

WCRC Minutes

July 7, 2004

Intro of members: Leigh Ann Vradenburg, Watershed Coordinator; JB Alexander, Creede; Don Dustin, Creede; Mark Walker, CDPHE; Les Dobson, USFS; Chuck Barnes, Creede; Erik Sandvik, Creede; Jim Mietz, SLV RC&D; Jeff Graves, CDMG; Jim Matush, Creede; Mike Wireman, USEPA; Don Gant, Creede; Melvin Blair, Creede; Gene Reetz, USEPA; Nat Muillo, USEPA; Sarah Fowler, USEPA; Zeke Ward, WCRC Chairman

Approval of minutes: Motion to approve the June minutes made by Chuck Barnes; second made by Mike Wireman. Motion carried.

Additions/corrections to the agenda: A discussion of wetlands restoration and EPA programs by Gene Reetz was added after the Coordinator's Report. The Solomon and Hecla updates were moved to the beginning of old business.

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: Zeke said that the NonPoint Source council had visited Creede on June 30th to tour the Willow Creek project. Zeke showed them some of the Committee's reclamation sites from 2003 and discussed future plans.

Zeke also said that he had met with Jim Mietz to further discuss alternative energy sources for Creede.

Leigh Ann said that she had followed up with Keith Wier of Resonant Shock at the Committee's directive from the June meeting. She had sent Keith a letter discussing the Committee's concerns about a market for a concrete-type product and the costs of the Phase I analysis. She had received an email back from Keith indicating that they would reconsider the costs and try to provide us with some more information about the market in the near future.

Leigh Ann presented at the EPA's Community Involvement Conference on June 15th. She presented with Mike Wireman, Marcella Hutchinson, Nat Muillo, and Karl Hermann of the EPA. Their presentation covered work that is being done in the San Juan Mountains, highlighting the Willow Creek project and the assessment report that the EPA is currently doing.

Leigh Ann completed her 40-hr HAZWOPER certification at the end of June and will be working with John Parker doing XRF analyses during and following his clean up of Airport Corner. The

certification was required of all individuals working on VCUP projects who could be exposed to the contaminants.

Leigh Ann informed the Committee that the application that the WCRC had prepared for the Mineral County Fairgrounds Association had been selected to receive \$200,000 in EPA Brownfields funding. Leigh Ann will work with the MCFA to prepare the paperwork.

Mike Wireman said that the WCRC had also been selected to receive funding through the EPA's Consolidated Funding Process. This grant was for evaluating treatment options for the Nelson Tunnel. He said that we should revisit plans for the money at the August TAC meeting and potentially direct some funds at completing the underground trial that CDMG had designed.

Leigh Ann said that she was concerned about funding for her salary for the next five months. She did not believe that the grants they had received would come in time or be sufficient to cover her salary. She asked the committee for ideas. Mark suggested that an EPA Regional Geographic Initiative grant or a Department of Local Affairs Community Development Block Grant might be appropriate. Jim Mietz suggested that the Committee look into developing an endowment. Mike said that we should talk about funding at the September Mountain Studies Institute conference. Mark said that we could get funding through a tax district. Zeke said that a mill levy override would be the way to go, but that it would be appropriate to wait until it was not an election year and after our management plan is in effect. He thought that it would also be appropriate to list a sunset for the project so that voters would be more likely to go for it. Jim Mietz suggested that we come up with a subcommittee to work on funding options for coordinator salary. Motion that Jim Mietz, Zeke, and Mark be on a subcommittee to develop funding options for the coordinator's salary made by JB Alexander; second made by Chuck Barnes. Motion carried.

Gene Reetz discussed wetland issues for the Committee to consider. He passed out pamphlets and fact sheets on wetlands and wetland restoration. He said that there are wetland grants available under the EPA's Consolidated Funding Process that would fund wetland planning but not construction. Mark asked if there was potential for the WCRC to get involved in a wetlands banking program. Gene said that that was a possibility as mitigation for areas with Army Corps 404 violations such as filling wetlands and cutting out riparian areas. Mike said that it would be important that wetlands fit into the plans for Creede and Mineral County. Chuck said that there was a City plan in 1995 that had a drawing of what the floodplain could look like. Motion to have Gene Reetz contact the Army Corps to determine the potential for mitigation projects on Willow Creek made by Chuck Barnes; second made by Don Dustin. Motion carried. Les said that the Forest Service might also be looking for mitigation/wetland restoration for areas destroyed along Highway 160. Tom Malecek would be the contact for that.

Old Business:

Silver Moon Assessment Update: Leigh Ann said that Sabrina Forrest with the EPA and their contractors from URS had done soil analyses at the Silver Moon Trailer Park. All of the sites but one had lead levels above 400ppm. Most were in the range of 1000-1500ppm. Leigh Ann said that the confirmation samples and data validation were currently being done. There also would

be a bioavailability study of the soils, but that would take another couple of months. Leigh Ann, Sabrina, and the URS people had met with Keith Siddel, the landowner, and Sarah Scott, a resident and County health nurse to discuss the findings. Keith's interest was in providing the appropriate information to the residents of the park first and showing discretion when it came to involving the general public at that time. Mike said that regulations and lead levels were not black and white. Mark said the 3,000ppm was the action level that the EPA generally used. Mike said that the next step once all of the data was collected would be to provide Keith with a table of potential remedies.

Solomon Update: Mike said that he had asked around to see if the Solomon wetlands could be restored and running again without a NPDES permit. He was told that the site would have to have a permit. He said that he would be meeting with more people the next day to discuss issuing permits in a more flexible manner that did not look at effluent standards. He said that an example had been on the Eagle River in which standards applied in stream somewhere downstream of the discharge. Temporary standards might be another solution. JB asked who the permit holder would be. Mike said that the WCRC would have to come up with someone. He said that he would report back to the Committee on his meeting.

Hecla/Creede Resources Update: Mike said that negotiations continued with Hecla regarding assessment and clean up of their property below Creede. The EPA views Hecla as a viable company, but they are willing to go the non-enforcement route as long as Hecla is working with the WCRC. Mike said that they would like to see Hecla/Creede Resources contribute to assessment at the mill site. There is a potential to do an EPA Targeted Brownfields Assessment at the mill site, and then the City would partner with Hecla to do the clean up. Chuck said that at one time Jeff Stern had taken some soil samples at the mill site. Chuck will follow up on that data. Leigh Ann asked if the TBA could be done this year. Mike said that it was possible and he would continue to work with the lawyers to progress.

XRF: Leigh Ann said that she had purchased the XRF machine as directed by the WCRC at the June meeting pending funding from John Parker. The machine was broken initially, but was immediately repaired and was in good working order now. Leigh Ann will be using it on Parker's clean up and to do soil sampling on the fairgrounds property.

Powell EC Results: The TAC had reviewed the data from the Powell water treatment system that was demonstrated at the June meeting. They agreed that the process had potential, but the burden of proof now rested on Powell to prove that their method could remove a significant amount of metals from Nelson Tunnel water. Members of the TAC would draft a letter for Leigh Ann to send to Powell EC.

New Business:

Newsletter: Leigh Ann drafted a newsletter that she distributed to the Committee for editing. She requested comments or corrections by the following Monday so that she could distribute the newsletter before going on vacation. Chuck suggested that they put copies in the City newsletter or use similar distribution points. Mark said that the newsletter should have recurring features

such as upcoming events. Chuck said that he could help with formatting. Jim Matush suggested that we should note that donations to the WCRC are tax deductible. Jim Mietz suggested that we word it as "may be tax deductible". Jim Mietz said that the RC&D has a bulk mailing permit that we could use.

NPS, CWA, MSI Conferences: Leigh Ann said that she would like to attend the Colorado NonPoint Source, Colorado Watershed Assembly, and Mountain Studies Institute Conferences in September. She would like to present a poster at the CWA conference, and she and Zeke were on the schedule to present at the MSI conference. Mark suggested that Leigh Ann talk with the CWA about presenting our Brownfields efforts at next year's meeting. Motion to approve expenses for the NPS, CWA, and MSI conferences made by Don Gant; second made by Don Dustin. Motion carried.