

SPBRT/MRT Environmental and Recreation Meeting Summary

7/27/22

2:00-3:30 PM

Attendees:

Diane Kielty, David Nickum, Christina Burri, Megan Maiolo, Robin Knox, Casey Davenhill, Juan Madrid, Kirk Vincent, Larry Rogstad, Lynda James, Josh Kuhn, Laura Quattrini

Agenda Topics:

2:00 - Introductions

2:10 – Review Project List

Moved to next meeting

Josh – No on the ground knowledge but happy to help. Pick up streams below Park County. Douglas and Jefferson.

David – Can take Urban/Metro SP area and up the corridor. Elbert

Randall – Arapaho County, El Paso

Robin – Lower SP South of the river. Yuma, Kit Carson. Phillips. Washington

2:10 pm - Projects / Themes to Propose to BRTs

Time horizon to introduce topics to the RTs is October. Topics identified and introduced by M&I for focus are -

1. Future landscapes for warming climate
2. Socio economic benefits of urban landscapes
3. Efficiency targets

The Turf bill may be something to focus on to promote and encourage. There will be Metro RT presentation at the August 11th meeting on HB22-1151: Financing Alternatives for Removal of Non-Essential Turf (Caroline Koch & Victoria Arling, Western Resource Advocates) (30 Min.). Information to attend is below.

Hybrid – Live & Virtual

Live Location: Denver Water

[Directions to Administration Building | Denver Water](#)

Denver, CO 80204

or

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84725874240?pwd=eG1lL3hVNkM3OVQ4YVpkcE5VVHNRQT09>

Meeting ID: 847 2587 4240

Passcode: 937100

Dial by your location

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

833 548 0276 US Toll-free

Find your local number: **<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84725874240?pwd=eG1lL3hVNkM3OVQ4YVpkcE5VVHNRQT09>**

Subcommittee to gather information on HB22-1151 - Casey Davenhill, Juan Madrid, Lynda James

GEI is working on reclamation of gravel pits and may bring something forward for a WSRF grant. Gravel mining in Weld and Larimer counties has created riparian deserts for wildlife. Develop mining and reclamation instead of open ponds that are not always the best storage vessels. Consider taking these back to habitat.

Subcommittee to explore gravel pit reclamation – Larry Rogstad, Kirk Vincent

Upcoming Meeting Topics:

- TU is overlaying climate models and species habitat and where to focus conservation efforts. Some pilot projects with beaver dam analogues to slow release of water and maintain strong habitats are under development to implement next year. Is this group interested in hearing from this group about this modeling and the pilot projects? Lead scientist is Duncan Rose out of Cortez area. Watershed environments vary. Does this relate to wildfire risk modeling? Another group is modeling risk assessment regarding water supply threats. Is this another parallel activity. There is also the Colorado Heritage Program conducting a statewide wetlands mapping project.
- Suggest looking at WSRF project maps on the South Platte Website, [Grants — The South Platte Basin](#)
- There are Stories on the SPB website here, [Stories — The South Platte Basin](#)

2:45 - Presentations

Forest Health/Wildfire Response Efforts

Christina Burri – Denver Water watershed scientist. CO Forest Health Council engagement opportunities. How RTs align with forest health needs. Leveraging resources with Director Gibbs as lead for the Forest Health Council and the RTs. Identify opportunities for alignment. What is needed by RTs that this Council could provide?

- Information sharing
- Project Updates
- Advocacy – elevate importance of watershed health
- Bring our Project List to the Council
- USFS and CSFS engagement and participation – new state forester Matt McColmes (sp). These folks may need to be at the RT discussions. The field offices may not be aware of RTs.
- Federal engagement opportunities – Biden just appointed a new Wildfire Mitigation and Management Commission. Director Gibbs and others are appointed to this Commission. Large funding is coming into this Commission that must be spent in 10 years. Their first meeting is in September.

Christina offered to serve as a liaison between the Council and RTs. Forestry treatment of pile burning has become an issue. Groups are not able to get insurance due to insurance price increases. A blog on this issue - <https://nocofiredshed.org/prescribed-fire-liability-insurance-unavailable-unaffordable-and-vital/>. How to utilize slash product to avoid piles on landscapes is being considered. This is a big issue working on private lands.

[Colorado Forest Health Council | Department of Natural Resources \(DNR\)](#)

The **Front Range Roundtable** was created to collaboratively plan and spend \$40 million dollars for forest health treatment projects most specifically on the Colorado front range. Funding was from 2010 – 2020. Money has been spent. They reapplied in 2020 and did not receive a grant. They have been named as a first priority for funding in the new infrastructure bill for forestry monies. They are an information sharing group for the moment.

Megan Maiolo - Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed, Cameron Peak Fire presentation on impacts. Altered watershed processes, excess sediment, WQ issues, etc. Conducted mapping to prioritize post-fire projects using a composite of factors. Provided update on status of projects. Two lives were lost in recent flooding. The mulch treatments are holding up through this monsoon season. The county is looking into additional funding for projects.

Laura Quattrini – Big Thompson Watershed Coalition (Forestry Program). BTWC formed in 2013 after major flood. Discussed the long-term aftereffects of fire. Recovery efforts and costs of the recovery is proof of need for pre-fire actions. Working with private landowners requires a great deal of effort. They are learning lessons and must build in more staff time for the community outreach. Shared upcoming forest project opportunities with priority on wildfire mitigation.

Limiting factors: Interest of landowners, workforce development – not enough contractors to do the work, what to do with woody material, terrain (slope, rocky, etc.), funding limitations

Biochar has been considered, but the material from treatment varies and doesn't always fit within the parameters of what can be accepted for biochar. Cost offsets differ and is not always financially viable. There is promise.

Climate Resilient Planting is another consideration.

Next Meeting Topics:

- David is not able to be at the next meeting. Casey has stepped up to coordinate on August 24th. This is in the middle of Water Congress in Steamboat.
- Mushrooms to breakdown slash into soil. Learn more on this and other ideas for slash piles in the forest.

The next Env. Rec meeting has been moved to Wednesday, August 31st starting at 3:00 pm. Colorado Watershed Assembly Host.

3:58 pm - Adjourn