

WRC UCF Minutes

May 3, 2022

Public Meeting

Those Present:

Susie Johnson – DLVCD/WRC, John Hollenback – WRC/DLVCD, Dan McQueary – WRC/landowner, Cam Balentine – WRC/Brown's Gulch/MHCD, Pete Dallaserra – WRC/MHCD/Landowner, Amanda Cooley – Po Co Planner, Stephen Begley – FWP, Will McDowell – WRC/CFC, Josh Schrecengost – NRCS, Ray Vinkey – NRDP, (Teams), Mary Price – CSKT, (Teams), Andy Fisher – CFC, Heidi Brewer – CREP Coordinator (Teams), Greg Mullen – NRDP (Teams), Brian Chaffin – U of M (Teams), Brian Bartkowiak – NRDP (Teams), Brandon Warner – BSB 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 Dan McQueary, seconded by Pete Dallaserra and motion carried to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.
- **New Business:** None.

Project Updates:

CREP Proposal: The Governor has signed the CREP Proposal so now landowners are able to sign up for the Clark Fork River Basin Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). A press release will be coming out in the paper. Ted would like a draft fax sheet and a kickoff meeting with partners to be held in Deer Lodge.

Upper Clark Fork Stream Flow Working Group: Brian Chaffin, U of M College of Forestry and Conservation talked about split season irrigation survey. The University of Montana is conducting a study to better understand irrigator perceptions of voluntary water use reduction and compensation programs. Specifically, to learn how individuals perceive the costs and benefits of reducing irrigation during low flow times of the year in exchange for financial compensation. Your responses are important and will help inform a general understanding of potential solutions to water use challenges during times of drought. Your responses will also help a graduate student complete their degree! If you are willing to participate in this survey, please have the adult (age 18 or over) in your household who is most involved with irrigation-related decisions and water management complete the 10–15-minute survey. Brian will be sending out

this survey. The next Flow Group meeting will be May 11th at 9:00 am. at the Pen Convention Center.

Terrestrial Priority Areas:

- **Garnet: Terrestrial**

A DNRC forestry grant request was submitted in April for conifer encroachment work in the Garnets.

- **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. No further activity in April.

Hollenback: No update.

DNRC: Landowner agreement in place. 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 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). Waiting for a field review by FWP & NRDP.

Habitat Enhancement: Task Order 13

Graveley Bros.: Conifer encroachment project stopped by the Graveley ranch.

DNRC: (Brock Creek and Spring Creek sections): Stock Water System Glen was on site with the DNRC in April. The DNRC has propose that they will use their fire crew to complete the conifer removal from aspen clones in the Brock Creek project.

Aquatic:

- **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 under way. Seven landowners contacted. Meetings held with four on potential CREP projects. Now scheduling field reviews with Ray Vinkey and waiting for response on proposed CREP project on the Harrington - Hershey property.
- **Brown's Gulch:** Partial funding for the Ballentine projects has been secured. Additional grants submitted. No other activity underway. Waiting for FWP to conduct additional studies on Brown's Gulch before any potential new funding is made available.
- **Cottonwood Creek – Aspen Grove:** Will is now developing the bid package for the Aspen Grove projects. Bids are due on May 31st.
- **Cottonwood Creek, RCC-Vineyards Diversion:** Confluence has finished a conceptual design. Now Confluence and NRDP is trying to schedule a meeting with the involved landowners.
- **O'Neill Creek** – No activity.
- **Gold Creek** – No activity.
- **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: County still waiting for the DEQ to approve the expansion of the landfill project.

Partners/Board Members reports were given.

Next meeting: June 7, 2022

Submitted by Susie Johnson, May 16, 2022