

Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 2/13/14  
Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument Interagency Office, Escalante  
**MEETING SUMMARY**     P. 1 of 11

**ATTENDEES**

Dennis Bramble, private landowner  
Tim Carlson, Walton Family Foundation  
Steve Cox, Boulder Community Alliance/Boulder Town Council  
Amy Dickey, UT Division of Water Quality  
Kim Dolatta, US Forest Service  
Sue Fearon, Boulder Community Alliance  
Mike Golden, Dixie National Forest  
Shannon Hatch, Tamarisk Coalition  
Amber Hughes, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument  
Patrick Lambert, US Geologic Survey  
Melissa Masbruch, US Geologic Survey  
Phoebe McNeally, U of U/Digit Lab  
Jason A. Metzger, American Conservation Experience  
Kevin Miller, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument  
Mary O'Brien, Grand Canyon Trust  
Charlotte Overby, Conservation Lands Foundation  
Noel Poe, Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners  
Ron Rogers, ERWP (via Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners)  
Brooke Shakespeare, US Forest Service  
Sarah Shaughnessy, UT Forestry, Fire & State Land  
Carolyn Z. Shelton, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument  
Peg Smith, Boulder Community Alliance  
John Spence, National Park Service / Glen Canyon  
Dan Trujillo, UT Division of Wildlife Resources  
Joel Tuhy, The Nature Conservancy  
Linda Whitham, The Nature Conservancy  
Erika Winton, Conservation Lands Foundation

Michele Straube, University of Utah (facilitator)

**NEXT ERWP MEETINGS**

- Tue 6/3, evening — community presentation on hydrology (the "water" part of watershed)
- Wed 6/4, 10-2 — full partnership meeting
- Wed 6/4, 3-6 — community open house and 5-year celebration
- Wed 6/4, 6-??? — campfire event for ERWP partners at Hoyt Camp in Deer Creek

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**COMMITTEE UPDATES**

**Coordinating Committee** (Chair, Linda Whitham)  
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

2013 Accomplishments (handout available from facilitator)

- Awards
  - Several Partners recognized for their ERWP-related work
  - Partnership selected by DOI Secretary of Interior for a second year as one of America's Great Outdoors Rivers
- Increased ERWP Capacity
  - Sue Fearon hired as BCA Regional Coordinator, working on private lands
  - Ron Rogers hired as part-time ERWP Education/Outreach Coordinator
- Long-term Funding
  - Nearly \$2,000,000 raised in 2013; more diverse funding sources than before
  - 2014-and-beyond Funding Plan under development, including potential funding opportunities and resources for specific projects (by committee) and partnership-wide capacity needs
  - Fundraising Boot Camp held 1/21/14 in Boulder, primarily to help local partner organizations expand ERWP-related efforts
  - Coordinating Committee held strategic planning retreat 12/3-4/13 in Moab, with deep look at 10-year Action Plan and focus on developing long-term Funding Plan with funding needs and priorities through 2020
- Public Outreach Events and Presentations
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Beaver Festival
  - ERWP Interpretive Panels in GSENM visitor center
  - New website
  - Facebook-FAQ's
  - Media – ERWP newsletter sent to all as insert to *Garfield Insider*
  - Newsletters
  - Conservation Corps collaborative training and closing ceremony
- Cross Watershed Network (XWN) – ERWP partners participated in inaugural XWN peer-to-peer sharing workshop
- Ongoing Science and Research Efforts
  - Ground water /piezometer well study
  - Springs and seeps inventories
  - Russian olive invasion study – second year
  - Colorado River Cutthroat Trout and Three Species Surveys monitoring
  - Beaver Reintroduction Assessment Tool - state wide mapping underway
- GIS / Watershed Resource Database– welcome Phoebe

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**Woody Invasives Committee** (Co-chairs, Amber Hughes and Kris Waggoner)  
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- GIS & Information Sharing
  - Google Drive is replacing the ERWP web portal
    - Easy access storage for a number of ERWP documents
    - Won't be open to the public
    - File sharing for ERWP partners with permission
    - Will restrict who can edit files
  - TNC has \$15K to continue GIS support
    - Support for Woody Invasives restoration work
    - Development of Watershed Resources Database
  - GSEP will host a public website for ERWP (<http://gsenm.org/escalante-river-watershed-partnership/>)
  - Tamarisk Coalition has a link on their website with ERWP information
  
- Russian Olive Removal Activity
  - 2013 Public Lands
    - 492 acres – new treatments
    - 790 acres – retreatment
    - 290 acres - monitored
  - 2013 Private Lands
    - 185 acres – new treatments
    - 435 acres- retreatment
    - 70 acres monitored
  - 2014 Public Lands Field Work Plan
    - March, 4 seasonals begin (2 GSEP Assistants, 2 UCC Interns)
      - April –June, 3 volunteer projects (1 on GLCA, 2 on GSENM)
    - June, Youth Corps crew on Dixie National Forest
    - August, saw and ERWP training in Alvey Wash
      - August 23 and 24, crews make their way into the Canyon (crews will work Saturday to Saturday and Sunday to Sunday)
      - Sept – Oct, 2 volunteer projects (1 each for GLCA and GSENM)
    - Russian olive removal efforts end October 31-ish.
  - 2014 Acres to be Treated (GLCA, and side tributaries)
    - 206 acres -- new treatment
    - 1080 + acres -- re-treatment
  
- Private Lands Partnership
  - Partners
    - Landowners -- access control, grazing management, re-treatment
    - Boulder Community Alliance -- landowner contact, re-treatment
    - Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Land -- initial treatment, re-vegetation

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- Partners for Fish and Wildlife -- clearances, re-vegetation, initial treatment
- Natural Resources Conservation Service -- Southwestern Willow Flycatcher habitat assessment, Environmental Quality Incentive Program
- 2014 Private Lands Work Plan
  - January – February, main stem initial treatment
  - March–October -- re-treatment Boulder and Escalante, initial treatment (North Creek, main stem, Escalante, Center Street), debris removal, re-vegetation
- Monitoring
  - Long term monitoring data will be housed with Glen Canyon Recreation Area
  - Rapid Assessments housed with GSENM
  - Monitoring documents will also be put on ERWP Google Drive
  - Monitoring field schedule -- hope to complete all 10 long-term sites by end 2014
  - Tamarisk leaf beetle inventory by TC will not occur this year
  - Q: Will there be any monitoring on Dixie National Forest?
    - A: Salt Gulch could be the 11<sup>th</sup> long-term monitoring site
- NRST Workshop
  - Scheduled for March 5-6, 2014
  - Classroom course work and field visits on private lands in Escalante
  - Kristi Hatch has agreed to assist with writing NRCS conservation plans in conjunction with this workshop
- All the Conservation Corps working with ERWP have been approved as initial 21<sup>st</sup> Century Conservation Service Corps

**Conservation Targets Committee** (Co-chairs, Mike Golden and Mary O'Brien)  
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- Fish Monitoring Efforts
  - UDWR/USFS completed CRCT monitoring throughout Lower Colorado GMU
    - Preliminary Escalante data show stable-to-increasing populations
  - UDWR completed three species monitoring at long-term monitoring station
    - Sucker populations look good
    - Roundtail not detected
  - Q: What is the main limiting factor?
    - A: Non-native fish, although there are other limiting factors as well
- Main Canyon Restoration Projects Completed
  - FH 17 drainage maintenance and resurfacing
  - Three fish passage barriers replaced
  - One low water crossing improved

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- 10 miles of roads decommissioned
- Conifers removed in 64 acres of riparian area along 9.1 miles of stream
  
- Educational Pamphlets
  - Native fish
    - UDWR funding fish illustrations (using UDWR artist)
    - Working on verbiage for materials
  - Water conservation
    - Actively looking for partners
    - Buy-in from Iron County Extension
    - Interest from UDWR Farm Bill biologist
  - Aspen
    - USFS and Grand Canyon Trust coordination
    - Due to be done in 2014
  
- Database Development
  - TU aquatic analysis
    - TU received BLM \$\$ to do aquatic analysis to identify and prioritize native fish conservation efforts
    - Focus on which streams currently are habitat, as well as identify limiting factors on current strongholds
    - Possible to use TU data to extrapolate to potential future good habitat
    - TU met with ERWP committee yesterday to describe results of aquatic analysis
  - ERWP watershed resource database
    - General approach to combine data, but not duplicate databases (provide links)
    - Prioritize data collection by purpose
    - Extensive discussion at committee level re: metadata and quality of data sets
      - Watershed resource database will only include data sets that have appropriate metadata
    - Next steps – review what data is available
      - Phoebe McNeally coordinating and designing the effort
  
- Colorado River Cutthroat Trout Restoration Projects Update
  - East Fork Boulder Creek
    - Still pending the Garkane license amendment
    - UDWR outreach with the Boulder community prior to any action
    - Suggestion made: Connect with the local community “early and often” (allow lead time) about fish restoration efforts once Garkane issue is resolved
  - Calf Creek
    - Still in preliminary discussions between UDWR and GSENM

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- Boulder Mountain Sport Fish Management Plan
  - May open the door to new opportunities
  
- Beaver
  - Video produced by Trout Unlimited / Grand Canyon Trust / USFS with Wildlife Conservation Society funding
    - 6 minutes
    - Forest Service managers and scientists highlighting the values beaver bring in the face of climate change
  - Beaver Festival -- September 13,2014 in Anasazi State Park (Boulder)
  - BCA has money left from 2013 for flow control devices, to buy cameras, and to help finance 2014 Beaver Festival
  - Q: What has happened in North Creek since the beaver dam was illegally breached, equipment was destroyed and beaver were killed?
    - A: The beaver are still there and doing well. Illegal activity has ended.
  
- UT Division of Water Quality funding opportunity for water quality improvements
  - 2015 focus is west and lower Colorado Basin
  - Funding applications out end March / early April for work to be done in 2015
  - Federal and state non-point-source money
  - \$600-800,000

**Science Committee** (Co-chairs, Dennis Bramble and Linda Whitham)

- Science Committee will remain a separate committee (rather than merging with Conservation Targets)
  - Seeps and springs, and legacy cottonwoods, projects have been moved to Conservation Targets Committee
  - Watershed Resource Database is a joint project across the two committees
  
- Reference Areas
  - Gathering existing data on possible reference areas in 2014
  
- Science Workshop
  - Will precede Adaptation Workshop
  - Science Workshop planned for late winter/spring 2016, timed to come after GSENM science plan is issued
  - Workshop purpose:
    - Encourage researchers to use watershed as a living laboratory
    - Explore ERWP research goals and objectives, and identify principal data gaps
    - Get research at watershed level across agencies
  - Scheduling a retreat in Fall 2014, followed by a committee meeting in Spring 2015, to plan the workshop

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- US Geological Survey welcomed as new ERWP partner
  - Department of Interior's science agency
  - UT Water Science Center – largest collector of hydrologic data in state
  - Hoping to work with USGS to conduct environmental flows studies – identify minimum flows needed to maintain conservation targets
- Watershed natural condition assessments – may be \$\$ available through NPS program

**Education/Outreach Committee** (Co-Chairs, Kris Waggoner and Linda Whitham)  
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- Community presentation 2/12/14 evening at Cowboy Blues: “Pioneers in Your Attic”
  - PowerPoint slides available from facilitator
  - Well-attended by cross-section of local community
- NRST / Canyonlands Conservation District sponsoring participatory grazing workshop
  - “Principles and Practices of Riparian-Compatible Livestock Grazing”
  - 23 sign-ups as of ERWP meeting / maximum 60 participants
- New ERWP website – subset of Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners website
  - Public face of ERWP
  - Website is 60% populated
- Watershed Hydrology 101 – community outreach event for next full partnership meeting
  - USGS as presenters
  - Tie-in to EQIP/NRCS re: productivity and hydrology
  - Ask people at event: “What are your issues?”
  - Film it to create a webinar?

**SELF-EVALUATION RESULTS**

(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- Coordinating Committee's reflections on the self-evaluation survey results
  - What was your biggest take-away from the self-evaluation?
    - We're doing pretty well
    - Membership diversity
    - Uncertainty in short- and long-term funding
    - Dealing in two worlds: Russian olive and “other”
    - Dealing with controversial issues (or not)
    - Committee workload
  - What works best about ERWP?
    - Shared goals
    - Committed leaders and partners
    - Leveraged funds through coordinated action

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- What is ERWP's biggest challenge?
  - Long-term funding
  - Are we meeting ERWP mission?
  - Capacity
  - Engaging other partners
- Coordinating Committee's suggested changes
  - Keep Coordinating Committee structure
  - Add responsibilities to Education/Outreach and future watershed coordinator position
  - Change approach to quarterly meetings to encourage community member participation
  - Various other ideas for engaging new partners
  - Website needs to be more than about Russian olive
  - Encourage shared responsibility for all aspects of Action Plan
- Full group discussion of self-evaluation results – ideas, no commitments:
  - Measure progress against this self-evaluation regularly
    - Some suggested annual evaluations; others suggested every 3 years
  - Conduct a community survey to identify community interests and concerns
    - Generate baseline information at end of 2014
    - USU (Jack Wilber) conducted community surveys in different watersheds
    - Need to reach out to community members personally to get good response rate
  - End of RO season, when conservation corps leave – ask business owners and residents “how did it go?”

**ADDITIONAL AGENDA ITEMS**

- Wide Hollow Reservoir update
  - High sediment load to reservoir has caused multiple and significant problems
  - 3 years ago, UT Division of Water Resources said sedimentation and control plan needed
  - Irrigation company needs to respond – both by developing plan and implementing measures to prevent continued sediment and runoff
- GSENM grazing EIS update
  - EIS process was started in late fall
  - Have completed scoping and defined issues (ended 1/13/14)
  - Contractor is preparing scoping report for internal review
    - Scoping is used to define alternatives, conduct analysis of the management situation, define current conditions and affected environment
  - Talking about doing public participation as part of alternatives development



### **OTHER PARTNERSHIP UPDATES**

- Dolores River Restoration Partnership (DRRP)
  - Developing an exit strategy for monitoring and maintenance after removal is done
  - ERWP needs to address this for public and private lands
- Southeast Utah Riparian Partnership (SURP)
  - 8 years partnership life → fatigue → retreat in January
  - Revisit purposes / goals / mission
  - Submitted 6 proposals to Watershed Restoration Initiative (Colorado and DRRP)

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**Escalante River Watershed Partnership  
 February 25-27, 2013**

Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office  
 1789 N. Wedgewood Lane, Cedar City, UT

Monday, February 25

- Noon-4 -- Rapid monitoring workshop (Dixie NF Supervisor's Office)
- 4-5 – Meeting re: dispersed camping and travel management planning

Tuesday, February 26

- 8-9:45 am – Coordinating Committee meeting (Dixie NF Supervisor's Office)
- **10-5 – full partnership meeting** (Dixie NF Supervisor's Office)
- 5-7 pm – social hour at Toadz, <http://www.clubtoadz.com/>

Wednesday, February 27

- 8 am-noon – Joint session: Conservation Targets Committee, Science Committee, Trout Unlimited, Aquatic Analysis data availability (Dixie NF Supervisor's Office)

February 26 Full Partnership Meeting – Agenda

|             |  |   |
|-------------|--|---|
| 10:00-10:15 | Introductions<br>Housekeeping  | Facilitator   |
| 10:15-11:00 | ERWP Administration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2012 Accomplishments and <i>Fiscal Report</i> (10)</li> <li>• Strategic Planning Retreat (20)</li> <li>• Coordinating Committee (15)</li> </ul> | Linda Whitham<br>Mike Golden<br>Linda Whitham               |
| 11:00-11:45 | Trout Unlimited / BLM joint Aquatic Analysis project   | Warren Coyler,<br>Trout Unlimited                           |
| 11:45-12:15 | Outreach Strategy for Local Communities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Garfield County Commission letters</li> <li>• Education/Outreach Committee Strategy</li> </ul>                              | Carolyn Shelton<br>GSENM<br><br>Linda Whitham<br>Sue Fearon |

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|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 12:15-12:45   | <b>LUNCH</b>  |   |
| 12:45-4:10  | Committee Updates, including 2013 Work Plans / Budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woody Invasives &amp; Restoration (45)</li> <li>• Conservation Targets (45)</li> <li>• Science (45)</li> <li>• Education/Outreach (45)</li> </ul> | Amber Hughes<br>Kris Waggoner<br>Gen Green<br><br>Mike Golden<br>Mary O'Brien<br><br>John Spence<br>Linda Whitham<br><br>Kris Waggoner<br>Linda Whitham |
| 15 min  | <b>BREAK</b> (during Committee updates, as needed)  |   |
| 4:10-4:20   | Cross-Watershed Network   | Michele Straube   |
| 4:20-4:30   | Other Partnership Updates   | Partnership reps  |
| 4:30-4:40   | Upcoming Events   | All Partners  |
| 4:40-5:00   | Additional Agenda Items (if any)<br><br>Schedule Next ERWP Meeting  |   |
| <b>Please take care of your own garbage before you leave the meeting.</b> |   |   |