

Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 10/2/12
Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Interagency Office, Escalante UT
Meeting Summary P. 1 of 16

Attending:

Louise Barnes, Escalante City Council
Dave Bastian, Utah Conservation Corps
Dennis Bramble, private landowner
Angelita Bullets, Dixie National Forest (Supervisor's Office)
Tim Carlson, Walton Family Foundation
Jim Catlin, Wild Utah Project
Steve Cox, Boulder Community Alliance
Terry DeLay, UTFS Dixie National Forest
Amy Dickey, Utah Division of Water Quality
Kara Dohrenwend, Rim to Rim Restoration
Kim Dolatta, USFS Escalante Ranger District
Sue Fearon, Escalante Canyon Outfitters – Canyonlands Conservation District
Mike Golden, Dixie National Forest
Gen Green, The Nature Conservancy
Shannon Hatch, Tamarisk Coalition
Brooke Havice, University of Utah
Amber Hughes, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Allison Laramie, Coconino Rural Environment Corps – CREC
Afton McKusick, American Conservation Experience
Jason Metzger, American Conservation Experience (ACE) – Utah
Kevin Miller, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Matt Moore, Canyon Country Youth Corps
Mary O'Brien, Grand Canyon Trust
Charlotte Overby, Conservation Lands Foundation
Noel Poe, Grand Staircase Escalante Partners
Janet Ross, Four Corners School / Canyon Country Conservation Corps
Sarah Shaunessy, Utah Forestry, Fire and State Lands
Brooke Shakespeare, USFS Escalante Ranger District
Carolyn Shelton, GSENM
Josh Sherrock, Canyon Country Youth Corps
Peg Smith, Boulder Community Alliance
Craig (Sage) Sorenson, Boulder Community Alliance
John Spence, National Park Service / Glen Canyon National Recreation Area
Michele Straube, University of Utah
Judy Tinuher, Coconino Rural Environment Corps – CREC
Dan Trujillo, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
Joel Tuhy, The Nature Conservancy
Kris Waggoner, Grand Staircase Escalante Partners
Linda Whitham, The Nature Conservancy
Mike Wight, Southwest Conservation Corps
Kevin Williams, NRCS

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Upcoming trainings and workshops

- October 9, 2012 – Conservation Corps Appreciation Dinner
- October 11, 2012 – Fundraising 101 Webinar (11:30am – 1pm)
- March 11–13, 2013 – River Management Society (presentations, workshops and fieldtrip)

Next ERWP Meeting

- February 26, 2013 in Cedar City
- Majority ruled that scheduling 2013 meetings one at a time works best, rather than scheduling full calendar year of meetings at once
- Discussion about scheduling 2.5 – 3 day clumps of partnership meetings – no decision reached:
 - Would include: longer committee meetings, partnership meeting and fieldtrip
 - Discussion points
 - Enough time to meet and accomplish what you need?
 - Would committees be prepared for the partnership meeting, if they meet directly beforehand
 - Enough time to be prepared for the partnership meeting?

ERWP Administration

- Executive Committee Change
 - Curtis Oberhansly resigned from Executive Committee, citing time constraints for himself and other BCA staff due to on-the-ground RO removal activities
 - ERWP signatory partners unanimously approved Sue Fearon as the new Executive Committee “local” representative
- ERWP Strategic Planning Retreat
 - Scheduled for December 4 in Moab (6 hours)
 - Participants
 - Executive Committee
 - Committee Chairs
 - Current Funding Committee
 - Agenda developed by:
 - Executive Committee
 - Kristen Jespersen, Tamarisk Coalition
 - Facilitators (Michele Straube and Brooke Havice)
 - Retreat objectives
 - Confirm key long-term priorities in 10-year Action Plan
 - Revisit organizational structure to accomplish long-term priorities

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- Explore sustainable funding strategies to accomplish long-term priorities
- Develop recommendations
 - For discussion at next full ERWP partnership meeting, and
 - For ERWP signatory partners' decisions (as needed)
- Hope to spend half of retreat time on fundraising
 - Internal process – who's responsible, what resources are available to help
 - Strategies to achieve long-term financial stability for ERWP organization and key priorities
- 10-year Action Plan as driver for ERWP activities
 - Action Plan Committee and committee chairs will be meeting next day (10/3) to update the 10-year Action Plan, to ensure it accurately reflects what the committees have accomplished and plan to work on
 - Committees' annual work plans should be built from the Action Plan
- 2013 ERWP committee membership
 - Meeting participants signed up for committees for calendar year 2013, and indicated interest in chairing a committee in a future year
 - A preliminary 2013 committee membership list will be circulated to the full partnership, so those who could not attend the meeting can sign up

Conservation Corps Collaborative Training

- Mike Wight's Conservation Corps Collaborative Training PowerPoint presentation
- 2012 Conservation Corps crews were trained in August, giving them a background of the ERWP and skills training for Russian olive removal based on the Cutting Guide developed by Kris Waggoner and the Woody Invasives committee
- General consensus is that the training was highly successful; work done by the Conservation Corps crews has greatly improved and crew morale has benefitted
- Conservation Corps crew training should be repeated annually
- Woody Invasives Committee – need funding for 2013 training by late August / before crews get on the ground

Woody Invasives and Restoration Committee Update

- Public Lands Removal in 2012 – Kris Waggoner and John Spence
 - NPS – ahead on retreatment
 - BLM 5 crews out, very successful, done by Oct. 31st
 - 130 acres of new removal, training improved progress
 - Retreatment crew in all drainages from last 6 years (1000+ acres)

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- Private Lands Removal in 2012 – Steve Cox
 - Boulder – finish removal in Salt Gulch in 2013 (GIS maps)
 - Escalante will be 2013 focus – “below the bridge”
 - Removal → passive restoration = success
 - Boulder = extensive landowner participation; anticipate Boulder becoming “Russian Olive Free” in 2013

- Dixie National Forest – Terry DeLay
 - = upper elevation, therefore less RO
 - Mapping regularly
 - Trail crew has been treating Lower Box, no resprouts
 - 2013, focus on upstream above Boulder – may need funding assistance

- Planning with Don Coleman – Kara Dohrenwend and Sarah Shaunessy
 - Scope of work/framework for Don Coleman’s property – passive restoration opportunity that provides a plan that is adaptable for other private land in Alvey Wash
 - Using FFSL funding
 - Draft restoration plan given to landowner
 - RO → tamarisk/ very visible at bridge
 - Monitoring opportunity for the Science Committee

- Riparian Workshop – Amber Hughes
 - National Riparian Service Team hosted workshop at end of August
 - Approx. 50 participants (DNR, private landowners, NRCS, BLM, NGO’s, USGS)
 - 3 full days -- may have affected the low private landowner turnout
 - ERWP member presentations/field trips
 - Headwaters and Highway 12 demonstration projects = amazingly successful passive restoration (channel narrowing, aggrading, native willows)
 - Next year – NRST will host workshop targeted more specifically for landowners

- Russian Olive Control Monitoring Plan – John Spence
 - John Spence’s long-term monitoring/adaptive management PowerPoint presentation available directly from John (also available on the web portal)
 - Distributing to Science and Woody Invasives Committees and would like feedback by end of October
 - In place by 2015: 10 long-term sites with 15/site
 - Science Committee can use this plan for worst case scenario planning

- Revegetation Plan – Kara Dohrenwend
 - Passive/active native revegetation guidelines for public/private lands – Private landowners interpretive restoration process guide
 - Assist in framing restoration goals
 - Promoting passive restoration and resource list with ecological vs. landscaping perspectives

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- Feedback from the committee and photos needed
- End of November – ready for review
- Ready for use by next partnership meeting (Feb.)
- Model document/process for other partnerships

- Update on Wildland Scapes Plants Grown for Escalante Area – Shannon Hatch
 - 17 shrub/tree species under development native to area via Kara's nursery
 - 3-500 plants via Jannett Warners' nursery
 - Funded by Tamarisk Coalition
 - For use at discounted price in active restoration (20% below market price)
 - Product list - email version for ERWP distribution [sent to ERWP distribution list 10/4/2012]

- Data for GIS – Gen Green
 - All updates on public lands (reaches treated) and private lands (parcels treated) should be submitted to Gen Green as season closes
 - Data can be submitted to Gen Green via email or Skype or Google Earth
 - Kris W and Gen to follow up with each other on this year's results

- Inventory of Alvey Wash – Amber Hughes
 - ~2300 acres intensely inventoried, leaving 1300+ acres (not including private lands)
 - Inventory of public lands will continue over next few years
 - Private lands already inventoried by BCA and included in GIS maps
 - Extending crew work through October (focused on non-WSA parts, so can use heavier equipment)
 - Will have to do patchwork/phased approach, which makes for more easy access
 - Next steps pending inventory completion
 - Planning over winter to initiate removal next year – public lands
 - NEPA needs to be done

Streams Committee Update

- RSRA (Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment) Protocol – Jim Catlin
 - 10 sites in Escalante River have already been surveyed
 - Provides landscape scale view re: health of stream; one more tool to use in rapid assessment
 - Streams and Science Committees have had discussions with scientist developers of RSRA protocol
 - Work with DWQ to identify appropriate sampling sites and correlate to long-term monitoring sites

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- Water Quality Monitoring – Amy Dickey
 - DEQ has identified monitoring locations in west and Colorado basins (monthly for year)
 - 6 within Escalante Basin
 - Sampling can be done by local residents
 - Brooke Shakespeare conducts Monday sampling
- Main Canyon Restoration Projects – Mike Golden
 - Fish passage – Birch Creek (Main Canyon) and Water Canyon Creek
 - Road improvement – 2 miles of Forest Hwy 17
 - Road decommissioning --11 miles of DNF MTP
 - Riparian treatments / encroaching conifers – 65.5 acres public land, 4.1 acres private land -- via good neighbor agreement with state
- Limiting Factors Database Development -- Mike Golden
 - Identified 3 main needs/desires
 - Data portal for data access
 - Spatial display of partnership data
 - Ecological integrity table based on key attributes
 - Currently compiling data availability
 - Trout Unlimited/BLM sponsored “aquatic analysis”
 - Develop existing conditions
 - Identify limiting factors
 - Identify and prioritize restoration opportunities
 - Streams/Headwaters/Science Committees will learn more about TU/BLM project to explore opportunities to work together
 - Streams/Headwaters/Science Committees – sit down with TU/BLM to exchange info and goals, help design scope of project and shape next steps
 - More info for Mike G to share via email
- CRCT Conservation Planning Efforts (3 fish species conservation plan) – Mike Golden
 - Plans to be drafted this winter
- East Fork Boulder Creek Native Trout Restoration – Mike Golden
 - Use of rotenone
 - MOU signed between DWR and USFS region
 - No NEPA required with state lead
 - No further action pending lawsuit, Boulder Irrigation v. Garkane Power (re: 2 cfs flow release, state water rights issue)

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Science Committee Update

- Science Retreat – Dennis Bramble
 - Planning Fall 2013 workshop in Escalante (late September – early November 2013)
 - Targeted attendees with defined outcomes to those strategic participants – 30-35 people
 - Breakout groups with themes
 - Escalante River Watershed is a living laboratory;
 - Integrated “holistic” management of large landscapes (i.e., breaking down agency barriers)
 - Topical breakout groups under discussion
 - Reference areas
 - Integrated measures/monitoring
 - Building bridges between land managers and local communities (through education, etc.)
 - Follow-up/details in committee meeting at 5pm today

- Hydrologic Monitoring – Dennis Bramble
 - Piezometers installed in Headwaters site and South Hollow restoration area
 - What explains differences in water pressure/level?
 - Headwaters site = massive set of really strong springs
 - Value of hydrologic monitoring information – fundamental understanding of groundwater/surface water connection and long-term fluctuations in water table

- South Hollow Restoration Project – Dennis Bramble
 - Possible reference area
 - Forest Supervisor’s Office in Cedar City – draft protocol → Regional Office
 - Various field trips

- Hobbit Spring Protection – Dennis Bramble
 - Dixie RAC \$\$ to fence and protect spring held up
 - \$\$ coming in 2013

- Springs and Seeps Protocol – John Spence
 - Will be ready by late winter
 - Begin 3-year effort to catalog springs and seeps – NPS → BLM → FS

- Springs and seeps survey planning underway – John Spence sending out protocol – Kevin, Brooke S and Dennis to visit offline

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- “Legacy” Cottonwoods – John Spence
 - Pre-1930’s trees
 - Map geographic distribution and abundance of “legacy” cottonwoods in lower watershed
 - Create GIS layer on location, number, size, age, diameter, etc.
 - No funding yet – John doing it one tree at a time

Headwaters Committee Update

- FS Activities -- Terry DeLay
 - Lake Creek fish passage -- public/private land project approval – good neighbor policy \$ good for this too
 - Ponderosa and bristlecone pine cone seed collection
 - Fire salvage timber sale projects, 3 fires 4-5 years ago
 - Elevation and latitudinal limitations
 - Will share collected pine cone seeds across 4 FS districts
 - Sawmill aspen project
 - Wonderful aspen regeneration
 - Monitoring for ungulate use – if overutilization, will fence
 - Iron Springs – spruce/fir project
 - Upper Valley vegetation project (burning and riparian restoration) in Hobbit Springs and reconstruct check-dams
 - Mitchell Springs – ponderosa pine management, beneficial burns
 - Lay Creek fire – 1200 acres burned
 - Aspen regeneration
 - Any salvage opportunities?
 - Reforestation needs
- Beaver Activities -- Sage Sorenson
 - North Creek – 2 beaver dams
 - 3-4 feet deep water filled in with sediment
 - Monitoring active beaver dams – have moved downstream
 - Beaver increasing in upper reaches
 - Willow growth and meadow creation expedited by beaver activity, silt collection/river cleaning and raising groundwater table, diversity improvement
 - Addressing human/beaver conflict and management
- Beaver Activities -- Mary O’Brien
 - Leave it to Beaver Festival took place September 21–22, 2012
 - Education and public outreach (and involvement) – beaver hat, beaver tails, music, activities, scientific displays, sponsors and other animal exhibits
 - 150 participants, lots of kids

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- Carolyn Shelton and Sage Sorenson performed a song from the festival
 - Chew chew chew chew
That's what beaver do – we chew
Slap your tail, shout out loud
I'm proud to be a beaver!
- Semester in the West – Whitman College student research and involvement
- Beaver Restoration Assessment Tool (BRAT)
 - Should be completed by 12/31/22
 - Will be entered into ERWP GIS database / beaver habitat suitability GIS layer
 - Documents current and historic beaver activities
- Miscellaneous Headwaters Update – Mary O'Brien
 - Reference area possibilities
 - King's Pasture – fence building, headwaters
 - South Hollow – visits, lower elevation
 - Developing cottonwood survey methods
 - Keystone species in riparian areas

Action Plan Committee Update / CAP Action Plan

- All committees should regularly update the details of the 10-year Action Plan to make sure it reflects the reality of what committees are working on.

Education and Outreach Committee Update

- Outreach activities since last meeting -- BCA update
 - Beaver Festival
 - Private land RO removal
 - Escalante Arts Festival
- FAQs
 - Will be ready to review at next meeting
 - Will form basis for future outreach materials
- ERWP wishes to write more articles for Garfield County Insider
 - Develop list of potential topics
 - Appreciation dinner for Conservation Corps as potential topic

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- Possible education/outreach materials: t-shirts, magnets, other ideas
 - Portal url and list of contents/share with full partnership post meeting
 - Update one-pager with new URL
 - Send out updated one-pager to full partnership
 - Post on portal
- Web portal contents: <https://sites.google.com/a/erwportal.org/erwp>
 - Calendar
 - Large file documents
 - Maps
- ERWP newsletter...pending end of field work
 - Available at Strategic Planning Retreat
 - Possible distribution in Garfield County Insider as insert
- Suggestion made to get a high level agency person out to tour Escalante Watershed
 - Visit a combination of RO and beaver sites
 - Assistant Secretary of the Interior will be touring Dolores River Watershed next week

Funding Committee Update -- Michele Straube

- Funding timeline introduction
 - Calendar year funding timeline was developed by Kristen Jespersen and Brooke Havice
 - Will be discussed/adjusted with committee chairs at strategic planning retreat and shared with full partnership after that
 - Tied to funding opportunity cycles
 - Will drive committee efforts and focus budget development, to ensure that committees are thinking about \$\$ at appropriate times
 - Get ahead of the curve re: fundraising efforts and anticipate funding deadlines
 - Major components of proposed funding timeline
 - Plan for 2 years out -- in 2012, confirm budget for 2013 and plan budget for 2014
 - Budget/work plan to be developed in Oct. – Dec. timeframe at committee level (Woody Invasives, Streams, etc.)
- December 31st committee budget deadline
- 2013/2014 budgets due 12/31/12
 - But having them ready before 12/4 strategic planning retreat would be even better!

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- Funding Committee role and general responsibility for fundraising clarified
- Substantive committees
 - Create annual work plans
 - Identify funding opportunities
 - Decide who is going to apply for which funding
- Funding committee
 - Membership:
 - Change membership to be committee chairs only
 - Suggestion made to add BCA and GSEP to Funding Committee, as their activities cross committees
 - Functions:
 - Coordination / gathering all budgets in one place
 - Look for duplication / gaps
- *Everyone* has responsibility to look for funding resources and share funding opportunities partnership-wide

Cross-Watershed Network – Michele Straube

- History of the effort
 - February 2012, Tamarisk Coalition symposium – third day was devoted to collaboration across watershed partnerships
 - Developed big wish list
 - 1-2 conference calls to synthesize wish list
 - Survey to broad list re: priorities and needs (received >200 responses)
 - 9/14 Core Team meeting in Cottonwood AZ to create organizational framework and identify first projects
- Cottonwood meeting very productive
 - Mix of facilitators and staff for partnerships
 - Season and Daniel from Tamarisk Coalition = staff
 - Partnerships represented -- Verde River, Virgin River, Tamarisk Coalition, The River Network, ERWP, Gila River
- Working concept of Cross-Watershed Network
 - Tagline: Healthy watersheds through healthy partnerships
 - Mission / purpose
 - We are a peer-to-peer network that supports cross-watershed collaboration by connection practitioners for information sharing and capacity building

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- Guiding principles
 - Mutually supportive / non-competitive
 - Increase effectiveness, build on existing strengths and resources
 - Shared leadership, responsibility and credit
 - Focus on outcomes and tangible results
- Participants
 - Open to all / partnerships, agencies, site-based practitioners
- Proposed projects for first year
 - Develop website for passive networking
 - Participant / partnership profiles to include projects and contacts
 - Connect people to each other
 - Links to resources
 - Two hot topic webinars to cover:
 - Substantive issue – post-woody-invasives-removal effectiveness monitoring
 - Process issue -- collaboration development / how do you build a partnership?
- Question to ERWP participants – Does this concept for a Cross-Watershed Network sound useful? Can it add value?
 - Head nods in the affirmative all around

Other Partnership Updates

- Southeast Utah Riparian Partnership – Kara Dohrenwend
 - In the process of redefining its purpose and focus
- Dolores River Partnership – Tim Carlson
 - Flycatcher project/restoration on-going
 - Capitalize on Great American Outdoors with Secretary of Interior to tour Dolores
 - Need similar tour in ERW
- Grand Valley Partnership -- Shannon Hatch
 - 250K grant award – Tamarisk Coalition is coordinating
 - Getting work started
- Verde Partnership member benefited from attending ERWP meeting – Tim Carlson
 - Tim Carlson to invite member of Gila River Partnership to next ERWP mtg

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- GSEP organizational focus – Noel Poe
 - ERWP work
 - Educational program that brings school kids into GSENM visitor center
 - Archeological site stewardship program
 - Paleontological coordinator of GSENM volunteer program
 - 7 staff and 2 contractors (hydrologist and oral history)

Additional Agenda Item – Garfield County Commissioners’ Letter on Beaver Reintroduction

- Components of possible ERWP response
 - Acknowledge lack of direct communication with commissioners
 - Address livestock/water use concerns
 - Include pictures from NV BLM allotments showing benefits/no effect on grazing (Mary O’Brien has the pictures)
 - If possible, include stocking rate for each photo
 - Beaver Festival had economic benefit (bringing tourist income)
- Potential ERWP actions
 - Attend Garfield County Commission meetings – Steve Cox?
 - In-person communication/education with Commissioners who expressed concerns over irrigation, water rights and fencing / riparian zone = no grazing
 - Mary will get photos/presentations from NV to share with Garfield Co. concerned
 - Invite NV BLM permittees to UT to share their experiences with beaver and grazing with Garfield County Commission
 - Terry DeLay to ask Bill Hopkin (UT Dept of Ag/Food) to facilitate this information exchange
 - Find a willing FS permittee to demonstrate success of beaver reintroduction
 - Small sub-group should create strategy for responding to Garfield County Commissioners’ letter:
 - Sub-group to include:
 - Terry DeLay + possibly 1 other FS person
 - BCA – Peg Smith (lead on supporting info)
 - NPS rep
 - GSENM rep
 - Ed / Outreach Committee, as interested
 - Sub-group discussion points:
 - Message
 - Audience
 - Messenger(s)
 - Supporting documentation
 - Identify permittee
 - Michele to send doodle poll and organize initial meeting

10/3/12 Field Trip Participants

Dave Bastian, Utah Conservation Corps
Tim Carlson, Walton Family Foundation
Steve Cox, Boulder Community Alliance
Kara Dohrenwend, Rim to Rim Restoration
Sue Fearon, Escalante Canyon Outfitters – Canyonlands Conservation District
Shannon Hatch, Tamarisk Coalition
Brooke Havice, U of Utah Environmental Dispute Resolution Program
Amber Hughes, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Noel Poe, Grand Staircase Escalante Partners
Sage Sorenson, Boulder Community Alliance
John Spence, National Park Service
Michele Straube, U of Utah Environmental Dispute Resolution Program
Kris Waggoner, Grand Staircase Escalante Partners
Linda Whitham, The Nature Conservancy

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**Escalante River Watershed Partnership
 October 2-3, 2012**

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Meeting Schedule

Tuesday, 10/2

- 8-9 am – Education & Outreach Committee meeting (Interagency Office)
- 9:30-10:30 am – Woody Invasives / Science Committees combined meeting (Interagency Office) – on the agenda (among other things)
 - short- and long-term post-woody-invasives-removal monitoring
 - appropriate scale of woody invasives removal efforts
- **11-5 – full partnership meeting** (Interagency Office)

Wednesday

- 8-10 am – Action Plan Committee / committee chairs combined meeting (Interagency Office)
- 10 until -- field trip
 - Escalante River to Sand Creek hike, between 3-4 miles one way, easy-moderate hiking
 - Highlights: natural bridge and an arch, Conservation Corps members hard at work, beautiful spring
 - Conditions: We will be crossing the river a few times. Water and air temperatures will be cooler in October.
 - *Bring a lunch, water, snacks, and anything else you'll need for the hike (e.g., neoprene socks)*

October 2 Full Partnership Meeting – Agenda

11:00-11:15	Introductions Housekeeping	Facilitator
11:15-11:35	ERWP Administration	Facilitator
11:35-11:50	Conservation Corps Collaborative Training	Mike Wight
11:50-1:00	Committee Updates	• Woody Invasives & Restoration (70 min) Committee Chairs
1:00 – 1:30	LUNCH	\$10 for pizza and salad RSVP to Facilitator by 9/27
1:30-3:25	Committee Updates – cont'd.	• Streams (10 min) • Science (30 min) • Headwaters (30 min)

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education/Outreach (30 min) • Funding (10 min) Committee Chairs
3:25-3:40	BREAK	
3:40-4:00	Long-term perspectives on flow and channel change relative to restoration in Escalante River watershed	Mike Scott
4:00-4:20	X-Watershed Network Other Partnership Updates	Michele Straube Partnership reps
4:20-4:30	Upcoming Events	All Partners
4:25-5:00	Additional Agenda Items (if any) Schedule Next ERWP Meeting	