**Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership**

**MEETING NOTES**

**STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING:** April 10, 2020 9 – 11 am

**Where**: Zoom Conference Call

**NEXT MEETINGS:**

* + **Friday May 8th 9-11 am****—**Steering Committee Meeting
  + **Mid/late May—**Webinar for Public Meeting (see details below)

**Attendees:** Tobi Rowher, Kevin Khung, Aaron Kimple, Al Pfister, Ryan Unterreiner, Justin Ramsey, Robin Young, Mely Whiting, Seth Mason, Mandy Eskelson

**Action Items**

* Contact local teachers about WEP logo art contest **(MSI, Al)**
* Share Concept Design Plan flyer from Hey Red Marketing at end of April **(MSI)**
* Finalize Phase II contracts to begin work 5/1/2020 **(Al, Lotic, SJCD)**
* Set up meeting between Lotic and SJCD on Phase II schedule **(MSI)**
* Set up meetings with USFS to discuss Concept Design Site considerations and Phase II data for Lotic analysis **(MSI, Lotic, Chris)**
* Revise/add info for webinar presentations **(MSI, Lotic, SJCD)**
* Share survey questions and metrics to include in outreach **(Lotic)**
* Draft PSA outreach materials and schedule to advertise webinar **(Al, MSI)**
* Next meeting: determine WEP’s strategy for adding new steering committee members **(Steering Committee)**

**Concept Design Plan**

* Outreach flyer**:**
  + Need to present these concept-level project designs strategically and clearly since the goal is for this area to serve as demonstration project of larger process.
  + 1-2 page flyer to highlight project goals, locations, options and benefits to multiple water users in concise, appealing language. Intent is to use in digital and print for multiple events and groups in the future.
* Hey Red Marketing, company TU recommended and offered discounted price for WEP, will create flyer messaging and graphic designs for Concept Design Plan site, with input/direction from Chris (Riverbend). Riverbend’s involvement is crucial to ensure we provide accurate information and highlight benefits most important to involved parties.
* Final draft completed by end of April to share with boards, landowners, ditch company in early May.
* USFS Considerations:
* District Ranger, Kevin Khung, recommended having separate meeting on this project as well as Phase II to discuss restrictions, permitting, access, etc. on surrounding Forest Service land. USFS can also help inform Lotic’s analysis of “values at risk” on forested lands which may impact water quality and quantity in project area.

**Updates & Partner Check-In**

* New Steering Committee members discussion: Herb Grover expressed interest in attending WEP meetings and including the Weminuche Audubon and Lower Blanco Property Owners Association on stakeholder email list. Group did not have time to discuss this topic, but will address at next meeting on how best to add new members and keep engagement with current committee members.
* WEP Logo: local school art contest
* Contacting Jenna Gannon and JD Kurz to determine capacity/interest in hosting design contest in classroom(s).
* Steering Committee wants to keep instructions loose and let student creativity drive artwork, with a focus of representing agricultural, municipal, environmental and recreation water use in a simplified way we can replicate on documents/letterhead.
* Phase II contracting:
* In early April, CWCB grant manager, Chris Sturm, said contracting may take 6-8 weeks with staff losses and due to larger grant totals. CWCB does not us to retroactively bill for work done before contracts signed and recommended extending grant end date by one year to accommodate normal and COVID delays.
* To ensure work progresses after Phase I ends 4/30/2020, MSI received confirmation from CWCB to begin using cash match funds, starting in May, to cover costs until grant contracts are finalized.
* MSI sent subcontractor agreements for SJCD, Lotic, and Western Wildscapes to begin Phase II tasks on 5/1/2020.
* Phase II tasks:
* Steering Committee decided to host WEP only webinar in mid/late May as kickoff public meeting, due to challenges of coordinating with multiple groups and COVID-19 restrictions as well as concerns about keeping Phase II tasks on schedule. This ensures WEP informs public of goals, objectives, methodologies and final products from Phase II from onset and gather community feedback. More details in Public Meeting Planning section.
* Seth Mason (Lotic) will need low water data collection. Ideally this is collected before runoff starts, but option to collect in late July rather than wait until next spring.
* Lotic Phase II presentation:
* Seth Mason shared slide presentation of Phase II tasks and potential breakout activities, survey questions, and advertising options with Steering Committee.
* Video of presentation will be shared with Steering Committee members, and revised versions will be presented to the public.
* Feedback from Steering Committee:
* Balance of providing technical details and keeping topics high-level/approachable.
* First meeting for Phase II-simplify for initial presentation, with options to dive deeper into technical components by 1) Seth answering to posted questions during webinar, 2) provide resources/explanations on website, and 3) discuss in subsequent public meetings with more time available and capacity to review maps and details.
* Current content would be appropriate, however, for other groups like the Southwest Basin Roundtable Environmental and Recreation (E&R) subcommittee. Mely working on scheduling this with Seth.
* Explain how consumptive use and agricultural inventory from SJCD will be incorporated into models and analysis. Also explain how this influences other types of uses (ex: E&R)
* Lotic will characterize current and future hydrology by looking flows and thresholds of mainstem river and tributaries at any given time, using historical stream gauges and CWCB modeling tools (ex: StateMod). This info will be presented in tabular summaries and different graphic and map options.
* Intent is to provide baseline information we can reference back when conducting assessments of ecological integrity, recreation use, etc.
* Assessment results will identify issues or locations of importance that require attention/have opportunities for improvement.
* Address how forest health nexus influences water-related values and concerns.
* Lotic will discuss risks to water infrastructure, high value biota and riparian areas.
* Risks determined by scenarios with different burn scenarios, how this impacts water quality, sediment deposition, and hydrology.
* Mitigation tools: CWCB expressed desire for analysis to identify existing or possible catch basins to capture sediment and debris flows from wildfire runoff. Also confirmed forest treatments can serve as matching funds for mitigation projects in headwaters, to possible use in Phase III and future.
* Lotic will need resources/data from USFS on burn potential, model assessments, and datasets.
* Recreation & environmental water uses:
* Lotic will work with local panel of experts to determine stream flow conditions that are optimal or sub-optimal for different use types (bank use for fishing, tubing, rafting) overlay those result from hydrological assessments onto how those uses change for different seasons and climate scenarios.
* Compounding factors, like drought, can be used in models to show impact on recreation economy.
* This task will focus on the mainstem San Juan, not other tributaries. Committee asked to include East and West Forks of San Juan.
* Present limiting factors on fisheries, such as the interplay of available habitat and flows affected by natural conditions, management, and land use. Good example of where analysis will utilize SJCD assessment and water commissioner’s opinion to identify opportunities to improve irrigation structures and how this can impact habitats.
* Phase II Results: articulate set of planning goals (visionary statements), objectives (actional and measurable), and specific actions to occur in Phase III. This will create a technical report for the community to give feedback on, then WEP can identify most appropriate way to get meaningful information regarding high priority management areas and actions.
* Ensure we explain this process creates a framework we can refer back to as we prioritize and accomplish actions.
* Survey/Activity Options:
* Water value posters (used in Eagle County): voted on for priority. Not very rigorous for statistical analysis, but it provides general ranking and sense of community values. Option to use live, interactive poll or word cloud through Zoom conference.
* Steering Committee to review at May meeting before webinar.
* Used in beginning with Eagle group with the intent to share technical report and analyses at later date to see if any changes in responses from beginning to end of project. Do this at the first meeting, with easy, approachable survey questions. Present survey results of topics and locations of rating of low to high preference at tail end of Phase II.
* Mental Mapping (used in Middle Colorado River): use small group setting towards the end of Phase II, getting ready for Phase III. More challenging activity, moving towards consensus for Phase III goals and objectives. Beneficial in illustrating decision process of priorities, why recommendations chosen, and how they are connected.

**Public Meeting Planning**

* Dates:
* Now mid/late May as online, recorded webinar with survey, hoping to capture ag community before full runoff hits irrigation season.
* MSI has successfully hosted webinar through Zoom/Facebook combo and is looking into other platform options to ensure reaches broad audience. Recording will also be shared with partners and held on website.
* Webinar will be advertised in newspaper, online, and radio beforehand.
* Potentially add in-person option, depending on COVID-19 guidelines.
* Collaboration with Resilient Archuleta & SJ Headwaters Forest Health Partnership
* Public meeting/webinar in May now will focus only on WEP, but hope to hold joint meeting at later date, possibly this summer.

**Conclusion/Next Meeting**

* Next Meeting: Friday May 8th 9-11am
* Review revised presentation from Loticbased on Steering Committee feedback and discuss how to incorporate SJCD and WEP info/slides in webinar in mid/late May.