at Connected Lakes (Phase 1) with State of Colorado and matching funding. Secondary weed treatment and revegetation has been on-going at this site.

During Phase 2 of this project, an additional 24 acres of woody invasives removal and retreatment, secondary weed treatment, and revegetation, are being completed. This work is being executed according the James M. Robb/Colorado River State Park Noxious Weed Management Plan.

Las Colonias/Watson Island
Tamarisk Coalition started working with the City of Grand Junction and numerous other community partners to reverse the domination of weeds and invasive plants on Watson Island in the mid-2000s. By 2008, initial control and revegetation efforts were accomplished between the Botanic Gardens and the river. Informed by a restoration plan, additional removal and revegetation efforts continued at Watson Island through 2015. A pollinator garden was installed on the northern edge of the site in 2013; additional trees and shrubs were added by the City of Grand over the last several years.

Currently, the City of Grand Junction is working with several partners, including CPW and the Western Colorado Conservation Corps to improve 25 acres of riparian and wetland habitats adjacent to the Colorado River at Las Colonias Park. The goals of this project are to provide wetland-dependent migratory birds (and other fish and wildlife species) with high quality slough habitat on the property; and to increase support for wetland habitat conservation by the citizens and visitors of the City by making this section of Las Colonias Park accessible for outdoor exploration and education activities.
The intent of this project is to excavate and shape a new channel such that historic hydric regimes are restored to an area of the river whose natural meandering processes have been artificially restricted. The hydrology of the system will re-create environmental gradients from the new channel upwards that will supply targeted wildlife species with riverine, wetland and riparian habitats on the site.

**Walter Walker**

At this stop we will learn about large-scale restoration efforts currently underway at Walter Walker State Wildlife Area, a Colorado Parks & Wildlife property located along the Colorado River. This 450 acre site provides the largest protected resting area for wintering waterfowl in the Grand Valley and a number of other species, including Colorado River endangered fish species, find refuge at this site as well.

In 2014 tamarisk, Russian olive, and secondary weeds were treated on the majority of the site. Revegetation with cottonwood poles and willows was subsequently completed, with varying degrees of success.

**Horsethief SWA**

The Horsethief State Wildlife Area is owned by the Bureau of Reclamation and is managed by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. The area was acquired and developed to partially replace wildlife habitat values lost as a result of the construction of the Grand Valley Unit of the Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Project. Consisting of 2,080 acres, the land offers access to various trails and receives about 1,500 visits per year with visitation expected to increase as the area becomes better known. The area follows the Colorado River and as a result, its primary function is for wildlife habitat. Tamarisk once blanketed the area; since its removal revegetation efforts have been undertaken to improve wildlife habitat.