

## WRC UCF Minutes

April 5, 2022

Public Meeting

### **Those Present:**

Susie Johnson – DLVCD/WRC, John Hollenback – WRC/DLVCD, Dan McQueary – WRC/landowner, Rem Mannix – Powell County/WRC/landowner, Bruce Thomas – WRC/landowner, Pat Saffel – FWP, Glen Green – WRC, Roy Trimbo – FWP/Bear Coordinator, Sydney Stewart – NRDP, Ray Vinkey – NRDP, Mary Price – CSKT, Seth Makepeace – CSKT, Doug Martin – NRDP, Andy Fisher – CFC, Casey Hackathorn – TU, Brandon Warner – BSB (Teams) 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 John Hollenback, seconded by Bruce Thomas and motion carried to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.
- **New Business:**
- **Roy Trimbo, FWP Grizzly Bear Technician**-was introduced and thanked for his donation to WRC.
- **Stakeholder- Discussion Seth Makepeace and Mary Price, CSKT**, The Tribes have put together a few GIS products that they have been using for water planning on the reservation. These products provide a good illustration of how water moves through the basin, and also indicates such features as hydrography, irrigation ditches/canals, soil types and public land ownership in a watershed. The Tribes are proposing to develop a similar type of product for Gold Creek and would like some input as to how this type of product would be most useful for water users as well as FWP and the Tribes.

### **Project Updates:**

**CREP Proposal:** Movement on obtaining and disseminating the train videos began in December, Training g videos sent to partners, Planning checklist also completed & sent to partners. CREP program & rental rates have been released by FSA. NRDP is working on the public release of info. Draft proposal for Harrington completed. Ted has requested a meeting to review. Meeting scheduled for April 20<sup>th</sup> with Sam Redfern to look at a possible wetland project on Blacktail Creek. No additional info currently.

- **Upper Clark Fork Stream Flow Working Group:** Next meeting will be May 11th at the Pen Convention Center in Deer Lodge starting at 9:00 am.

### **Terrestrial Priority Areas:**

- **Garnet: Terrestrial**
- **Gough Creek:**

**Dutton Ranch:** Glen finished up the landowner agreement and sent it up to NRDP. His project list will include conifer encroachment removal from grasslands (keying in on areas of Antelope bitterbrush), conifer encroachment removal from the Gough Creek riparian zone, and biological weed control for Spotted knapweed.

**Hollenback:** No update.

**DNRC:** Finished up the landowner agreement and sent to Brian Robbins and Jordan Rice for review and input before being sent to NRDP. Proposed projects include two spring developments (with short pipelines and stock tanks) and conifer removal from an Aspen clone.

**Brock Creek:** Cynthia Montagne: Glen Continued work on the Brock Creek Ranch LLC (Cynthia Montagne) management plan. Property is located in sections 14, 23, & 24 T10N R10W in the Brock Creek drainage. This includes some map work, analyzing the inventory data and begin writing the plan narrative. Glen will need to meet with Cynthia soon to review the plan with her and get input from her.

### **Deer Lodge North & South: Task Order 16**

**Aspen Grove Ranch (Sherm Anderson):** Glen met with Sherm Anderson to review and discuss the NRDP landowner agreement. Overall, he agrees with the proposed projects - he did recommend some minor changes to the cross fence and the stock water pipeline. The proposed projects include a cross fence, riparian fence, beaver mimicry, stream crossings, off stream stock water system (pumping station, pipelines, & summer and winter stock tanks). Glen now needs to meet with Troy and TerriJo to get their input on finalizing it so it can be sent up to NRDP.

### **Habitat Enhancement: Task Order 13**

**Graveley Bros.:** This project went out for bids on early March and a contractor field day tour was held on March 9 which several contractors attended. Sandy Graveley contacted Greg Mullen with concerns about the project unit boundaries. Greg and Glen met with him in Avon and he explained that the project unit boundaries on the map were not the areas they thought were going to be treated. He wants the forested areas thinned out, but we explained that was never the intent of the project, but it was to clear the conifers off of the rangeland to preserve the sagebrush grasslands and areas of bitterbrush to improve the wildlife habitat. He went back and talked with

his brother and later asked Greg to pull the bid solicitation because they decided not to go through with the project.

**DNRC:** (Brock Creek and Spring Creek sections): Stock Water System The solar pump system on the section leased by the Sanders Ranch in Granite County has been pulled and will not be installed due to the high cost. On the Brock Creek DNRC section, the two spring developments are moving forward and a contractor has been selected to get those installed. To further try and reduce the cost, the fences protecting the spring collection areas will be installed by the same contractor that will install the riparian fence (using wood posts and barbed wire). The riparian fence is planned to be installed this spring (as per the last communication with the contractor last fall). These are the fences along Brock Creek, Spring Creek (Granite County) and the wildlife friendly fences on the Lampert Ranch. Glen will be contacting the contractor to confirm this schedule.

**Aquatic:**

- **Blacktail/Basin Creek BAO restoration Planning Project:** Final report submitted to NRDP on March 31. Project now closed.
- **Blacktail Creek Riparian Restoration Planning Project:**  
A new task order was signed in February for this project. Ted has updated the landowner information for the reach of Blacktail Creek to its headwaters up Roosevelt Drive. Landowner contacts began, Draft CREP document revised for Harrington. A meeting to review has been requested. A meeting to discuss a potential CREP project with Redfern has been set for April 20<sup>th</sup>. Scheduling of project planning in the headwaters of blacktail under way with Amy C.
- **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 underway on the Brothers Diversion after an August site visit by NRDP, Ted Confluence, & Mark as well as Randy Brothers. Meeting held with MHCD & Silver Bow County representatives to the NRDP advisory council. Future Fisheries grant request submitted with a\$5,000 match from George Grant Chapter of TU for the Balentine project. Partial Future Fisheries grant obtained. In February Will submitted to a US F&W grant source. No new information.
- **Cottonwood Creek – Aspen Grove:** : Final design now in place phase 2. Will has developed a schedule of task for implementation of the project and related administrative issues with NRDP, Anderson & NRCS. The project is scheduled to be completed in 2022

- **Cottonwood Creek, Applegate Diversion/Fish Screen #1:** Project completed on October 28.

**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. No change since January report.

**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. Confluence has communicated that they are nearing completion of the final design.

- **O’Neill Creek** – No activity.
- **Gold Creek** – Meeting held with key landowners to discuss potential multiple landowner involvement. Meeting held with Ground Water program staff Bureau of Mines & Geology to begin discussion of how to design potential ground water storage projects with Gold Creek as Pilot. Program manager will attend the February WRC board meeting. No change since January report. No additional info.
- **Racetrack Aquatics Project Development TO: 5.14:** No Activity.

### **Flow:**

- **Racetrack/Dempsey Creek Flow Project Development – Task Order No. 6:** No Activity.

**Deer Lodge Landfill Compost Project:** Work on feasibility study completed and submitted to the Deer Lodge Landfill Committee. Conf call held with other organizations on the status of the project. Waiting for responses from same. Continued implementation of the NRCS Conservation Innovation grant. Carcass pickup still under way. Landfill board has submitted their expansion permit to DEQ. The Compost projects will be addressed after the expansion has been approved. Vital ground grant extended to allow for development of the compost site in 2022. Communications with Commissioner Seager in March. County still waiting for approval of expansion from DEQ.

Partners/Board Members reports were given.

Next meeting: May 3, 2022

Submitted by Susie Johnson, April 14, 2022