#### Meeting Date: August 29, 2019

#### Time: 9-11 am

#### Location: Mesa County Workforce Center.

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| **Meeting Attendance** | | | |
| **Last** | **First** | **Affiliation** | **Email** |
| Bean | Dan | Palisade Insectary | **Dan.bean@state.co.us** |
| Bloodworth | Ben | RiversEdge West | bbloodworth@riversedgewest.org |
| Brandenburg | Sara | National Park Service | Sara\_brandenburg@nps.org |
| Brooker | Sara | National Park Service | sebrooker@outlook.com |
| Childers | Theresa | National Park Service | Theresa\_Childers@nps.gov |
| Cohn | Montana | Mesa County | Montana.cohn@mesacounty.us |
| Collins | Libby | Colorado West Land Trust | libby@cowestlandtrust.org |
| Davis | Rob | City of Grand Junction | robd@gjcity.org |
| Ewing | Amanda | Bureau of Reclamation | aewing@usbr.gov |
| Firmin | Pete | Colorado Parks & Wildlife | pete.firmin@state.co.us |
| Fulton | Rica | RiversEdge West | rfulton@riversedgewest.org |
| Grant-Hoffman | Niki | Bureau of Land Management | mnhoffma@blm.gov |
| Jennings | Matt | Western Colorado Conservation Corps | mjennings@mesapartners.com |
| Krueger | Rick | Private Landowner | Rick1kruegar@gmail.com |
| Kukaritis | Cara | RiversEdge West | ckukaritis@riversedgewest.org |
| Lidberg | Cory | US Bureau of Reclamation | clidberg@usbr.gov |
| Lloyd | Rusty | RiversEdge West | rlloyd@riversedgewest.org |
| Long | Kamie | Colorado State Forest Service | kamie.long@colostate.edu |
| Lovoi | Derek | Colorado Parks & Wildlife | derek.lovoi@state.co.us |
| Murphy | Molly | National Park Service | molly\_murphy@nps.gov |
| Roberts | Jeff | Western Colorado Conservation Corps | jroberts@mesapartners.org |
| Schireman | Griff | Bureau of Reclamation | gschireman@usbr.gov |
| Sholtes | Joel | Colorado Mesa University | jsholtes@coloradomesa.edu |
| Timberman | Ann | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | Ann\_timberman@fws.gov |
| Wadas | Shannon | RiversEdge West | swadas@riversedgewest.org |
| Werkmeister | Melissa | US Bureau of Reclamation | mwerkmeister@usbr.gov |

## Project Updates

**Bureau of Reclamation Projects – Melissa Werkmeister, Lands and Recreation Group Chief**

* Three main projects this year in fire areas
* Cameo fire weed control: went out last November to do some Russian knapweed control- hoping to do some more control this fall
* Went to backpack spraying due to tires getting punctured
* Orchard Mesa Wildlife Property: houndstounge removal
* Salinity control project along the irrigation canal, required to replace habitat that was damaged or removed (25 ¾ road in the Redlands- southwest confluence of CO and Gunnison Rivers)
* GVIC installed a new head gate, seed put down, planted 255 trees and shrubs and caged= hoping to use as a model for other irrigation companies that want to do mitigation. Total of 6 acres, found 170 species of birds over the course of a few years so left some Russian olives until other natives could get established. Planted native plants in bunches instead of in rows. Box elder, cottonwood, mulberry in wetter areas. Uplands planted wild rose, NM Privet.
* GVIC will be responsible for the area over the next several years.

**Mesa County Weed and Pest Programs Overview – Montana Cohn, Mesa County Noxious Weed and Pest Management Coordinator**

* Montana is the only full time employee- there are 2 separate entities: Mesa County Noxious Weed and Pest / Upper Grand Valley Pest Control District
* Work mostly on private property since the county does not own a lot of open space and public land.
* Species of concern: tamarisk, RO, flowering rush, purple loosestrife, etc.
* Flowering rush found last year in June in Leech Creek at 24 ½ Rd and G Rd. Ornamental in origin, was listed as A species before found in CO. Have to dig it out- can grow as submerged or above the surface.
* CDA website has resources for invasive weeds in CO
* Yellow flag iris: watch list species, well established in a drainage ditch in the valley- few examples in ponds in CO, forms dense monoculture. Looks like cattails, difference is at the base with a fan base and flat at the bottom.
* Purple loosestrife: late flowering this year, over 100 sites in the county, mostly in the Redlands. 3 million seeds per plant. Partnerships: CPW, City of GJ, Grand County, Montrose County, REW, BLM, USFS, NPS.
* Yellow starthistle- found near Mesa, CO.
* Dry projects- education and outreach, gift card exchange program for some of the A list plants, eradication of high priority B species
* Site in Palisade has Chinese clematis

**Colorado West Land Trust Projects & Updates – Libby Collins, Project Manager**

* Stewardship impact grant through GOCO in partnership with the West Region Wildfire Council
* Reduce the threat of wildlife in designated Wildland Urban Interface areas throughout the Land Trust’s service area.
* Fire mitigation is usually focused on public lands, not as much on private lands outside of structures. Missing link are large properties with fuel loads= impacts local economies and public health.
* Service areas: Mesa, Montrose, Delta, 125, 000 acres in conservation easements. In Ouray County will use as a demonstration project.
* GIS will interface land with high use wildfire risk to determine areas of high priority.
* Start with mapping piece, landowner outreach, education in wildlife mitigation, who are the resources out there.
* Hoping to bring money to the table for the wildfire council by working with landowners and other entities.
* Demonstration project: Montgomery property is located on the hillside looking over the Dallas Divide Road in Ouray. Community Wildfire Protection Plan is factored into mapping. 140 acres, no structures, overgrown, receives a lot of lightning strikes.
* Total budget for treatment on demo project = 105,000
* Over 3 years= project pipeline in all three counties, list of interested landowners for when funds become available.
* New venture to enter into stewardship
* Possible riparian area mitigation will depend on what priority areas are targeted.

**Ann Timberman:**

* Funding through Salinity Control Program

## Tamarisk Beetle Movement Updates a

**Palisade Insectary – Dan Bean**

* Nina Louden runs the beetle program at the insectary
* Insectary is the western outpost for the CDA
* Originally created to control oriental fruit moths
* Before beetle was released in CO it was released in western NV in the Humboldt River Basin (released in 2001) = became a collection site
* 2005 released in Mesa County
* Sparky with the BLM was instrumental in helping to release the beetle in the valley as well as setting up monitoring sites.
* Russian knapweed has been at all of the sites prior to the beetle
* Present time: beetles are moving up and down Mesa County- this season there is an abundance going up towards Douglas pass, they are moving up the Gunnison, defoliation out towards Delta.
* Steady rise in populations across western CO in 2017 and 2018 (same pattern was observed in Dinosaur National Monument).
* The beetle only eats tamarisk- once there is no more food, they die off
* The Arkansas River basin has about 70% of the beetle population in the state.
* Mortality of tamarisk hangs around 30-40%
* Even if biocontrol keeps a plant steady it is successful
* In the future tamarisk will decline, but will never be eradicated. Flowering declines dramatically once defoliation occurs.
* Even without mortality the root system withdraws, fuel load diminishes. Fuel load is the same with green tamarisk as with defoliated tamarisk.
* Coniatus (northern tamarisk beetle) population has exploded over the years.

**REW Tamarisk Beetle Program map & curriculum (Ben + Cara, RiversEdge West)**

* REW does rapid monitoring for beetle data- both forms available on REW’s website. When the program started in 2007, REW was doing most of the monitoring along the rivers, then shifted to relying on partners for the data.
* REW puts on beetle workshops every year.
* Beetle map- NM is the only state with all 4 beetle species.
* This year we have seen a push further south- might make it to Mexico down the CO River.
* REW does have more funding for education programs- if you do get any requests for education let Cara know with REW and she can assist with up to an hour-long classroom curriculum.

## DRC Needs & Survey

Cost-share Strike Team program

* 2 person crew- try to find a way to cost share the program and be mobile within the DRC
* One of the purposes of the strike team is to maintain and protect our investments where we have completed work- both ecologically and socially
* REW wants to develop a list of projects so we can explain to funders what our priorities are and have a unified front
* Example of a projects: **CPW**- pole plantings have been a struggle where there is no irrigation, kochia was extremely bad this year- year to year secondary weeds change;

**NPS**: washes seeing thistle, knapweed, Siberian elms leaving urban areas and spreading on NPS land, riparian washes are where all of the invasives are coming from.

**CO West Land Trust**: Monument Rd and the new trail, REW went in a number of years ago, will need work in the future; putting together a native plant restoration plan to coincide with restoration work; need the City’s input but know there are limited resources

**Amanda**: Would be helpful to have more information about Phase II of restoration – potential topic of future meeting

**Action Items:**

Prioritize projects and areas – send to Rica

Creating Implementation & funding working groups

Program Needs

* + Discussion of DRC program needs moving forward – what would make the DRC more helpful? How do we best track projects/funding? Any projects that you need support with?