

**WRC UCF Minutes**  
October 5, 2021  
Public Meeting

**Those Present:**

John Hollenback – WRC/DLVCD, Susie Johnson – DLVCD/WRC, Pete Dallaserra – WRC/MHCD/landowner, Dan McQueary – WRC/landowner, Eric Hassler – WRC/BSB, Cam Balentine – WRC/MHCD/Brown’s Gulch, Karen Knudsen – WRC/CFC, Heidi Brewer – CREP Coordinator, Georgina Kennedy – NRCS, Will McDowell – CFC/WRC, Kevin Bossert – NRCS, Brian Bartkowiak – NRDP, Mark Mariano – Rampart Solutions and Ted Dodge – WRC.

**Agenda:**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman John Hollenback.

**Treasurer Report:**

- Invoices were reviewed and approved at the previous Board meeting.

**Minutes:**

It was moved by Eric Hassler, seconded by Pete Dallaserra and motion carried to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

Susie Johnson will be retiring from the Conservation District at the end of February and would like to stay on as the Bookkeeper for WRC as a Contractor. It was moved by Pete Dallaserra, seconded by Dan McQueary and motion carried to keep Susie on as a WRC Contractor.

**Project Updates:**

- **CREP Proposal:** Meeting held with Lynn Harrington Hershey, her husband and Heidi on work proposed CREP project is now underway. Waiting for FSA to scheduled training session for NRDP partners & presentation of new rental rates. No new updates.
- **Upper Clark Fork Stream Flow Working Group:** Next meeting will take place November 17<sup>th</sup> starting at 10:00 – 2:00 at the Board room at the Pen Convention Center. Silver Lake water was released on August 5<sup>th</sup> and shut off September 19<sup>th</sup> for the Clark Fork River.
- **Milltown Water Right/Drought Plan:** No update.

**Terrestrial Priority Areas:**

- **Garnet: Gough Creek:**

Hollenback: Completed the NRDP landowner agreement. Meeting with John to review and sign and forwarded the agreement to NRDP in Helena. Now waiting for the NRDP review and approval of the agreement.

Dutton Ranch: No contact made.

DNRC: No contact made.

- **Brock Creek: Cynthia Montagne**: Field resource inventory on the property.
- **Deer Lodge North & South:**

Lampert Ranch: Contractor continues to work on the stock water projects and should get them completed by the September 30 deadline. On-site construction check completed on Monday, September 27. On the west system, a second spring box has been installed on the existing spring development with the pipeline installed. All that needed to be completed was installation of the two stock tanks. All materials were on site. On the east system, the new spring development has been completed (except for the protective fencing), all of the pipelines has been installed and both tanks are installed (and both were full with water). The protective posts and planking still needed to be installed around the tanks.

Aspen Grove Ranch (Sherm Anderson): Contact made with and met with Troy and TerriJo Anderson concerning their participation with WRC and the NRDP. Plans made to start the necessary field work to complete a field/resource inventory to gather the information necessary to finalize a landowner agreement. They currently do not participate in the FWP Block Mgmt. program and NRDP is requiring public access on at least a part of the property. They are agreeable that something can be worked out where they would put a portion of the ranch property into the program. Field resource inventory completed. Work started with them on developing the new landowner agreement.

- **Habitat Enhancement**

Graveley Bros.: Started working on the contract documents for the vegetation management (conifer encroachment removal in grasslands and Aspen Clones).

DNRC (Brock Creek section): Revised the existing NRDP landowner agreement; planned projects have changed so had to revise the project list and update cost estimates.

### Aquatic:

- **Cottonwood Creek – Aspen Grove**: Reviewed and commented on project engineering, which is finishing up with engineer responding to 11 pages of NRCS comments. Discussed engineering considerations with GWE, NRDP, and both landowners. Also discussed concerns of the irrigation equipment supplier regarding the final designs.

Continued working with DNRC-Lewistown to provide our interpretations of the water rights, hydrology and water use as detailed in the DNRC “Correct and Complete” report. The DNRC Lewistown office is completing their Preliminary Determination (decision) of the two Water Right changes for Aspen Grove/Anderson. We hope to see the Preliminary Determination by the end of October.

Aspen Grove project was moving towards a contract for construction by the landowner, starting in early September 2021. However, due to delays in the delivery of the fish screen from Farmers Conservation Alliance in Hood River Oregon, the landowner, after meeting with NRDP and WRC, has decided to delay construction of the Project until summer 2022. This is because installation of the fish screen below the head gate needed to be the first step in the construction and the fish screen was not available until November, pushing the other elements of construction back into winter, which is not advisable at high elevation.

**Cottonwood Creek, Applegate Diversion/Fish Screen #1:** The NRDP conducted an evaluation of two submitted bids and chose Jeremy Mickey of Granite County as the contractor for installation. Jeremy is mobilizing this week, Oct. 4-8, and may begin construction of the rock diversions by the end of this week. The screen is a corrugated water screen for 7.5 CFS, so it is much smaller than prior screen installed on Cottonwood.

**Cottonwood Creek, McQueary Fish Screen:** Met contractor on site in September to review the small modification on this screen (cutting an opening in back wall to flush sediments without using the 12-inch pipe under canal). Decided on a steel plate set horizontally over the 12” pipe well and inlet. This is so the pipe can still be used if a lot of fish need to be flushed to stream. This modification was completed. The screen will be cleaned and winterized in October, also as part of O&M contract.

**Cottonwood Creek, RCC-Vineyards Diversion:** An engineer (Confluence) is working with RCC on some initial conceptual designs of an improved diversion and screen for the senior water right on Cottonwood Creek. NRDP and WRC are in touch with the engineer.

- **O’Neill Creek** – No activity.
- **Gold Creek** – No activity.
- **Racetrack Creek:** No activity.
- **Brown’s Gulch:** Site visit by NRCS, FWP, & WRC contractor carried out in June. A follow up meeting is scheduled for Oct October 5. Final work begun on the Brothers Diversion after an August site visit by NRDP, Ted, Confluence, & Mark as well as Randy Brothers.

**Flow:**

- **Racetrack/Dempsey:** No update.
- **Deer Lodge Landfill Compost Project:**  
Work on feasibility study completed and submitted to the Deer Lodge Landfill Committee. Waiting for responses from same. The landfill committee is waiting for approval of the permit submitted to expand site. Continued implementation of the NRCS Conservation Innovation grant. Carcass pickup still under way.

Partners/Board Members reports were given.

Next meeting: November 2, 2021

Submitted by Susie Johnson, October 20, 2021