

WCRC Minutes

August 6, 2003

Intro of members: JB Alexander, Creede; Leigh Ann Vradenburg, Watershed Coordinator; Zeke Ward, Chairman WCRC; Jim Matush, Creede; Erik Sandvik, Creede; Jeff Graves, CDMG; Laura Coppock, USFWS; Jim Herron, CDMG; Bob Tridle, Creede Resources; Andrew Ross, CDPHE; Phil Bethke, Creede; Jim Mietz, SLV RC&D

Approval of minutes: Motion to approve the July minutes was made by Jim Herron; second made by Laura Coppock. Motion carried.

Additions/corrections to the agenda: The discussions regarding the proposal for pumping and electricity (7 A) and Wason Ranch (7 B) were moved to the beginning of the meeting so that Jeff and Jim H. could leave early.

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.

New Business:

Wason Ranch: Zeke updated the committee members that were not present at the TAC meeting about the discussions brought forward by Wason Ranch. John Fognani, a lawyer from Fognani, Guibord, Homsy, & Roberts, was present at the TAC as a legal representative for Wason Ranch. Fognani indicated that Wason Ranch is interested in pursuing a federal citizen suit against several of the mining companies that formerly or presently own(ed) land or operated in the Creede District. These actions fall under the citizens suit provisions of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act and the Clean Water Act. The intent is to effect investigations and clean-up in contaminated areas whether through cooperation or injunction. The Wason Ranch applauded the efforts of the WCRC, and they indicated a desire that the WCRC work with them in the clean-up. Zeke said that he had informed Wason Ranch representatives that the Willow Creek Reclamation Committee was founded on the principles of voluntary and cooperative clean-up. Without the committee's formal decision to change that position, the WCRC would not participate in legal action. There were no further discussions by the committee to change position on the issue.

Proposal for pumping and electricity: Jim Herron indicated that he had looked into options for dewatering the Nelson from the Berkshire Shaft. The purpose of this would be to access that area to determine inflows and water quality. The distance from the Berkshire to the Commodore portal is 7,762 feet. The alternatives for pumping include: 1) using a compressor, airline and diaphragm pump; 2) run electrical line into the mine for an electric pump; and 3) use a generator and electric pump. Noted problems with electricity and/or a generator include risks of shock and exhaust. Zeke said that compressed air seemed the best way to go. Ken Wyley and Jerry Wintz have evaluated the present airline in the mine, and it is 3,000 feet short of what we need. They

have found a source for 2" aluminum pipe at 50 cents/foot. Ken will check on the availability and cost of 4", and whether or not the cost includes couplings. Zeke said the county has an air compressor that we might borrow. He also said that although we have not determined a source for the pump, we should go ahead with purchasing and laying the pipe because of the time involved. Motion to approve up to \$8,500 for Ken to purchase the aluminum pipe made by Laura; second made by JB. Jim Matush asked if volunteers could help with pipe installation. JB asked if any of the pipe hangers were still in place. Jeff said that most of the old hangers were gone and would have to be replaced. Motion went to vote and carried unanimously.

Coordinator's Report: Leigh Ann informed the committee that the Community Clean Up Day had occurred on July 15th. The project encompassed the reach from the top of the flume to the confluence of East and West Willow. The City and County donated dumptrucks, backhoes, and manhours to the project. Wood debris and metal were pulled from the channel and the streambank. The metal was hauled to the dump, and the wood was piled up for drying and burning once the burn ban is lifted. An article and picture from the event appeared in the Mineral County Miner.

Leigh Ann said that Jim Erdman was interested in collecting samples on August 20 for a study on plant uptake of metals as an indicator of groundwater contamination. She said that he had indicated that he might not do the La Garita site to determine the location of the seep on the Rio Grande. Zeke said that we would like to see that area done, and suggested that Leigh Ann determine Jim's reasoning for omission.

Leigh Ann said that in the next month, before construction on the reclamation project begins, she needed to do photopoints at the sites. Due to the delay in 319 funding, she needed a source of free stakes to mark the sites. Zeke suggested digger link discarded by potato farmers. He could cut the wire and make tin tags. Jim Mietz said that he would contact some farmers and determine a source.

Leigh Ann indicated that she plans on attending the Colorado Nonpoint Source and Colorado Watershed Assembly meetings in September. She would like to present posters at both events. Leigh Ann and Zeke have been invited to speak at the Colorado Riparian Association meeting in October.

Leigh Ann is presently investigating sources of funding through private foundations. She wanted to confirm that there were not any sources that the committee would not support. The committee agreed that they would support any funding opportunities through recognized foundations.

JB asked about the status of getting work done on the trestle at the Midwest. Leigh Ann said that she had discussed it with Jerry Wintz at the site visit for the reclamation work, and they agreed that we should wait until the reclamation project at that site is complete before determining any safety work needed.

Old Business:

Bid results/ Reclamation schedule: Leigh Ann said that the bid opening was held on July 22. There were three bids submitted: Frontier Environmental: \$441,460; McCollum's Excavating: \$77,623; and Timberline Excavating: \$134,610. Upon CDMG's review and approval of the bids and equipment lists, RC&D awarded the bid to the low bidder, McCollum's Excavating. The work is scheduled to start September 1.

Gareth's final report: Leigh Ann said that we had received a final report from Gareth Davies. This report is available for distribution.

Report final copies: Leigh Ann said that she now had final reports (with the exception of biological) ready for distribution. She asked the committee the most cost effective and appropriate way to distribute them. Zeke suggested that she use labeled 3-ring binders for the office displays, comb-bound paper copies on special request, and a CD with the pdf files for most purposes. JB suggested that the summary provided by Rodger Ortiz regarding the USGS sampling of the Rio Grande be added as an appendix to the surface water report.

Other:

Zeke said that he and Leigh Ann would look into the costs/benefits of the WCRC becoming a 501(c)(3) to present at the September meeting.

Leigh Ann asked about using funding appropriated for Coordinator Helper to pay her salary. Zeke said that it was appropriate because that fund was intended for general coordinator duties.

The next meeting will be September 3, 2003.

Meeting Adjourned 3:18 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Leigh Ann Vradenburg