

WCRC Minutes

August 3, 2005

Intro of members: Zeke Ward, WCRC Chairman and Mineral County Commissioner; JB Alexander, Creede; Jim Matush, Creede; Erik Sandvik, Creede; Merl Jennings, Creede; Don Dustin, Mineral County; Jeff Graves, CDMG, Les Dobson, US Forest Service; Phil Bethke, USGS; Kelley Thompson, WCRC Director

Approval of minutes: No corrections to the June minutes were proposed. Motion to approve the June minutes made by Don; second made by JB. Motion carried.

Additions/corrections to the agenda: CDMG report – Endangered Historic Place Designation was added to Reports section. Items of Forest Service Reclamation Work and Leigh Ann Recognition were added to Old Business.

In-Kind: Forms were provided in hard copy for volunteers to track time and other expenses. Zeke encouraged monthly submission of these forms.

Reports:

Director's Report

Kelley began as full time director on August 1. Kelley met with Leigh Ann on July 22. For now, Leigh Ann will continue to work hourly on the brownfields work. Kelley came to Creede several times in July and described those visits.

Kelley first described the trip underground by Jeff Graves, Jim Herron, and himself on August 2. In comparison to water measurements in May, the lower and middle mine pools were down slightly but water levels in the upper pool had risen. Jeff said that flow through the flume in the Bachelor shaft was 282gpm on May 26 and 292gpm on August 2. There was less air flow in the mine than normal probably due to high outside temperatures, and there wasn't sufficient oxygen to reach the Park Regent.

On July 11, Steve Russell, Cindy Villa, Marvin Reynolds, and Kelley conducted field observations of the re-vegetation trials in the lower Willow Creek floodplain. It appeared that application of mushroom compost and nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium fertilizer have so far proven most successful for re-establishment of grass in the floodplain. Fescues, Bromes, and wheatgrasses have appeared to be the most successful grass varieties in the trials. The trees and shrubs planted in 2005 are doing very well. Kelley has written a summary of the visit.

Zeke and Kelley; and Clyde, Eldon Seime, and Henry Brink from the city; met with Bob Tridle and Paul Gladen of Creede Resources on July 19th. Creede Resources is very interested in transferring the floodplain, tailings, and mill sites to the city of Creede. Zeke explained that Creede Resources is completing a characterization of the sites and is considering entry by them or by the city into a Voluntary Cleanup Plan for the sites. At the next city council meeting, Zeke will help the city draft a resolution describing support and zoning for the project, and Kelley will help develop a map of the site.

Rock from Wolf Creek : Kelley explained that current blasting on Wolf Creek was producing large rock that could be used for stream restoration. Some time back, Diann Gese with the forest service gave permission to the Alamosa River Foundation to select and remove large rock from the site for transport to Capulin for use in their river restoration. Kelley noted that that Willow Creek could potentially also use this opportunity to get rock for the stream restoration for only the cost of transportation. Although a source of funding has not been identified, the committee authorized Kelley to investigate whether the forest service would allow the WCRC to get rock from Wolf Creek.

Niton training : Kelley informed the group that Niton is having free XRF trainings at various sites in August. Most are on the coasts, but they are having a training in Salt Lake City on August 17. The committee was interested in seeing if Niton could come to Creede or to a local college to be able to present a training to a larger group. Kelley will call Niton to check on training fees.

Checking Account Signature Card : Kelley mentioned that he needs to have the signature card changed on the petty cash checking account in order to pay small bills. Merle made a motion to have Kelley Thompson and Zeke Ward as signatories on the Willow Creek Reclamation Committee checking account at the Community Banks of Colorado. Don seconded the motion, and the motion carried. Kelley will go to Del Norte to sign the signature card.

CDMG report – Endangered Historic Place Designation:

Jeff mentioned that Jim Herron wants to nominate the Commodore area for Endangered Historic Place Designation with the State Historic Preservation Office. The CDMG feels that the Commodore is their top pick for the state, and designation may make additional grants available to stabilize and preserve the site. Jim would submit the nomination but would need signatures from the owner and name WCRC as a co-sponsor. Phil moved to support the application for Endangered Historic Place Designation for the Commodore with the State Historic Preservation Office. Don seconded the motion and the motion carried. Jeff will inform Jim Herron to proceed with the nomination.

Old Business

Floodplain Cleanup: Zeke mentioned that Steve Yochum was hoping that disturbance to existing vegetation would be minimized in any cleanup. JB recommended starting upstream of the flume to remove timbers that could still pose a problem for the flume, and there is no vegetation to worry about upstream. Don had idea of cutting up timber into thin slabs, putting “flood of 2005” brand, and selling. Zeke will check into use of a locally owned skidder. Kelley will call Wagner and Century equipment about equipment prices.

TAC Report – Commodore Stabilization : The TAC reported on ideas to stabilize the Commodore area. The TAC felt that the highest priority is the upper pile area and the wooden flume. The wooden flume is near failure, and its failure could be even more catastrophic than this year's; potentially taking out the rest of the pile as well as historic structures including the ore house. Stabilizing the bed and banks of the lower pile is also very important, but we should deal with the upper area first. Jim Herron thought that we should consider preservation of the wooden flume. The current idea is that we could preserve the wooden flume in place and potentially use it as a flood bypass for unusually high flows. A new conveyance system would be installed just to the west of the wooden flume and tie back into the steel portion of flume to continue to use the steel drop and stilling basin. The new flume could be of pre-cast concrete, cast in place concrete, or potentially plastic pipe.

The TAC also talked budget sources and priorities. Poxsons should contribute money, the grants that were originally designated for Windy Gulch could potentially be redirected to the Commodore, and CDMG could probably match these funds. The committee compared the priority of the Windy Gulch and Commodore projects. Windy Gulch may present a flood risk to Creede in a 10 to 25 year flood. The Commodore will present a flood risk to Creede in a 1 to 5 year flood; flooding could potentially destroy the most valuable historical mining structures in the Creede area; erosion of the upper Commodore pile would pose a serious water quality risk to the Rio Grande; and reconstruction of the flume could potentially improve long-term water quality by reducing the amount of water that is infiltrating through the pile from the wooden flume. Phil mentioned that work at the Commodore should be considered as a continuation of emergency measures. Erik made a motion to state that the Commodore stabilization project is a higher priority project than the Windy Gulch project, the committee would prefer to use the money originally designated for Windy Gulch at the Commodore site if possible, and to form a subcommittee to design and implement the project. JB seconded the motion and the motion

carried. Jeff, Kelley, and Zeke will form the subcommittee and Jim Matush mentioned that he and other volunteers could help with any work that might be needed.

TAC Report –Nelson Discharge Equilibrium Data: Erik presented the study he did using the USGS chemical equilibrium software PHREEQC to evaluate treatment of Nelson Tunnel water using sodium hydroxide, hydrated lime, and sodium carbonate. The software indicated that zinc could not be treated to the level of water quality standard with remaining concentrations more than 5 times higher than the standards. JB suggested that we really need bench scale tests to use actual Nelson water and evaluate treatment using differing amounts of lime. JB already has lime and much of the equipment to run the tests, but we would need money to examine metal levels. Some additional money may be needed for glasswater, etc., and Don estimated that as much as \$500 to \$1000 may be needed for lab equipment. Kelley will see if Mike Wireman could run the metals samples, or, if they can't, to see if Summitville could run the samples or help with the tests. The lab at the high school could also potentially be used to run the tests. Phil suggested that we should check with government organizations to see if they may be liquidating lab equipment, and Phil will get the name of the person in charge of the USGS lab.

Forest Service Reclamation Work : Les is still thinking of anoxic drain at Midwest Mine, and hoping to use equipment mobilized for Commodore work to do a small river stabilization at the Outlet Mine. The vegetation at the Midwest and Phoenix reclamations are not doing well, and it appears that they need more organics. Les has looked at costs to purchase and haul mushroom compost for the sites, but would need somewhere to stockpile the compost. Zeke got permission from Bob Tridle to use either the Creede Resources property for stockpiling either near the entrance near the tailings or at the mill site.

Leigh Ann Recognition : Zeke talked to Jon who indicated that Leigh Ann had been looking at horsehair jewelry at Rare Things. They could get the jewelry in 2 to 3 weeks and it would cost \$125. The committee would also like to make a plaque. Jim recommended Winning Expressions. Don moved and Erik seconded a motion to buy the jewelry and plaque for Leigh Ann. Motion carried. Kelley will email committee to have people send money to committee. The committee also wanted to make sure a thank you note had been sent to Kathleen Reilly for her work on the duck race.

New Business:

Floodplain photography: Steve Yochum expressed interest to Kelley in acquiring aerial photography of the floodplain while the vegetation is still active. Kelley mentioned he could probably do infrared and color photography through Agro for the cost of the airplane and pilot; approximately \$200. The committee asked Kelley to see if the NRCS could pay for this cost.

2006 high flow sampling: Kelley mentioned that Barb Horn had contacted him. She is trying to plan her 2006 schedule and budget and would like to know if the WCRC is planning on a spring sampling and could again contribute the \$1000 for the sampling. The committee felt that yes, we should plan on the 2006 sampling and could again contribute the \$1000. JB also inquired into doing a low flow sampling in the fall. The committee felt that a sampling of a few select sites would be useful characterize any changes that might have occurred with the flooding. JB moved and Erik seconded a motion to have the TAC authorize a subcommittee to develop a sampling plan for the fall. Motion passed.

The next meeting will be September 7, 2005.

Meeting Adjourned 3:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Kelley Thompson