**Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership**

**NOTES**

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING:** March 13, 2020

**Where**: Town Hall Courtroom, Pagosa Springs, CO

**When**: 9 am – 11 am

**Attendees:** Al Pfister, James Dickhoff, Mely Whiting, Tobi Rowher, Joe Crabb, Justin Ramsey, Ryan Unterreiner, Seth Mason, Robin Young, Herb Grover, Mandy Eskelson

**Concept Design Plan**

* March Board Meeting Presentations:
* Overall: Both boards involved in site area seemed receptive and supportive of broad Concept Design Plan project proposals, presented by Al, Tobi, and Chris.
* Feedback: Biggest concerns discussed were anglers/recreators going upstream from access point. Proposed solutions included seasonal access, additional education/regulation signage on use of the area. Board members also interested in removing sediment deposition in upstream area from landslide as well as remain open to working around new building for access road construction.
* Next Steps:
  + - Request for Riverbend to provide bulleted paper/report out to share with boards and landowners for review to ensure all parties have received information.
* Follow up with ditch company to ensure their concerns are addressed and feedback included.
* Option to hold target outreach meeting with landowners to explain plan designs and explore options. Consult with Cynthia Purcell for contact list.
* Board meeting attendees/landowners invited to join future public meeting, whenever date and location are confirmed.
* Steering Committee agreed best to finish consultation with Concept Design Plan site parties first before presenting to public to ensure questions and issues addressed and permission provided before seeking further feedback.

**CPW-Great Outdoors Fund**

* San Juan River site:
* No updates yet from the [Great Outdoors Fund](https://thegreatoutdoorsfund.org/). Website exploration showed Phil’s World, near Cortez, on project list, demonstrating it may be worth following up with GOF to ensure San Juan River projects still a priority and receiving funding.
* CPW confirmed one project site has been mapped as big game winter range, which may be an important environmental value to highlight in future assessments.
* For detailed updates on PAWSD and San Juan Water Conservancy District Joint Work Session on area, please refer to PAWSD website <https://www.pawsd.org/district-business/public-meetings/> and the PAWSD/SJWCD Joint Work Session Materials <https://www.pawsd.org/downloads/PAWSDSJWCD-Joint-Work-Session-Packet-03-12-2020.pdf>

**WEP Administration & Marketing**

* Grant Approvals:
* Water Supply Reserve Fund approved by CWCB. MSI will work with CWCB to discuss contracting obligations and begin sending out contract agreements for Lotic and SJCD within next few weeks.
* Archuleta County Board of County Commissioners agreed to provide $2,850 cash funds towards Phase II, making up for decreased amount from Southwestern Water Conservation District application. BoCC is using Conservation Trust Fund for WEP support.
* Remaining Grant Applications:
* Due 3/15: Town of Pagosa Springs Service Organization application for remaining $2,500, but Town rep suggested bumping up amount because last year’s criteria created reduced amounts for all applicants. Therefore, WEP is increasing request to $4,500 to be used as additional funds in Phase II, especially for river access goals/projects that align with Town Council goals.
* Outreach materials:
* MSI to share updated WEP FAQ’s sheet, which includes vision, goals, Phase I accomplishments, SMP vs. IWMP terminology, etc. This can be uploaded to website and shared at future public meeting.
* Longer term WEP market strategy:
* Option to hold school art contest for logo design. Can provide gift card to winner with remaining Phase I funds. Contact JD Kurz and have graphic designer refine for WEP Steering Committee approval.
* Option to revamp WEP website and/or create StoryMap for group to use more interactive, education tool to share WEP’s plans. MSI can work with Fort Lewis College to organize free internship for GIS student to create StoryMap for WEP, if group desires this tool. Chris has shared great resources from Rio Grande Headwaters Restoration Project for your review [Website](http://www.riograndeheadwaters.org/stream-management-plans.html) [StoryMap](https://rghrp.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=47c95df190814e2e84695385c4761ea4)
* Example of succinct way to describe group goals: “Through the Rio Grande, Conejos River, and Saguache Creek SMPs, we aim to improve stream function while protecting existing water uses for future generations.” Something to consider with WEP FAQs document.
* Website resource list: add book “A River Wants More” by local author Val Valentine. Include on website as restoration project example completed 10 years ago. NRCS/SJCD heavily involved in this project as well.
* Additions for Public Stakeholders email list:
* Weminuche Audubon and Lower Blanco Property Associations, receive email addresses from Herb Grover.

**Public Meeting Planning**

* Joint public meeting (with Resilient Archuleta and San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership)

Wednesday April 15 option cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions of public gatherings. Postpone until late May/early June, with Doodle poll to be sent to WEP, Headwaters, and Resilient Archuleta members mid-April to accommodate evolving restrictions.

* Concerns:
* Currently classes cancelled from March 23 – April 10, with evaluations in early April to determine if public events allowed again. This may last weeks or months and this group needs to be prepared, if necessary.
* Although option to provide completely remote access meeting through several platforms via recording presentations and have participants call in, this may exclude larger portion of community not savvy with this technology or unable to access it.
* Impacts to Phase II schedule: Large benefit in gathering community input before beginning field work this summer. Lotic’s data collection will not necessarily delayed if public meeting postponed, but the group encourages sharing Phase II steps and data sources with public, whether via survey or later meeting to ensure public given opportunity to offer feedback on types of data and methodology used. Recommend this approach to prevent issues later on, ensure transparency, and build credibility with community early on.
* Venue/Platform:
* Potential to use CSU-Extension Building at later date but must coordinate with Robin due to other cancellations/postponements.
* Recommend offering meeting with multiple ways to participate in order to accommodate different capacities and community needs: provide combination of in-person meeting, webinar recording/conference, and online survey to gather input before and after meeting.
* Outreach materials can be developed with vague date range, list of participating local groups (WEP, RA, SJHFHP), and survey to begin advertising with newspaper, website, social media, and radio. Be sure to include language event may be delayed due to COVID-19 restrictions.
* Agenda:
* Schedule/Presentations (2 hour meeting)
* 1st hour= Presentations for 3 local groups on 2020/future plans and how these groups may collaborate in future. Group suggested best to give specific area or project rather than vague collaborative goals. If unable to at this time, at least show these groups are sharing projects and progress with each other to determine overlap and investigate collaborating more in the future.
* 2nd hour= 40 minute workgroup breakout session, asking list of questions for feedback and 20 minute report back to whole group on answers. Lotic to share questions used with San Miguel SMP effort to offer activity example.
* Other options include guest speakers, such as Val Valentine to discuss restoration projects.
* Future collaboration examples:
* Herb Grover mentioned San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership working on Jackson Mountain research project out of CSU national program for Adaptive Silviculture, which complements the goals of WEP to understand how forest health could affect water sources. Learn more about SJHFP with their Forest Health Activities Map [here](https://mountainstudies.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=422a42f67b1b454e974d54b7a25b1402)
* Citizen science collaborations to get community involved in process. Example project with the Weminuche Audubon Society looking at bird communities in areas treated with prescribed fire, mastication, and no treatment. Report found [here](http://www.weminucheaudubon.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/BirdMonProjectHDG12-4-19.pdf)
* Next Steps:
* Continue working with RA and SJHFHP on outreach materials. Perhaps MSI, Al, Robin Young to come up with first draft of PSA and flyer.
* Mid-April send out Doodle Poll for late May/early June meeting dates
* Lotic to share with Steering Committee presentation outline and breakout session activity questions.
* Check with San Juan Conservation District on how they’d like to present Phase II steps at public meeting.
* Check in with agriculture stakeholders and committee members, begin engaging recreation groups more. Check with Pagosa Brewing about beverage donation for meeting in return for marketing and donation tax letter.

**Next Meeting**

* Friday April 10th 9-11am-video conference meeting
* MSI will send calendar invite and detailed instructions on how everyone can use Zoom video conference calling.
* Potential topics: development of public meeting prep/outreach, Phase II confirmation and steps, summer field trip, outline local events WEP reps can attend/present, etc.