

Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 11/6/14
Interagency Visitor Center, Escalante, UT
MEETING SUMMARY P. 1 of 14

ATTENDEES

Michele Straube, University of Utah (facilitator)

Dave Bastian, Utah Conservation Corps
Dennis Bramble, private landowner
Rhett Boswell, UT Division of Wildlife Resources
Cassidy Buchanan-Gauthier, Arizona Conservation Corps
Steve Cox, Boulder Community Alliance / Boulder Town Council
Terry DeLay, UD Forest Service, Dixie National Forest
Jake Deslauriers, Canyon Country Youth Corps / Four Corners School
Crockett Dumas, private landowner / past public land manager
Sue Fearon, Boulder Community Alliance
Mike Golden, Dixie National Forest
Shannon Hatch, Tamarisk Coalition
Gael Duffy Hill, Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners
Grant Johnson, Escalante Canyon Outfitters
Melissa Masbruch, US Geologic Survey
Phoebe McNeally, U of U / DIGIT Lab
Kevin Miller, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Mark Nelson, Boulder UT resident
Mary O'Brien, Grand Canyon Trust
Noel Poe, Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners
Ron Rogers, Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners
Brooke Shakespeare, US Forest Service
Sarah Shaughnessy, UT Forestry, Fire & State Land
Peg Smith, Boulder Community Alliance
Craig "Sage" Sorenson, private landowner
Dan Trujillo, UT Division of Wildlife Resources
Joel Tuhy, The Nature Conservancy
Loch Wade, private landowner
Clint Wirick, US Fish & Wildlife Service

NEXT ERWP MEETINGS (and other meetings of interest)

- December 15-16: ERWP Coordinating Committee Retreat (Moab)
- February 3, 2015: Evening community event (Escalante)
- February 4, 2015: ERWP full partnership meeting (Escalante)

- February 10-12, 2015: Tamarisk Coalition annual conference (Albuquerque, NM)
 - Draft Agenda: <http://www.tamariskcoalition.org/sites/default/files/files/Final%20Agenda%20Nov12%283%29.pdf>
 - Poster submissions due 1/1/15: <http://www.tamariskcoalition.org/about-us/events/2015-conference>

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COORDINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE (Chair, Linda Whitham)
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- ERWP 2014 Funding Overview
 - Including Russian olive removal, native fish work, education/outreach, capacity, etc.
 - Total projected cost of all ERWP work in 2014: \$2102,249
 - Total amount raised in 2014 to date (not all in-kind or federal contributions tracked): \$1,659,083
 - Total WFF contribution: \$861,169 or 51% of tracked funding
 - Total funding sources (including partner cash and in-kind contributions): 12 sources
- ERWP 2015 Budget
 - Based on last year's projections; will be updated at December Coordinating Committee retreat
 - Total Cost: \$1,926,233
 - Total Funding Secured: \$259,933
 - Shortfall: \$1,666,300
 - Grants to pursue in 2015: NFWF (2 separate programs), UPCD Watershed Restoration Initiative, UT Dept of Food/Agriculture, misc. foundations
 - Possible grants to pursue in 2015: BoR WaterSMART, NRCS
- Fundraising Retreat Overview (Escalante 8/13-14/14)
 - Funding Outcomes
 - Develop a Marketing/Communications Plan to better target key audiences (federal, state, and private funders)
 - GSEP and BCA to work with local businesses to share info about ERWP and determine opportunities for partnering
 - Distribute ERWP info through federal agencies (e.g. Public Lands Day, visitor centers)
 - Identify list of potential donors
 - Visioning Outcomes
 - Future focus of ERWP will include water distribution, efficiency, and conservation
 - Better engage water distributors, state agencies and local community in the partnership
 - Look for local champions
 - Expand capacity to manage and coordinate the partnership

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- Next Steps
 - Need to fundraise for 2015 and start thinking about 2016
 - Coordinate upcoming grant applications
 - Get partner input on UPCD grant
 - Think about scope of WaterSMART grant
 - Continue work on Marketing/Communications Plan
 - December Coordinating Committee Retreat
 - Track in-kind contributions from all partners / supporters
 - Continue to build relationships with local businesses to increase awareness and cultivate support

CROSS-WATERSHED NETWORK (XWN) WORKSHOP (Michele Straube)
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- Peer-to-peer sharing workshop
 - Co-hosts: XWN and ERWP
 - October 15-16, 2014
 - Held in Escalante
 - ~65 participants, representing >20 watersheds
- Workshop Planning Committee
 - Jan Holder (Sky Island Alliance, formerly Gila Watershed, XWN Core Team)
 - Chip Norton (Verde River Greenway, XWN Core Team)
 - Daniel Oppenheimer (Tamarisk Coalition, XWN Core Team)
 - Tahnee Robertson (Southwest Decision Resources, XWN Core Team)
 - Michele Straube (ERWP, XWN Core Team)
 - Kris Waggoner (ERWP)
 - Linda Whitham (ERWP)
- Welcome given by Dennis Waggoner, Escalante Chamber of Commerce
- First topic, Day 1: Restoration Strategies for Creating System Resiliency
 - Introductory Speaker: Bruce Orr, Stillwater Sciences
 - Resource Experts:
 - Katie Jagt, Walsh Environmental
 - Bruce Orr, Stillwater Sciences
 - Chris Rasmussen, Eco Mainstream Consulting
 - Karen Simms, BLM Tucson Field Office

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- Second topic, Day 1: Strengthening the Link between Science and Restoration Activities
 - Introductory Speaker: Genevieve Johnson, Desert LCC
 - Resource Experts:
 - Dennis Bramble, U of U Biology (retired)
 - Genevieve Johnson, Desert LCC
 - Karen Simms, BLM Tucson Field Office

- Third topic, Day 1: Long-Term Monitoring of System Responses to Restoration Activities
 - Introductory Speaker: John Spence, NPS Glen Canyon NRA
 - Resource Experts:
 - Kara Dohrenwend, Rim to Rim Restoration
 - Mike Golden, USFS Dixie NF
 - Karen Simms, BLM Tucson Field Office
 - John Spence, NPS Glen Canyon NRA

- Keynote speakers during Day 1 lunch:
 - Cindy Staszak, GSENM Manager
 - Mike Golden, for Angie Bullets and Terry DeLay, USFS Dixie NF
 - Todd Brindle, Glen Canyon NRA Superintendent

- Concurrent Sessions, Day 2
 - Developing Effective Communication and Public Engagement
 - Creating and Maintaining Watershed GIS Databases
 - Restoration Funding Challenges and Tools for Addressing Them

- Available throughout workshop
 - XWN website / Create your practitioner profile
 - Hot Topics / questions

- Field Trip, Day 2 – Two groups went to three stations in opposite directions
 - Station: Restoration on private lands to meet multiple objectives (Hasenyager property)
 - Hosts:
 - Sue Fearon (BCA)
 - Sarah Shaughnessy (UT FFSL)
 - Kevin Williams (NRCS)

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- Station: Russian Olive removal on public lands / Long-term monitoring (demonstration site)
- Hosts:
 - Adam Stoldal (UCC)
 - Kris Waggoner (GSEP)
 - John Spence (Glen Canyon NRA)
- Station: Restoration of Colorado cutthroat trout habitat
- Host: Mike Golden
- Evaluation responses: What was most valuable for you about this workshop?
 - Learning how many people are doing the same thing.
 - Networking. Face to face connections.
 - Getting perspectives from other watersheds on the processes, challenges, and visions we share.
 - Field trips. It was great to see some on-the-ground stuff.
- Workshop sponsors:
 - Host: Escalante River Watershed Partnership
 - Walton Family Foundation
 - Terra Foundation
 - The Nature Conservancy
 - U of U Environmental Dispute Resolution Program
 - ESRI Press (GIS books)
 - Utah Conservation Corps (Day 2 lunch and van)

WATERSHED RESOURCE DATABASE (GIS) (Phoebe McNeally, U of U DIGIT Lab)
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- Why are we creating the database? Loop:
- Research design → data collection → analyze → evaluate → conclude & report → define → research design →
- Objective of watershed resource database:
 - To create a multi-purpose spatial database for data related to the Escalante River Watershed
 - One database – many data sets
 - Central data repository

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- Where Are We?
 - SQL Server database is built
 - Metadata standards have been agreed upon
 - Publicly available data has been gathered
 - WICR data is populated
 - ArcGIS Online is being used for sharing and editing
- Next? What data do you have?
 - Each meeting participant identified relevant data they could provide
- Q: Who will have access to the data collected in the watershed resource database?
- A: ERWP will make no decisions regarding access to data. Owners of the data will determine access to data, with a strong preference for open access where there are no privacy concerns.

SCIENCE COMMITTEE UPDATE (Co-chairs: John Spence and Linda Whitham)
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- Springs and seeps (Brooke Shakespeare, USFS)
 - Groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDE)
 - 27 spring survey sites over 2 years
 - Informal analysis
 - 2014 – springs close to or at surface with water, but don't turn into streams
 - lot of isolated wet spots on landscape
 - Water level recording -- 2 years data for Hall Creek
 - Looking for heterogeneity / variability of hydrologic response in watershed (reasons for recharge or not)
 - Topography / gradient – flat or steep (can water pool)
 - Geology – what's at surface, nature of rock (can affect or drive spring recharge)
- Q: What is source of Hall Creek water?
- A: Snowmelt driven, but spreads out over the year. Not necessarily spring-driven.
- Q: would introduction of beaver even out the peaks? What is historic data on beaver?
- A: Grundy documents first-hand experience regarding more water with beaver present.

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- Science workshop (Joel Tuhy, TNC)
 - Following up on Melissa Masbruch's Hydrology 101 June presentation in Boulder, and great community interest expressed there
 - Held workshop in Deer Creek
 - What do we know?
 - What do we not know?
 - What information is not being collected?
 - Federal agencies doing a lot of collecting information (USGS, GSENM)
 - Funding cuts has caused some data collection to stop
 - Explore a process to gather bits of information in one place so that all can have access to the same information re: reliable source of water
- Discussion:
 - Encourage connection between private landowner and federal land managers to gather / collect relevant information
 - Some USGS gauging stations have been taken off-line (Deer Creek, Boulder)
 - Can ERWP raise \$\$ to bring them back on-line?
 - Adopt-a-gauge?
 - Estimate \$20,000/gauge/year?
 - USGS visits gauges ever 6 weeks to correlate profile and read gauge
 - Possibly could train FS employees to read gauges
 - Use citizen science to read gauges?
 - Tamarisk Coalition has \$\$ for citizen science workshop or training
 - Grand Canyon NP has done citizen science

WOODY INVASIVES COMMITTEE UPDATE (Co-chairs: Sue Fearon and Kris Waggoner)
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- Change in responsibility for private land restoration
 - Effective 2/1/15, Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners (GSEP) will be the hub for Russian olive removal on public and private lands
 - Boulder Community Alliance (BCA) will focus their energies on Boulder community issues
 - Most of RO removal in future is in Escalante area
 - Advantages:
 - Less confusing for grantors and donors / reduced competition for funds
 - Increased consistencies and efficiencies
 - Shared employee resources across public and private land efforts
 - Private landowner participation in RO removal will continue to be voluntary; ERWP has no authority to force landowners to cut RO

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- After 2/1/15, relevant GSEP staff:
 - Sue Fearon, GSEP employee (private lands project coordinator)
 - Kris Waggoner, GSEP employee (public lands project coordinator)
 - Steve Cox, GSEP independent contractor (private lands)
- Private lands partnerships will continue under GSEP
 - Landowner (access control, grazing management, re-treatment)
 - GSEP (landowner contact, re-treatment)
 - UT Div. of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (initial treatment, re-vegetation)
 - Partners for Fish & Wildlife (clearances, re-vegetation, initial treatment)
 - NRCS (Southwestern willow flycatcher habitat assessment, Environmental Quality Incentive Program)
- 2014 field season
 - Training Week (mid-August)
 - The Conservation Corps partnered with the City of Escalante to build a base camp at the city park.
 - This helped the members easily access amenities in town along with having cell service and staying warm.
 - Members living at base camp also provided community service during the Art Festival.
 - Herbicide safety and hands on training
 - ERWP staff and corps crew leaders offered one-on-one training, and saw tips and tricks.
 - Due to training, zero accidents in the field
 - 2014 public lands treatment areas
 - Season totals: 378 acres, ~5 river miles (not including tributaries)
 - E. River, Death Hollow (GSENM): 22.64 acres, 1.03 river miles
 - E. River, Sand Creek (GSENM): 71.78 acres, 1.59 river miles
 - E. River, Boulder Creek (GSENM): 23.48 acres, .75 river miles
 - Alvey Wash (GSENM): 158.65 acres
 - E. River, Harris Wash (GLCA): 54.81 acres, 1.46 river miles
 - Upper Boulder Creek/Nazar Draw (DNF): 46.53 acres
 - 2014 Public Lands on-the-ground budget - \$713,200
 - 47% is Walton Family Foundation
 - Funding sources (including WFF): 7 sources

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- Rapid and Long Term Monitoring
 - 5 new rapid monitoring sites established
 - 2 new long-term monitoring sites established
 - Map-it-Fast program for field work and rapid monitoring
 - Learning from Verde watershed (and Mike Wight) re: using tablets for data collection

- 2014 private lands activity
 - Boulder
 - Monitored every parcel ever treated
 - One small initial cut this year
 - Reached out to landowners with 3 different handouts (recognizing RO, retreatment tool, record-keeping guide)
 - Developed fee-for-service program re: removing RO
 - 15% of landowners are removing their own RO
 - Many landowners in Boulder have no expectation of restoring the land post-removal; only purpose is to remove seed source

 - Escalante
 - One large site (XWN field trip site) / removal and re-seeded by hand
 - 3 parcels attached to riparian areas will be started mid-November

EDUCATION / OUTREACH COMMITTEE UPDATE (Co-chairs: Peg Smith and Linda Whitham) (PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- Boulder Community Alliance – remaining role in ERWP to be determined by Board
 - Will be looking for new Executive Director during 1st quarter 2015
 - Will continue to host Leave It to Beaver program as a local program (not officially part of ERWP)
 - Ready to work on beaver reintroduction whenever state moves forward

- 2014 has been a busy year for education and outreach
 - Winter 2013 ERWP newsletter published
 - ERWP website “on-line” (<http://gsenm.org/escalante-river-watershed-partnership/>)
 - ERWP Website blog started
 - Numerous Facebook postings (including meeting notices, shout-outs, celebration of ERWP partners)
 - Hosted several public events
 - New articles published
 - Supported second-party articles

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- ERWP Blog traffic
 - Traffic: in past 90 days, 249 “visits” to ERWP’s website blog
 - Blog entries (e.g., Dennis Bramble meets with rancher Sid Goodloe, XWN peer-to-peer sharing workshop)

- ERWP Facebook
 - “Likes” -- solid, year-over-year growth
 - Facebook traffic in past 28 days:
 - 3,078 people reached
 - Women: 50%
 - Men: 40%
 - U.S., Germany, UK, Canada, Chile, Mexico, Netherlands, Australia, Peru, France

- ERWP “Notes From the Field”
 - Stories about Conservation Corps work in the watershed

- ERWP Newspaper Articles (Wayne & Garfield County Insider)
 - Russian olive removal -- 10/23/14 feature article
 - Utah Conservation Corps opens office in Escalante -- 5/8/14 feature article

- ERWP Related Articles & Videos
 - "Cutting A Clear Path: A coalition of unlikely collaborators is reviving the Escalante River" -- Nature Conservancy Magazine
 - “Restoring Utah’s Escalante River” -- The Nature Conservancy
 - “Historic Photos: A Great Way to Bring Communities Together” –Conservation Lands Foundation
 - “Another oil leak reported in Southern Utah” – Salt Lake Tribune
 - “UCC Rogue Squadron on the Escalante” -- video

- ERWP 2014 Public Outreach Events
 - Community dinner presentation: “Preserving Historic Photos of Escalante, Boulder and the Escalante River Watershed”
 - History in Your Attic photo scanning event (May 23-24, 2014, in conjunction with 2014 Escalante Heritage Festival)
 - Worked with photo archivists from BYU’s Lee Library
 - Over 400 historic photos and documents were scanned
 - Scott Eldredge, manager of the BYU archive program, characterized the event as "their most successful HIYA scanning event."
 - Scanned photos are available to the ERWP Science Committee for review to help characterize changes to the Escalante Watershed's geomorphology and ground cover.
 - Jerry Roundy CCC presentation
 - 2014 Conservation Youth Corps “graduation” ceremony

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- Beaver Festival booth
- Escalante Canyons Art Festival booth
- Cross Watershed Network (XWN) Workshop
- ERWP Outreach Activities for November/December 2014
 - History in Your Attic - Weekly series on Escalante/Boulder area historic photos to run in local Wayne & Garfield County Insider
 - Co-sponsors: ERWP, LDS Church, BYU, Daughters of Utah Pioneers, Boulder Heritage Foundation, Escalante Heritage Center
 - Finish layout of the Escalante River Native Fish brochure with Mike Golden (DNF)
 - Wayne & Garfield County Insider feature news article on the XWN workshop
 - Wayne & Garfield County Insider feature news article on Escalante River fish restoration

CONSERVATION TARGETS COMMITTEE UPDATE (Co-chairs: Mary O'Brien and Mike Scott)

- New Conservation Targets Co-chair
 - Mike Scott will be taking Mike Golden's place as co-chair
- Aspen brochure underway
 - Draft circulated at meeting and editing suggestions offered
 - Questions raised about distribution, attribution, credits
 - Revised draft to be circulated via email for additional comments
- "Fishes of the Escalante" brochure underway
 - Working with UT Div. of Wildlife Resources on fish information and illustrations
 - Colorado cutthroat trout, flannel-mouth sucker, bluehead sucker, speckled dace, mottled steelpin
- Beaver update
 - Leave It to Beavers festival held in Boulder, sponsored by BCA
 - Leave It to Beavers festival held in St. George, sponsored by UDWR and GCT
 - Logan thinking of doing a Leave It to Beavers festival in 2015
 - USU has updated mapping of the state for beaver habitat (existing habitat and future opportunities)
 - <http://brat.joewheaton.org/>

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- Fish updates
 - Flannel-head sucker, bluehead sucker, roundtail chub
 - DWR monitoring above Harris Wash
 - Finding dramatic decline in roundtail chub / virtually none left
 - Organizing sampling trip from Harris Wash downstream
 - DWR, Glen Canyon NRA, BLM, FS
 - Looking at fishless sections to Lake Powell for reintroduction
 - Calf Creek as potential native fish restoration site
 - Potential restoration steps:
 - Use piscicide for non-natives
 - Build barrier (downstream of campground on BLM land)
 - Reintroduce fish
 - Conduct outreach near to campground
 - Discussion:
 - Community has difficulty with use of rotenone
 - Q: Will piscicide (chemical) go beyond Calf Creek into the Escalante River?
 - A: NO.
 - Q: Will rotenone kill all life under the rocks?
 - A: Rotenone application rates used currently are very minimal to get target species. Density and diversity of animals recovers fully within one year. One study shows that rotenone properly applied results in no greater harm than a big flood.
 - Q: Is rotenone harmful to humans?
 - A: A recently published peer-reviewed article concluding “no” for levels used in fish restoration will be shared with the partnership.

OTHER PARTNERSHIP UPDATES

- Dolores River Restoration Partnership
 - Recently received a \$60,000 collaboration award from the Colorado Non-Profit Association
- Southeast Utah Restoration Partnership
 - Hosted “Beetle Mania Today”
 - Decided to meet twice per year, one theme / meeting
- Desert Rivers Collaborative
 - Conducting XWN cross-visit with Southeast Utah Restoration Partnership

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**Escalante River Watershed Partnership
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AGENDA

Meeting Schedule

Wednesday, November 5

- 2:30-4:30 pm – Woody Invasives committee meeting (*Interagency Office*)

Thursday, November 6

- **10-5 – full partnership meeting** (*Interagency Office*)
 - Lunch \$12, **RSVP by COB Tue 11/4** to kris@gsenm.org

November 6 Full Partnership Meeting – Agenda*

Introductions
Housekeeping

Coordinating Committee

XWN Workshop

Watershed Resource Database

Science Committee

Woody Invasives Control and Restoration Committee

Education / Outreach Committee

Conservation Targets Committee

Other Partnership Updates

Upcoming Events

Additional Agenda Items (if any)

Schedule Next ERWP Meeting