

Watershed Wildfire Protection Group Meeting Minutes

8 November 2013; 0900-1500 MST; Colorado Parks & Wildlife Administrative Office;
Bighorn Room; Denver, CO

1.) Introductions

Meeting Attendance List

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Aaron Kimple (via phone)	San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership
Aaron Ortega	US Forest Service Pike-San Isabel NF
Brad Piehl	JW Associates
Claire Harper	US Forest Service R2 Regional Office
Don Kennedy	Denver Water
Donna Brosemer	Greeley Water
Evan Burks	US Forest Service Pike-San Isabel NF
George Bigger	Construks
Hal Gibbs (via phone)	US Forest Service Arapahoe-Roosevelt NF
Jamie Geerdes	Colorado Parks & Wildlife
Jill Ozarski	Senator Mark Udall's Office
Joe Duda	Colorado State Forest Service
Jonathan Bruno	Coalition for the Upper South Platte
Kristy Muskopf	Colorado State Forest Service
Lisa Dale	Colorado Department of Natural Resources
Marcus Selig	National Forest Foundation
Matt Schulz	Colorado Parks & Wildlife
Mike Frary (via phone)	Colorado DPS - Division of Fire Prevention & Control
Mike McHugh	Aurora Water
Noah Koerper (via phone)	Senator Michael Bennett's Office
Rich Edwards	Colorado State Forest Service
Russell Clayshulte	RNC Consulting / BCWA
Sally Edwards	Xcel Energy
Shelley Stanley	City of Northglenn
Travis Warziniack	USFS Rocky Mtn. Research Station
Trent Hyatt	Clear Creek County

Total Number of Participants = 26; 19 organizations

Brad Piehl & Rich Edwards – WWPG updates

- Brad and Rich traveled to Pagosa Springs to meet with San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership regarding their Wildfire Watershed Assessment after the West Fork fire this past summer.
- NW Colorado Council of Governments (i.e. in Silverthorne area) – Looking at this organization as a link for our group and as a Northwest contact/hub for statewide outreach and education.
- Cucharas watershed group (i.e. in La Veta/Walsenburg area) also interested in looking at Wildfire Watershed Assessments after East Peak fire this past summer.

Jill Ozarski, Lisa Dale, & Noah Koerper - Legislative updates

- Wildfire Insurance Health Task Force completed its work and put out report, on the DORA website:
http://www.dora.state.co.us/taskforce/Documents/FINAL_REPORT_WITH_APPENDICES.pdf
- Prescribed burning, hesitation to do pile burning, working through barriers to start burning piles this winter. Immunity removed for state agencies; liability for fires. Negligence, however, must be documented/proved.
- Forest Summit – collaborative forestry groups around the state met this past October in Delta.
- Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program did first round grants over the summer. Second round coming up, new info in January. Awards in May. State and private forestry properties only. Utilization of forest products must be addressed in grant. Funded Programs with counties and municipalities doing fuels reduction work; cannot fund any burning. Vegetation management and socioeconomic factors will be measured with help from Colorado Forest Restoration Institute.
- US Forest service wildfire budget went over \$600 million, dealing with fire borrowing. This has been restored to fire budget.
- Farm Bill has a forestry title in it, forest policy decisions get made here. House passed the farm bill. Senate version has not yet passed. Bennet on conference committee for Farm Bill; also Chair of Forestry Committee. Nationwide Good Neighbor Authority and Stewardship Contracting Authority is included with Farm Bill.
- New bipartisan bill (Wildfire Prevention Act of 2013) introduced to use FEMA dollars to support doing additional wildfire risk reduction projects (Hazard Mitigation Assistance Program). The bill calls for 15% of total dollars spent by FEMA on wildfire, to come back to the state for mitigation after the fire. Money will be managed by OEM. Approximately \$6M potentially could have been obtained for mitigation since 2012 to date.

Marcus Selig; National Forest Foundation

- See power point:
www.jw-associates.org/wwpgmeetings.html

Group Updates

- Mike Frary – CO Division of Fire Prevention & Control; stakeholder meeting for prescribed fire rulemaking.
- Hal Gibbs - Arapaho–Roosevelt NF; engaged in flood recovery activity. Meet with the Colorado Big Thompson MOU group to identify 2014 action plan.
- Brad Piehl – High Park fire restoration.
- Matt Schulz - CO Parks & Wildlife – signed MOU with State Forest Service. Hired a new director.
- Mike McHugh – Aurora Water - getting letters put together to help support bills. Trying to get money for National Forest Foundation for Trail Creek Drainage.
- George Bigger – Construks - working with School of Mines, new products. Looking to partner with watersheds.
- Russell Clayshulte – RNC Consulting - risk assessment for Bear Creek watershed, high risk. Historic flooding into Evergreen Lake. Will put information together and share with group.
- Sally Edwards – Xcel - maps ready for fire modeling. Working on MOU with forest service.
- Don Kennedy – Denver Water - had 15 million dollars' worth of damage from flooding. Just did 4th increment with US Forest Service, 18 thousand acres of restoration work done. Trying to do more partnerships with entities to do work on private lands.
- Jonathan Bruno - Coalition for the Upper South Platte – Waldo restoration still ongoing. Received DNR funding for 1,000 acres of tree mitigation. Working on chips for Fairplay school biomass boiler system, only uses clean chips. Planning for prescribed fire, hopefully 3,000 piles.
- Joe Duda – Colorado State Forest Service - wood utilization and marketing group is a good resource. USDA announced 10 million dollar grant, CSFS will receive part of that. Cool Planet is working on development to use slash, this will help with our excess materials generated from forest management activities.
- Shelley Stanley - City of Northglenn – Trying to develop partnership with Clear Creek in order to try to reduce water quality impact for drinking supply. Stanley Lake took impact from flooding.
- Evan Burks US Forest Service PSI NF – new partnership coordinator.
- Marcus Selig – National Forest Foundation – Developing a conference for post-fire landscapes for utilities, municipalities, states, etc.
- Rich Edwards – CSFS recently received preliminary notification that 1.2 million dollars have been approved for the 2014 State Fire Assistance (SFA) grant program in the wildland urban interface.

Travis Warziniack; US Forest Service Rocky Mtn. Research Station - Economic Benefits of Watershed Protection

- See power point (link above).

Sarah Gallup; Colorado Dept. of Public Health & Environment, Air Pollution Control Division - Smoke Management for New Agency Burners

- See power point (link above).

Wrap-up

- Next meeting: between 17&31 January 2014 on a Friday.
- Need suggestions for speakers for meetings.
- Need suggestions on funding subjects to cover at meeting.
- Expand legislative update to 1 hour.
- Rich is in the process of getting a group website going.
- Request for organizational/role chart – in the works.