**Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership**

**MEETING NOTES**

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING: March 22, 2019 9 am – 11 am

Where: Town Council Chambers, Pagosa Springs, CO

**NEXT MEETINGS:**

* + **Friday, April 12, 9-11am**, Town Hall Chambers
  + **CANCELLED: Public Meeting April 25th AND Steering Committee Meeting April 26th**

**Attendees:** Tim Haarmann, Al Pfister, Tobi Rowher, Pat Bennett, Joe Crabb, Mely Whiting, Robin Young, Nicole Seltzer, Celene Hawkins, Aaron Kimple, Mandy Eskelson

**Action Items:**

* **Bring information/prepare to discuss with group on current or prospective project options (Steering Committee)**
* **Compile list of specific contacts (i.e. landowners, ditch companies) to discuss project options (Steering Committee)** + Review list provided last meeting
* Continue preparing goals and structure for future public meeting (Steering Committee)
* Continue refining Report Review, draft to Steering Committee (Al & Mandy)

**9:00 – 9:10 Welcome & Introductions**

* Nicole Seltzer: visitor from River Network, works with CWCB to provide assistance and outreach materials for Stream Management Plans. In attendance to simply observe this group’s current status and approaches.
* Upper San Juan Summary on River Network found at: <https://coloradosmp.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SanJuan_Summary_web.pdf> and general SMP info at <https://coloradosmp.org/>
* Option to send feedback or remove summary from website. Send comments to Mandy to pass along.

**9:10 – 9:45 Stream Gauge Responses**

* Stream Gauges: discussion on what info does a gauge offer and how do we currently use them
  + Concerns: fear of regulation/administration if stream gauge installed. Does the value of data outweigh these concerns?
    - Serve multiple uses and remain objective
    - Costs: long-term operation and maintenance, responsibility for funding & management.
* Data quality: 8 to10 year data gap in West Fork, need to rebuild and question of historic data reliability/accuracy
* Date storage & use: who manages and where is this data stored & utilized, available public access, costs
* Purposes: how does data inform water user decisions on:
* Quantity entering & exiting system (historic vs. current use, drought, diversions/agreements, decisions to make calls, administration)
* Option to define optimal flows for environmental/habitat monitoring/health and recreational flows
* Option to better understand system efficiencies, identify where to improve infrastructure or restore river channel.
* Option to identify trigger points for implementing augmentation plans or agricultural calls
* Warning system (floods, used in higher elevations locations in the past) and predictions
* use historic stream gauge records to correlate with area we expect a lot of changes in the future, use historic records as baseline.
* Monitoring-habitat and species health (temperature)
* Option to identify pinch points to add temperature equipment to existing gauge
* Need to document monitoring happening already on temperature, nutrients, sediment, flows/quantity (i.e. Navajo has three gauges, Blanco has close to three gauges as well from trans-basin diversion).
* Ask James Dickhoff and Chris Pitcher for report/engineering drawings for Town river features, pools, temperature
* Consider geothermal return flows affecting temperature results
* Recreation
* Initial conversations with rec users had negative response to stream gauge option, more concerned with public access. Pushback that it’s difficult to know river needs when limited access and feeling that restoration should not benefit private owners if no public access.
* Is stream gauge still best option/priority? Process purpose and benefactors of gauge more before extending to mapping. Consider other options or build upon current projects.
* Clarified group doesn’t necessarily need an outlined “Stream Management Plan” to get projects going and continue planning process.
* Discuss specific landowners to contact to have more direct conversations with impacted parties

**9:45 –10:00 Map & Data Review**

* Updated map available online with current & historic gauges <http://www.mountainstudies.org/sanjuan/smp>

**10:00 – 10:10 Report Review/Highlights**

* Creating matrix/table to organize what data available in each report, to inform data gaps, potential project sites, and reduce work/cost of data review for contractor in next phase.
* Hoping to get report table and summary review to Steering Committee before next meeting
* Current list of reports being reviewed:

|  |
| --- |
| **Report Title** |
| East Fork of the San Juan Restoration |
| Fire Risk to Water Supplies Assessment |
| Lower Blanco River Restoration Project |
| Navajo River In-Stream, Riparian & Wetland Improvement Project |
| San Juan Planning for Biodiversity Model Project, Phase II |
| San Juan River Historical Ecology Assessment |
| San Juan River Workgroup Final Report |
| Southwest Basin Roundtable Basin Implementation Plan (BIP) |
| State Water Supply Inventory (SWSI) |
| Stollsteimer Creek Watershed Master Plan |
| Survey of Critical Wetlands and Riparian Areas in Archuleta County |
| Town of Pagosa Springs San Juan River Improvement Project |
| Water & Soil Resource Management Considerations |

* Other reports to add?

**10:10 – 10:50 Goals for next public meeting**

* Steering Committee decided not to have public stakeholder meeting in April
* Instead discuss & finalize more project options to present publicly at later date
* Structure: large panel of representatives vs. small breakout sessions on project options Steering Committee is considering (example of local projects with short- & long-term impacts, benefits, costs, funding available)
* gauge (if there’s a need for data/information to make decisions)
* public access
* riparian restoration
* infrastructure efficiency
* Demonstrate date being collected/reviewed
* Address concerns of regulation and Compact calls again, emphasize these are voluntary options and that this group has no authority to change water law, rights, uses
* Possibly have presentations from local stakeholders (Lane Fenny?, JR Ford) on projects and issues they see
* PSA’s and how to draw in more engagement?
* Offer concrete examples for folks to comment on since valuable input limited until it directly affects people
* More targeted outreach versus broader public. Engage private landowners and ditch companies
* Highlighted it is common with other stream/watershed management plans to target conversations with private land and water users/diverters and pay staff/use community liaison (Al) to meet with landowners for data collection and future modeling.
* Benefits to having targeted engagement with specific stakeholders, crucial need to ensure maintaining public input into process to understand their priority issues to drive technical analysis and project proposals.

**10:50—11:00 Conclusion/Next Steering Committee meeting**

* Steering Committee will discuss and map out broader issues/reaches/sites then list specific projects already happening.
* Identify possibly interested parties about project options (ditch companies, property owners, etc.)
* Al will hear update about property ownership issues on April 22nd