**Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership**

**Meeting Notes**

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING: November 8, 2019 10 am – 12 pm

Where: Town Hall Courtroom, Pagosa Springs, CO

**NEXT MEETINGS:**

* + **Friday Jan. 17th \*1 – 3pm** Steering Committee Meeting (Nov/Dec updates will be shared via email) \*afternoon time chosen due to MSI meeting with San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership that morning
  + Option for regular Friday Steering Committee Meeting every 2nd Friday 10am – 12pm after Jan. (Feb. 14, Mar. 13, etc.)

**Attendees:** Tobi Rohwer, Tim Haarmann, James Dickhoff, Al Pfister, Pat Bennett, Chris Pitcher, Mely Whiting, Justin Ramsey, Joe Crabb, Robin Young, Aaron Kimple, Mandy Eskelson.

**Action Items:**

* Determine Concept Design Plan site’s next board meeting time & contacts **(Al)**
* Request detailed Phase II Scope of Work from San Juan Conservation District, share with Steering Committee for feedback **(MSI)**
* Schedule Consultant meeting in Nov. or Dec. between Lotic & SJCD to align scopes of work, share updates with Steering Committee **(MSI)**
* Request past data from NRCS for Concept Design Plan site, share with Riverbend **(MSI)**
* Prepare Concept Design Plan presentation for Jan 17 Steering Committee meeting **(Chris)**
* Coordinate Lotic’s spring presentation with Southwest Basin Roundtable sub-committee meeting **(MSI/Mely)**
* Option for Concept Design Plan site presentation at board meeting in Feb. 2020.
* Option for Joint Public Meeting with Resilient Archuleta & San Juan Headwaters in April 2020.

**Cash Match Funds Schedule (part of Phase II CWCB application):**

* Already Committed: Big thanks to Banded Peak Ranch for their large support & MSI’s contribution.
* Immediately: Trout Unlimited-National & 5 Rivers Chapter **(Mely-already requested)**
* Immediately: The Nature Conservancy **(Celene/MSI)**
* Nov. 12, 2019: San Juan Water Conservancy District board meeting **(Mandy)**
* On or before Dec. 13, 2019: Southwestern Water Conservation District application **(Mely/TU)**
* Jan. 2020: Southwest Basin Roundtable Water Supply Reserve Fund application **(MSI)**
* April 2020: Town of Pagosa Service Organization Request **(Al/MSI)**
* TBD: Pagosa Tourism Board **(Al/MSI)**

**Phase II: CWCB Grant Application & Next Steps**

* Review CWCB Submission: tasks, deliverables, schedule:
* MSI will send out final CWCB proposal and budget to Steering Committee ASAP
* Updates:
* Lotic’s proposal removed stakeholder engagement, American Whitewater recreation survey, and support decision making tasks, but added forest/water nexus and climate tasks.
* Asked American Whitewater to not put in CWCB application for recreation survey on San Juan & Piedra rivers until this group/community receives more information and to ensure we’re not “double dipping” with CWCB funds. Option to consider in future if committee desires.
* MSI/Al/Mely came up with cash match funding options for 25% needed in application. Group will need to make requests over upcoming months (see Cash Match Funds Schedule above). Mely has already asked TU for $2,000 match.
* Mely/MSI discussed with CWCB the challenges for rural communities to meet match percentage requirements for these grant funds. At this time, CWCB still requires 25% cash and in-kind match for project, which this group’s Phase II application accounted for with local support.
* Need to research how the passing of Proposition DD impacts available funding related to the WEP. Proposition DD approved a tax on sport betting, allowing 66% of revenue in fiscal year 2020-21 to create Water Implementation Cash Fund for Colorado’s Water Plan in order to support state water projects. Option for the WEP to write in during public comment period to share how these funds may be used, leverage towards Phase III project implementation.
* Next Steps:
* Submit matching fund requests/applications (see schedule above)
* Request detailed Scope of Work from San Juan Conservation District on Phase II agriculture inventory/analysis.
* Include area of focus, criteria, specific tasks, schedule, inventory intent (address infrastructure issues not water rights regulation), survey questions, etc.
* Send to Steering Committee for questions/feedback in December
* Coordinate fall/winter meeting between Phase II Consultants (Lotic & SJCD)
* Align scopes of work, schedule, data/analysis sharing and integration for modeling
* Adjust data collection, survey questions or other approaches to ensure analysis and modeling needs met, with respect to community values and concerns.
* Determine 1st public meeting presentation, with possible topics including: introduction of Phase II goals and tasks, Concept Design Plan maps/narratives, Resilient Archuleta projects/goals, San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership’s projects.

**Concept Design Plan Updates**

* Detailed topographic survey complete. Initial findings include:
* Large amount of sediment deposition at site due to upstream landslide exported downstream in river channel. High flows favored Ditch diversion, redirecting channel back towards headgate, but may be different scenario with future conditions.
* Design Plans accounting for sediment deposition/channel incision: Sediment/material removal from channel possible to prevent issues, but also need to account for river geomorphology and explain to property owners channel location and material removal could prevent flooding. Possible bank stabilization upstream to prevent Ditch intake damage, but geology may challenge project feasibility.
* Low flow channel concern: Physical design solution possible to create centralized low flow rather than braided stream, but challenge with balancing riparian corridor needs with private property owners’ desires for channel near their homes for recreation (i.e. fishing).
* Public access concern: Desire to keep all public traffic out of subdivision, requiring separate access from the highway. Mely mentioned Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) grant funds may be available to help with road construction costs for public access at site.
* Coordinate with NRCS contacts who have access to past river channel design plans, data, and involvement with site.
* Presentation & Schedule of Concept Design Plan:

1. Present to Steering Committee on January 17th 1-3pm. Ask NRCS/SJCD to join.
2. Present to Site’s board in February 2020. Al to determine board meeting time and champions/leaders to keep informed of Concept Design Plan process.
3. Steering Committee members to determine if presentation needed for ditch company board and members after January meeting.

**Winter Engagement**

* Phase I funding extended from January to April 2020. Allows more time to keep meetings and momentum going over winter.
* Steering Committee Meetings:
* Rest of Phase I: (send meeting times as calendar invites with Zoom conference call info)
* skipping December but updates shared via email. Next in-person meeting January 17, then 2nd Friday of Feb and March.
* Look into Lotic meeting with Steering Committee in March to discuss Phase II steps. Ensure timing of Lotic’s travel allows short presentation with Southwest Basin Roundtable sub-committee as well.
* Phase II Recreation Analysis: ask Lotic if they need data/numbers from Pagosa Outside or other businesses on boating user days, ideal flows, etc.
* Option for Public Meeting in March or April 2020:
* Waiting until next spring allows CWCB funds to be secured for Phase II, ample preparation with Consultants, and to determine if Concept Design Plan presentation is ready for public input.
* Join with Resilient Archuleta & San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership, gathering a larger audience & show support of other local groups.
* Possible to discuss 10-year funding proposals for San Juan National Forest projects being submitted (i.e. Rocky Mountain Research Institute-RMRI, Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program-CFLRP) that allocate funding for forest health, habitat restoration, and wildlife connectivity projects that overlap into riparian areas (i.e. Cutthroat trout protection). Pagosa Ranger District part of this proposal, with opportunities to partner with WEP.
* Phase II (April 2020 on):
* Every other month in person (6 meetings)
* Option to attend remotely with Consultants as well (6 meetings)
* Allocated for 2 public meetings (mid-way through Consultant analysis, final presentation on Lotic’s assessment)
* Winter Outreach:
* Presentations to local boards (Town council, tourism board, ditch companies, PAWSD) + newspapers article updates. With return of drought in Southwestern Colorado after heavy snowpack last year, there is a need to remind community how quickly the hydrologic regime and conditions can change and the need to plan.
* Discussed option for recreation community presentation in Spring 2020
* Discussed Spring/Summer 2020 field trip for Steering Committee: Boating/tubing trip to look at potential project sites along San Juan river corridor. May inform Lotic focus and begin targeted stakeholder engagement.
* Option to visit 2 other sites: 1) new natural blockage near town (surrounded by private property) that drops 4 feet, which may affect fish passage during low flows, and 2) Town river trail washed out during high flows, taking out $80,000 worth of work. Town of Pagosa Springs is currently developing new plans.