

WCRC Minutes

October 2, 2002

Intro of members: JB Alexander, Creede; Erik Sandvik, Creede; Leigh Ann Vradenburg, Watershed Coordinator; Mark Walker, CDPHE; Zeke Ward, Chairman WCRC; Kelley Thompson, AgroEngineering; Marvin Reynolds, CSU Coop. Ext.; Jim Mietz, SLV RC&D; Peter Ismert, EPA; Kim Larson, EPA; Laura Coppock, USFWS; Kathleen Reilly, CDPHE; Kip Nagy, Creede; Kim Nagy, Creede; Joe Burkett, Creede..

Approval of minutes: No corrections to the September minutes were suggested or submitted. Motion to approve the September minutes was made by JB Alexander; second made by Mark Walker. Motion carried.

Additions/corrections to the agenda: Discussion of a potential purchase of the Happy Thought was added under New Business as Item A.

In-Kind: Forms were provided in hard copy for volunteers to track time and other expenses. Leigh Ann encouraged monthly submission of these forms so that records could be kept current.

Coordinator's report:

Leigh Ann informed the committee of the journal article that she was sent: Wetlands Treat Mine Runoff (Civil Engineering, Jan. 1999). She explained the setup, costs, and efficiency of the treatment system at the Upper Blackfoot Mining Complex, and how it was and was not comparable to the Solomon Wetlands. She asked for the committee's comments regarding a feasibility study by MFG. Mark Walker indicated that MFG had not made a good enough case that a wetland system could work effectively year-round within our physical and climatic constraints. Kathleen Reilly suggested that we contact Ron Cohen with the School of Mines, and he might give us some insight into wetland options. Zeke Ward concluded that at this time we have not seen anything that would make us want to do a feasibility study.

Leigh Ann briefly discussed the National Nonpoint Source Workshop and the Colorado Watershed Assembly meetings she attended.

Leigh Ann informed the committee that she had made a presentation to the Paul Whitmore's 6th grade class in Creede. The class is interested in doing a cleanup project near the end of the flume. Zeke said that the committee is interested in participating in the cleanup, and that we should have the newspaper do a write-up of the event. Jim Mietz informed the committee that there is a poster contest and the 6th grade students could do a poster concerning their clean-up activities. He also indicated that the RC&D has funding for busing students for certain activities.

Old business:

Well drilling: Leigh Ann stated that the proposed date for USACE to start the well drilling was moved to October 21st. She also informed the committee that Bob Tridle, on behalf of Creede Resources, had objected to a borehole/well in the tailings pile. Mark Walker updated the committee as to the decisions of the well siting subcommittee. Wells were initially to be placed in: 1) a region of the highest Natural Potential anomalies; 2) a region of the highest Electromagnetic anomalies; 3) a region deemed by both geophysical methods to be outside of the contaminated area; 4) an area near the pile and near MW9 so that flux estimates could be obtained; and 5) an area on the Emperious Tailings Pile to determine groundwater levels and contamination below the pile. Jim Herron had called the office during the TAC meeting to inform the committee that he had spoken with Tridle and discussed an agreeable method for drilling a borehole in the pile and then re-filling it. The TAC committee concluded that the tailings pile well could be dropped from the scope of work and that we would continue discussions with Tridle and the USACE regarding a borehole.

Leigh Ann informed the committee that she had staked the proposed sites in the floodplain. There was a question of whether or not any of the new locations would fall within the right-of-way of the railroad (50' on either side of the centerline of the railroad). Leigh Ann indicated that the new wells were not planned within the right-of-way. Mark Walker made a motion to sample our old wells concurrent with USACE sampling the new ones (2 weeks after construction) and that splits of their samples should be sent to our lab for quality control; second made by Joe Burkett. Zeke added that parameters to be analyzed would be the same as those from the November 2001 and April 2002 sampling. Motion carried.

Underground sampling: Leigh Ann indicated that Jim Herron was interested in sampling water underground on November 7th, the day after the next meeting. Zeke summarized the purpose of the underground sampling as trying to do source control. Water levels also help us to identify different pools. Leigh Ann said that she had acquired from Kathleen Reilly a video that discussed underground investigations similar to ours. Leigh Ann thought that it might be beneficial to show this video to the city council as a form of outreach for the project.

Agro Final Report: Kelley Thompson indicated that Brian Hyde was interested in reviewing the final draft of their report before it was distributed. He said that they had also sent it to Montgomery Watson Harza consultants for review. The report was similar to the Technical Memo 2, but there were some modifications to the discussion of the Commodore.

Rio Grande Data: Leigh Ann distributed copies and summaries of the Rio Grande data that were obtained at the end of August. She indicated that these data confirmed the findings of the USGS in May- that there was an increase in zinc between the La Garita Bridge and the 4UR Bridge. The team that went out in August discovered a seep just below the La Garita Bridge on the west bank. This seep had high conductivity and total zinc concentrations; however, a significant amount of flow was not seen at the seep or as a difference between the two bridges. Leigh Ann said that she had sent this data to Andrew Ross (CDPHE). Mark Walker asked what the committee needed to do at this point. Kathleen Reilly indicated that she would discuss this with

Andrew Ross. Laura Coppock said that she would send an article to Leigh Ann regarding the influence of colloidal zinc and what it might mean in our case. The committee decided to wait to hear from Andrew before any further investigations were planned.

Tailing Pile Data: Leigh Ann distributed copies of the tailings pile data. Data summaries included TCLP analyses and 2:1 extractions for metals. Mark Walker told the committee that the 2:1 extraction was representative of what is occurring in nature. JB Alexander said that TCLP was usually for determination of hazardous waste, but that mine waste could not be considered hazardous waste. Peter said that our reasoning behind having TCLP run on hot spots was to give us some idea of our options for reclamation and/or storage. Leigh Ann requested that the committee decide whether TCLP analyses were necessary for some of the samples from the Happy Thought and the Last Chance, because the 2:1 extraction values were greater than some of the previously-deemed hot spots. JB Alexander made the motion to run TCLP on three of the sites from the Happy Thought and the Last Chance; second was made by Erik Sandvik. Motion carried. Mark Walker would like to see discussion of waste piles and site selection for remediation through the winter.

New Business

Happy Thought Potential Buyers: Kip and Kim Nagy are considering purchasing the Happy Thought land and wondered what role the WCRC would play in characterization and cleanup. Zeke indicated that the committee would help define the problems, and identify and implement remedies. Zeke said that if they purchased the property, they would have to be committed to the cleanup to remove any chance of liability. Mark Walker said that if they decided to move forward with this purchase, they should contact him about the Voluntary CleanUp Program.

Funding: Kathleen Reilly identified two upcoming deadlines for funding sources: December 3 for Consolidated Funding and November 21 for the Watershed Initiative (WI) grant. Peter described the WI and how it focused on results. Kathleen said that a meeting was held with a representative from the Governor's office to discuss the selection of the two proposals from Colorado. Zeke said that the stream channel restoration would be a good project to propose because a lot of the groundwork had been done by the NRCS, but we currently have not identified a funding source to implement the design. Leigh Ann indicated that she would talk to Laurie Clark and Steve Russell about getting a proposal together in such a short timeframe. Marvin Reynolds indicated that Diane Laughlin in Pueblo might be able to assist with some of the landscape design.

Bassett Well: Leigh Ann indicated that there was a private well on Bulldog Mountain that potentially tapped into the deep mine pool. We analyzed a sample from this well and found elevated levels of metals, especially silver, which might explain the persistent black coloration of the water. Leigh Ann indicated that she was discussing these results with Les Dobson, Bob Kirkham, the driller, and the well owners.

Final Items:

The next meeting will be November 6, 2002, with underground sampling on November 7.

Meeting Adjourned 3:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Leigh Ann Vradenburg