

Watershed Wildfire Protection Group Meeting Minutes

8 April 2015; 0900-1500 MDT;

Colorado Parks & Wildlife Administrative Office; Bighorn Room; Denver, CO

Introductions

Meeting Attendance List

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Aaron Kimple (via phone)	San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership
Alex Nelson	CSU Conservation Leadership Through Learning (CLTL Class)
Allison Mitchell	CSU CLTL Class
Brad Piehl	JW Associates
Brian Keating	US Forest Service Regional Office
Caitlin Bullock	CSU CLTL Class
Ch'aska Huayhuaca	CSU CLTL Class
Chuck Rhoades	US Forest Service; Rocky Mountain Research Station
Claire Harper	US Forest Service Regional Office
Diana Allen	US Forest Service; Pike & San Isabel NF
Evelyn Rhodes	City of Northglenn
Hally Strevey	Coalition for the Poudre River Watershed
Heidi Huber-Stearns (via phone)	U. of Oregon Institute for a Sustainable Environment
Jared Heath	City of Fort Collins
Jerry Gibbens	Northern Water
Jonathan Bruno	Coalition for the Upper South Platte
Kate Dunlap	City of Boulder
Kelly Cline	City of Westminster
Madeleine West (via phone)	Colorado Dept. of Natural Resources
Matt Schulz	Colorado Parks & Wildlife
Michael McHugh	Aurora Water
Monika Shikango	CSU CLTL Class
Morgan Boaman	CSU CLTL Class
Polly Hays	US Forest Service Regional Office
Rebecca Samulski (via phone)	Dolores Watershed and Resilient Forest Collaborative
Rich Edwards	Colorado State Forest Service
Sandy White (via phone)	Huerfano County
Sarah Synowiec	US Forest Service Regional Office
Shelley Stanley	City of Westminster
Stephanie DiBetitto	Colorado Water Conservation Board
Steve Belz	Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team
Tina Little	Colorado State Forest Service
Travis Reid	CSU CLTL Class

Total Number of Participants = 33; 20 organizations

Legislative Updates

Madeline West, Policy Advisor; CO Dept. of Natural Resources –

- HB1019 – Broadcast burning watershed protection bill adds broadcast burning as an eligible activity for CSFS grants, passed and signed.
- HB1052 – Wildfire mitigation income tax bill credit, postponed indefinitely.
- SB7 – Biomass as a qualifying activity to meet renewable energy requirements for the state, postponed indefinitely.
- Joint memorial 16-002 – came out of interim wildfire committee as a statement supporting the federalization of funding to support wildfire management as well as fighting, signed by speaker of the house in January.
- HB1040 – Auxiliary emergency communications bill, recommended out of the wildfire matters committee, allows DFPC to expand their emergency communication units to better communicate during fire, passed out of local govt. and is waiting the house appropriations consideration.
- HB1255 – Directs CSFS to conduct pilot projects that show the ability to utilize Colorado's Good Neighbor Authority with the USFS. Also directs CSFS to work with Colorado Water Conservation Board to develop a study that would assess the relationship between our recently approved Colorado water plans and forest management. In addition, the bill directs the CSFS to form a forest health advisory council of 26 seats.
- SB3 – Broadcast burns and wildfire risk reduction funding bill, adds broadcast burning as an eligible expense for reimbursement through a grant program and would 3M dollars into that grant fund, half coming from general funds and half coming from the severance tax operations funds which is funded by severance tax and is projected to be down next year by 80%
- HB1286 – Would increase the wildfire mitigation income tax deduction from 50% to 100%, has passed out of the house finance committee and is sitting awaiting the attention of the house appropriations committee

Group Updates:

- Mike McHugh – Aurora Water. Tennessee Creek project with USFS and CSFS going through renewal process with USFS same with CSFS. Taking a funding request to city council for the Horse Creek Project, \$1.85M riparian improvement to reduce sediment that's going into the South Platte.
- Hally – CPRW. Finishing last project of Skin Gulch. Working on post-fire restoration project at Seaman Reservoir; making progress at Ben Delatour Boy Scout ranch burning slash piles.
- Claire Harper – USFS, renewed partnership with Aurora Water, executed MOU and beat out Denver Water! Also working with Don at Denver Water.
- Steve Belz – RWEACT. Looking for a new Executive Director. Focusing on post-fire monitoring and backing off on water quality work. Working with USFS on forest plan revision.
- Stephanie DiBetitto – CWCB. Have a new webpage, Coloradoewp.com, site for watershed protection program as well as resources. Colorado watershed restoration program applications available after July 1 with awards in October.
- Jared Heath – City of Fort Collins. Getting into monitoring season on the High Park Fire effects on water quality. Working for CPW on high priority areas of the Poudre River.

- Jerry Gibbens – Northern Water. MOU with USFS, CSFS, & BOR, working to include National Parks. Brad working on 5 year plan. Still doing interagency treatment projects on grants.
- Polly Hays – USFS. New Director Steve Lohr worked in Washington office. Looking for a hydrologist.
- Chuck Rhodes – USFS Rocky Mtn Research Station. Research High Park CPRW work; joint fire science work. New national fire plan using citizen scientists monitoring.
- Kate Dunlap – City of Boulder. Working on talking with various parties involved with wildfire to make sure that we are part of the regular dialogue and that we are getting them the data they need in a useful format.
- Shelley Stanley – City of Northglenn. Partnered with Clear Creek County for mitigation work. Grants are covering 5 projects, 3 private and 2 public.
- Brian Keating – USFS. Staffing changes, just hired a regional smoke management coordinator. Working with state to be a little more aggressive with data. Congress appropriated some additional hazardous fuels reduction money for treatments on public lands. Worked with NRCS to treat some private lands. Continuing with CAFA grants proposals due today, money intended for state and public lands fuel reduction.
- Diana Allen – USFS Pike/San Isabel NF. 3,000 acres done this year, did burn through the winter on South Platte project. Partnership with CSU and Denver Water, Cripple Creek will be pilot project.
- Matt Schultz – CPW. Entering scale down implementation planning in 4 watersheds, \$1.5M for 10 watersheds, pile burns going well with CSFS and DFPC, knocking out backlog. DFPC just did first burn on state wildlife area.
- Aaron Kimple – San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership. Archuleta County, Wildfire Awareness Day is May 7th, prepping for monitoring new projects. Bridging the Divide, trying to get local breweries to support forest health.
- Becca Samulski – Dolores Watershed and Resilient Forest (DWaRF). Coordinating the Dolores watershed collaborative and making progress on wildfire risk watershed assessment. Focusing on funding right now to get the group going, applying for grants.
- Jonathan – CUSP, still active in forest management projects on private lands, applied for some CAFA funding and a few other grants. Working with Fire Adaptive Communities Colorado, still a young organization but trying to connect all groups working with fire in Colorado. Working on creating a database to connect groups working on similar things.
- Sandy – Shares San Luis Valley concern about upcoming fire season. Brad is helping to complete phase II on Cucharas River. County has hired a Wildfire Mitigation Specialist, Paul Branson.
- Rich for Page Whitesides – Page unable to attend. Buffalo Creek Water Dist., North Fork FPD rural water protection plan has been approved, also USFS has been generous with support.
- Rich – CSFS, 2015 Forest Health Report ready, Doug Fir Tussock Moth becoming an issue in the state; spruce beetle continues. Good Neighbor Authority master agreement signed with USFS for all 11 national forests in Colorado, working on identifying some projects areas. 5 CAFA grants submitted today! BMP monitoring audit is coming up this year, this year will concentrate on the southern front range.
- Brad – Cucharas has undersized culverts in two locations, capacity of culverts is undersized when you look at post fire flow. Upper Poudre Watershed Resiliency plan is doing some

interesting things looking at watershed resilience and should have something out in a few months.

Presentations:

- *Conservation Leadership Through Learning (CLTL) Program; CSU Warner College of Natural Resources: Ch'aska Huayhuaca, PhD Student & Program Coordinator; Center for Collaborative Conservation, Colorado State University; and CLTL students: Alex Nelson, Allison Mitchell, Caitlin Bullock, Monika Shikango, Morgan Boaman, & Travis Reid.*

CLTL Final Report on WWPG webpage:

<http://csfs.colostate.edu/media/sites/22/2016/06/WWPG-SituationAssessment-FinalReport-Spr2016.pdf>

- *Persistent Effects of Front Range Wildfires on Stream Water Quality: Implications for Watershed Restoration: Dr. Chuck Rhoades, Research Biogeochemist; USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Research Station.*
- *Investing in Natural Infrastructure for Drinking Water: Final Reporting on Lessons from Colorado & the USA: Dr. Heidi Huber-Stearns, Postdoctoral Scholar; University of Oregon Institute for a Sustainable Environment, Ecosystem Workforce Program.*

See PowerPoints on WWPG webpage:

<http://csfs.colostate.edu/forest-management/watershed-management/>