

WRC UCF Minutes

March 5, 2024

Public Meeting

Those Present:

Susie Johnson – WRC, John Hollenback – WRC/DLVCD, Dan McQueary – WRC/landowner, Cam Balentine – WRC/Brown’s Gulch/MHCD, Karen Knudsen – WRC/CFC, Josh Schrecengost – NRCS, Dave Torell – Powell County, Sydney Steward – NRDP, Cathy Johnson – DLVCD, Ray Vinkey – NRDP, Brian Bartkowiak – NRDP, Brian Chaffin – CFC/Flow Group, Andy Fischer – CFC, Mark Mariano - MTWW 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 Cam Balentine, seconded by Karen Knudsen and motion carried to approve the minutes of the previous meeting.

Project Updates:

Upper Clark Fork Stream Flow Working Group:

The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) Water Smart grant for Racetrack Lake not funded. A review of the proposal with the BOR was held the grant will be resubmitted.

A new BOR grant was applied for in October to create a complete data base of existing research & information for ground & surface water in the upper Clark Fork River Basin.

An additional BOR Cooperative Watershed Management grant to provide funds to the Flow Group was submitted on November 5. Next Flow Group meeting will be March 13th at 10:00 at the Powell County Community Center.

DNRC Landscape Scale Restoration Grant:

Planning activities underway. Meeting set for March 7th with DNRC staff to review contract management and project requirements.

Upper Clark Fork Conservation/Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Informational meeting with Farm Service Agency on March 13th at 1:00 at the Powell County Community Center.

Low Tech Restoration Project

CWEP/MT Tech proposal development. Meeting held with Clark Fork Watershed Education Program (CWEP) staff, MT Tech professor and others on March 9th to begin development of the Low-Tech Restoration project design. Draft concept paper developed and out for initial review. Additional meeting to be scheduled for March for further development.

Terrestrial Priority Areas:

New landowner Deer Lodge North and South

Garnet Terrestrial - Task Order # 15.25 – Draft 2024 Task Order signed. Planning activities underway.

Van Diest (Gilman Ranch)

Draft project proposal submitted to NRDP.

DNRC/Brock Creek:

Draft bid package documents for Conifer removal submitted to the NRDP.

Hollenback Ranch:

Stock water project nearing completion.

Draft conifer removal bid package documents connected to the DNRC/Dutton project.

Montange Brock Property

Planning underway. Waiting for meeting with DNRC before forwarding proposal project to Montange.

Graveley Ranch

Planning underway. Waiting for meeting with DNRC before forwarding proposal project to Graveley.

DNRC Landscape Scale Restoration Grant:

Planning activities underway. Meeting set for March 7th with DNRC staff to review contract management and project requirements.

Deer Lodge North-South:

Task Order has been received. The WRC has identified new potential landowners and has reached out to provide information on the NRDP Program.

Aspen Grove Ranch:

Project proposal completed and submitted to NRDP. NRDP rejected the proposal.

Beaver Mimicry Maintenance Project

Project proposal completed and submitted to NRDP. NRDP has rejected the proposal.

Habitat Enhancement:

No activity

Aquatic:

Blacktail Creek Riparian Restoration Planning Project:

Project proposal completed and submitted to NRDP.

Browns Gulch

Cam Ballentine Project implementation begun in October. Expected completion the early spring 2024. NRDP approved additional \$200,000 for Browns Gulch dependent on several factors. WRC will work with the Mile High CD to wait for the final decision.

Cottonwood Creek

No Activity, NRDP is waiting to see the outcome of the BOR grant which has funds proposed for the Kohrs Manning diversion before deciding on the development of a task order.

Gold Creek:

No change in status. on hold due to landowner issue.

O'Neill Creek

No activity, waiting for the land transfer to take place for the new manager prior to reaching out to see if there is still interest in developing a project.

Racetrack Aquatics Project Development TO.5.14-

Lower Racetrack Creek report completed and submitted to NRDP. Any further projects are on hold waiting for review of the fishery by the FWP.

Flow Projects

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O&M Task Order

Meeting set for March 5th with NRDP staff and Mark Mariano to develop 2024 new task order.

Deer Lodge Landfill Compost Project:

Waiting for DEQ permit for the landfill to be approved before moving forward with the project.

Meeting set for March 1st with Heart of the Rockies staff to prepare new carcass pickup contract.

Partners/Board Members reports were given.

Next meeting: Tuesday, April 2, 2024

Submitted by Susie Johnson, March 18, 2024

