

## WCRC Minutes

June 12, 2002

**Intro of members:** Joe Burkett, Wason Ranch; Jim Matush, Creede; Brian Hyde, CWCB; Les Dobson, USFS; Don Gant, Creede and Trout Unlimited; Steve Russell, NRCS; JB Alexander, Creede; Mike Wireman, USEPA; Chuck Barnes, Creede; Lee Petersen, Creede; Jim Herron, CDMG; Erik Sandvik, Creede; Frank Bassett, Creede; BJ Myers, Creede Mayor; Dan Brennecke, **Weston Solutions, Inc.**; Kelley Thompson, Agro Engineering; Leigh Ann Vradenburg, Watershed Coordinator.

**Approval of minutes:** No corrections to the May minutes were suggested. Motion to approve the May minutes made by Steve Russell; second made by Jim Herron. Motion carried.

**Additions/corrections to the agenda:** To accommodate the schedule of Creede Mayor, BJ Myers, agenda items concerning the Midwest Mine buildings and flood control alternatives were moved to the top of the agenda.

### A. 2002 Reclamation work sites update/ Midwest buildings discussion:

Les Dobson provided a Power Point presentation detailing the reclamation plans at the Midwest, Phoenix Park, Phoenix Mill, and Gormax sites.

Plans at the Midwest include relocation of waste piles to a hillside clearing behind the buildings, with subsequent capping and re-vegetation. Les explained that the Phipps family relinquished unpatented claims at the Midwest site, and they will send a letter expressing no further interest in the buildings. The Forest Service will manage the Midwest land, but they do not want to assume liability and maintenance associated with the buildings. **The Forest Service would encourage the buildings to be put under private ownership through direct transfer from the Phipps. If it is the desire of the community to preserve the buildings, the Forest Service can authorize the buildings to left on National Forest System land through a special use permit. The Forest would try to permit the buildings without fees.** BJ Myers emphasized the historical significance of the buildings and indicated that the City of Creede might be interested in looking into a permit if the fees could be waived or if there was a long-term agreement. BJ will discuss options with Chuck Barnes and the Creede Historical Society, and will make this an item at a future city council meeting. **Les will work with the Phipps to see if they are interested in deeding the buildings to the town of Creede.**

Les summarized plans for the Phoenix Park Mill site. Plans are to consolidate the waste material in the lower pond and cap it with natural material from nearby berms. Mike Wireman asked whether Eric Twitty had looked at the old building on the stream bank, and the committee believed that this had not been done.

Plans at the Phoenix and Gormax Mines consist of drainage diversions around the waste/tailings

piles.

#### B. Flood control options at the Commodore site:

Kelley Thompson with Agro Engineering summarized TAC options for flood control measures at the Commodore site. He asked whether we have the option of changing the historic character of the site since both the upper flume and lower pipe are in poor condition and in need of replacement. Options include construction of a larger open flume through the site, or a large buried pipe. Kelley and Mike Wireman expressed concern about the stability of the area during construction/excavation. Mike stated that the town would have to weigh the costs and benefits of the options. JB Alexander said that trying to bury a pipe would be dangerous and potentially destructive to the site. Although more visible, an open flume might be better, and an interpretive sign could explain the necessity of such flood control measures. Chuck Barnes indicated that the Historical Society would probably understand measures that were necessary to ensure the safety of the city. Kelley will map the open flume plan and other piping ideas, and he will arrange with JB and Chuck for a presentation to the city council.

**Coordinator's report:** Leigh Ann Vradenburg informed the committee that the re-veg committee had conducted their grass planting on Tuesday, June 11. Steve Russell further summarized the treatments being analyzed in this year's grass plots.

John Nichols with URS is scheduled to conduct electromagnetic survey work in the floodplain starting Thursday, June 13.

**In-Kind:** Forms were provided by email and 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. Sign-up sheets for past water sampling and re-vegetation events were circulated.

#### **Old business:**

##### Airport Corner:

Leigh Ann provided an update on the status of the Airport Corner project. Zeke Ward made a presentation to the County Commissioners on Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, summarizing the work to-date at the site and the requests of the WCRC and Mr. Parker. The Commissioners agreed to relinquish the road easements on the property following negotiations with Mr. Parker for a site for a health care facility. The reclamation plan has been sent to Mark Walker, CDPHE, for pursuit of Brownfields money. Leigh Ann and Mike Wireman expressed that a flyer about the Airport Corner Project was necessary to address any questions or concerns that the public might have. Leigh Ann agreed to work on the pamphlet.

#### **New Business**

#### Topsoil:

Steve Russell indicated that he had looked into topsoil sources for future reclamation efforts. A local source, the Deacon ponds, would charge \$8/yd. Steve believed this to be good and weed-free. We could treat 4 acres with 1,100 cubic yards. Other prices were \$21/yd in Alamosa and \$7/yd +\$7/yd to haul in Del Norte. The topsoil can be temporarily stored on the Airport Corner site and we need to acquire it soon. Jim Herron expressed a concern that the source of the soil would indicate that it could consist of highly erosive silts. Mike suggested that it might be suitable for re-vegetation application. Motion that Zeke should pursue purchasing the Deacon topsoil given that the money is available and it has been tested for metals made by Mike Wireman; Second made by Joe Burkett. Motion carried.

#### Underground goals and objectives:

Mike Wireman clarified that the current objectives for the underground work are access and safety. Right now we will not be concerned with sampling water in the tunnels. Mike emphasized that we need to be methodical in our investigations given the limited money for that task. Joe Burkett asked whether or not the upcoming shaft closures by CDMG would affect our sites. Jim Herron said that he did not believe any openings are associated the Commodore/Amethyst system, but there may be one associated with the Solomon. He will confirm with Steve Renner. JB expressed concern that a closure might affect airflow in the tunnels.

#### Homestake proposal:

Les summarized the TAC discussions regarding Homestake's reclamation plans at the 9700 and 9360. He said that the proposal, as well as discussions with Alan Cox, led him to believe that there were some uncertainties that needed to be addressed. The TAC decided that the WCRC should send a letter to Homestake detailing the points of concern. Motion for Les to draft the letter, the TAC to review it, and for Zeke to sign the final copy made by Joe Burkett; second made by JB Alexander. Motion carried.

#### Colorado Historical Society:

Leigh Ann indicated the \$50 membership fees were due for the Colorado Historical Society. Motion to pay membership fees made by JB Alexander; second made by Don Gant. Motion carried.

#### Solomon wetlands:

Dan Brennecke updated the committee about the researcher who had developed the proposal for a feasibility study on the Solomon wetlands. Jim Herron suggested that Roy F. Weston should contact Dr. Tom Wildman at the School of Mines because he is a prominent researcher in sulfate-reducing systems. Dan will look into the possibility of Weston working with Wildman.

#### Final Items:

Zeke Ward will make a presentation at the CDPHE Nonpoint Source Forum in October.

The next meeting is moved to July 10, 2002.

Jim Herron, Bob Kirkham, and Bruce Stover will be investigating the Commodore tomorrow, June 13<sup>th</sup>.

Meeting Adjourned 4:04 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Leigh Ann Vradenburg