

Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 3/8/12  
Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office, Cedar City, UT  
Meeting Summary P. 1 of 13

**Attending:**

Tim Bardsley, Western Water Assessment  
Bruce Bonebrake, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
Rhett Boswell, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
Boz Bosworth, Boulder Community Alliance  
Dennis Bramble, private landowner  
Tim Carlson, Walton Family Foundation  
Jim Catlin, Wild Utah Project  
Bobbie Cleave, Boulder Community Alliance  
Kim Crumbo, Grand Canyon Wildlands  
Breck Crystal, Trout Unlimited  
Terry DeLay, Dixie National Forest  
Amy Dickey, Utah Division of Water Quality  
Ron Dobbs, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
Kara Dohrenwend, Rim to Rim Restoration  
Kim Dolatta, US Forest Service  
Sally Ferguson, Student Conservation Association  
Mike Golden, Dixie National Forest  
Gen Green, The Nature Conservancy  
Mike Hadley, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
Shannon Hatch, Tamarisk Coalition  
Richard Hepworth, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
Amber Hughes, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument  
Kristen Jespersen, Tamarisk Coalition  
Rob MacWhorter, Dixie National Forest  
Afton McKusick, American Conservation Experience  
Alexander Nees, Canyon Country Youth Corps  
Mary O'Brien, Grand Canyon Trust  
Dave Pacheco, Wilderness Volunteers  
Kris Pack, Grand Staircase Escalante Partners  
Tim Peterson, Grand Canyon Trust  
Noel Poe, Grand Staircase Escalante Partners  
Sarah Sampson, Utah Forestry, Fire and State Lands  
Carolyn Shelton, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument  
Peg Smith, Boulder Community Alliance  
Craig (Sage) Sorenson, Boulder Community Alliance  
John Spence, National Park Service  
Dan Trujillo, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources  
Linda Whitham, The Nature Conservancy  
Mike Wight, Southwest Conservation Corps  
Ron Wilson, Utah Forestry, Fire and State Lands  
Clint Wirick, US Fish & Wildlife Service



Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 3/8/12  
Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office, Cedar City, UT  
Meeting Summary P. 2 of 13

**Upcoming trainings and workshops**

- BLM Electronic Notification Bulletin Board
  - Updated programmatic weed treatments EA
  - Sign up to receive scoping letter
- April 11, 2012
  - North Creek utilization cages / transects
- April 18, 19 or 20, 2012 (full day)
  - Upper Valley Vegetation Improvement Project
- Around Earth Day
  - Aldo Leopold movie "Green Fire" will air in Boulder and Escalante
- April 25-26, 2012
  - Dolores Partnership Riparian Grazing Training, Gateway, CO
  - More info from Tamarisk Coalition
- May 13-20, 2012
  - Amazing Earthfest, Kanab
  - Celebrating the Land and Life of the Colorado Plateau
  - <http://amazingearthfest.com/>
- June 8-11, 2012
  - Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment (RSRA) Training, Mancos, CO
  - More info from Jim Catlin, Wild Utah Project
- August 28-30, 2012
  - Riparian Service Team Creeks & Community Workshop, Escalante
  - Will showcase headwaters demo site
  - More info from Amber Hughes, BLM
- September 21-22, 2012
  - Leave It to Beavers Festival
  - Escalante Petrified Forest State Park
- October 2012
  - Using beaver as a stream restoration tool
  - USU, Logan



Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 3/8/12  
Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office, Cedar City, UT  
Meeting Summary P. 3 of 13

### Next ERWP Meeting

- Full partnership meeting in early June in Escalante
- Will do doodle poll to determine best date
- Field trip opportunities
  - Springs & seeps (1/2 day, training +)
  - Restoration planning assessment (1/2 – full day)

### ERWP Data Portal

- <http://erwp.dyndns.org/>
- username: partner (lower case letters)
- password: committee (lower case letters)

### ERWP Slide Presentation

- Noel Poe gave the dramatic slide presentation he has prepared for agency officials describing the ERWP's activities
  - A military operation to remove the enemy invader, Russian olive

### Woody Invasives and Restoration Committee Update

- Woody Invasives retreat was held the day before (3/7/12). Participants discussed:
  - Draft "Cutting Guide"
  - Minimum requirements/criteria for work crews
  - Capturing volunteer hours
  - Training / orientation / field session opportunities
  - Next steps – getting back to Youth Corps
- Additional committee activities
  - Finalizing monitoring plan (schedules and repeat visits)
  - Adaptive management approach
  - Revised WICP
  - Alvey Wash
  - Update cost/acre estimates (turning out to be higher than anticipated)



Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 3/8/12  
Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office, Cedar City, UT  
Meeting Summary P. 4 of 13

- No objections to Woody Invasives Committee 2012 work plan
  - Alvey Wash inventory
  - Russian olive invasion ecology project (Mike Scott, USGS, to lead)
  - Pull together all historic photos
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> year of WICP implementation – have funding
  - Beetle monitoring changes (Tamarisk Coalition working with individual partners to determine needs)

### Woody Invasives Restoration Plan Update

- Restoration planning subgroup has been meeting
- Purpose of restoration planning efforts:
  - Provide general guidelines for restoration planning
  - Mechanism to get funding for plant needs
  - Develop comprehensive literature package on CD for landowners to use as a resource
    - House it at BCA
- Open questions – subgroup is looking for input:
  - What types of plant materials are desired?
  - Decision trees – choose your own revegetation adventure, play it out to different end results
  - 1-4 sample site plans – field trip possibility?
  - FAQs?
- Hope to present draft restoration plan at the Oct/Nov ERWP meeting

### Streams Committee Update

- FS funding received to provide aquatic organism passage at 4 locations
  - Passage structures to open or reconnect 9.2 miles
- Wild Utah Project has submitted proposal to use its Rapid Stream Riparian Assessment (RSRA) model to conducting monitoring in the Escalante Watershed this summer
  - Science and Streams Committees are reviewing the proposal
- DEQ will be selecting sites for intensive monitoring this summer
  - Sampling will include water chemistry and macroinvertebrates
  - Sampling time is October 2012, then DEQ will go back in 5 years
  - 10 samples over a 12-month period



- East Fork Boulder Creek native trout restoration project update
  - Decision to use pesticides withdrawn July 11
  - Dixie National Forest still committed to resolving this collaboratively
  - Working with highest levels of DWR, DNF and FS to explore where and how to apply which tools
  
- DWR report on restoration of cutthroat trout (native fish work)
  - Places cutthroat trout have already been restored
    - West Boulder Creek (1998/99)
    - Twitchell Creek and 2 tributary lakes
    - Upper section Pine Creek (where road crosses)
    - White Creek
    - East Fork Boulder Creek – project started
    - Multi-tiered approach, similar to WICP
  - Potential future projects
    - Reconnectivity with tributaries
      - Remove non-natives
      - Provide places as refuge for natives / spawning areas
    - Lower Pine Creek – finish whole stream
    - Calf Creek – between falls, and between Lower Falls and Escalante River
    - North Creek
      - Sport fisheries
      - Less of threat to lower downstream
      - Stocking of sterile sport fish
    - Deer Creek
    - Lake Creek / Sand Creek Drainage
      - McGath Lake and downstream
  
- Streams committee working with DWR to plan conservation actions for Colorado Cutthroat Trout and three other species
  - April 26, Cedar City
  
- Discussion about benefits and constraints for DWR becoming full ERWP partner
  - DWR requested that current Partnership Agreement be sent to them to request Director's signature
  
- No objections to Streams Committee 2012 work plan
  - Limiting factors for geodatabase:
    - Format development
    - Data gathering



### **Tamarisk Coalition 2012 Symposium**

- Held in Grand Junction
- First two days -- 180 public and private attendees from across the nation
- Third day – meeting to explore cross-watershed / cross-partnership collaboration
  - 50 attendees from Colorado Plateau
  - Act as clearinghouse / potential for collaboration:
    - Funding
    - Monitoring
    - Science
    - Project planning and implementation
    - Revegetation and planning needs
- Symposium summary available here:  
<http://www.tamariskcoalition.org/2012TamariskSymposium.html>
- Tamarisk Coalition is looking for more involvement in strategic planning efforts for cross-watershed collaboration
- New website:
  - [www.riparianrestorationconnection.com](http://www.riparianrestorationconnection.com)
  - Training opportunities
  - Interactive posting
- Anyone requesting data generated by Tamarisk Coalition will have to fill out a “form” via email
  - Name
  - Title
  - Date
  - How will use the data
  - Anticipated outcomes or products from using the data
- Form is not needed to produce maps

### **Headwaters Committee Update**

- Grand Canyon Trust completed quantitative and qualitative assessments on 7 riparian and 6 wet meadows
- Beaver restoration assessment tool (BRAT) developed by Grand Canyon Trust and USU
  - Identifies creeks with highest potential for beaver restoration and ecosystem services
  - Will finish pilot study in Escalante River watershed by December 2012



Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 3/8/12  
Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office, Cedar City, UT  
Meeting Summary P. 7 of 13

- All stream reaches within Escalante watershed's drainage network will be classified:
  - "Low-hanging fruit" streams – currently inhabited by beaver or in relatively good condition for beaver re-colonization
  - Quick return streams
- Various GIS layers
- Live-trapping of beaver
  - 5 traps total, with direction from DWR
- North Creek – new riparian vegetation (willow) due to sediment trapped by beaver
  - Need to protect from over-browsing
- Trailcams
  - Cougar in camera's face
- Sweetwater Creek / Boulder Mountain Guest Ranch
  - Working on conservation plan for water and riparian conservation
- Beaver brochure completed
- Upper Valley Revegetation Improvement Project / FS project
  - 10 wildfires in 2011
  - Taking action to prevent catastrophic fire
  - Restoration examples:
    - Timber sale treatment
    - Manage for future northern goshawk habitat
    - Restore sorrel aspen stands
    - Maintain and promote aspen and gambel oak
    - Reduce younger pinyon/juniper and fire potential
    - Sagebrush potential for fires / reduce use by wild ungulates
    - Stream restoration
  - Scoping document issued December 2011
    - Received comments
    - Analysis → additional alternatives and proposed action OR
    - Tweak existing plans
  - Public field trip
- No objections to Headwaters Committee 2012 work plan



Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 3/8/12  
Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office, Cedar City, UT  
Meeting Summary P. 8 of 13

### Science Committee Update

- Joining Science Committee: Angie Evendon, from Berkeley, formerly with NPS
  - Home in Boulder
  - Interested in reference areas, natural resource areas, climate change projects
- Reference Area Working Group
  - Refine rationale / science management
  - Planning Science Workshop for 2013
    - Watershed as “living laboratory”
    - Piggyback on biannual science conference for Colorado Plateau?
- Springs and Seeps Working Group
  - Summary re: why springs and seeps are important → future proposal
  - First ever basinwide survey of springs and seeps
  - Workshop re: springs and seeps – funding request pending
  - Pull together existing agency data
- Climate Change Working Group
  - Western Water Assessment offering video on climate assessments → questions for this watershed → ERWP-specific presentation
- Upper Valley Vegetation Improvement Project – restoration opportunity for ERWP?
  - Val Anderson (BYU) brought this to Dennis Bramble's attention
  - Wide Hollow Water Conservancy District looking for guidance
    - Restoration of wetlands and meadow areas
    - Mitigation of lost wetland and riparian habitat at new reservoir
  - Other stakeholders
    - Army Corps of Engineers
    - Wide Hollow Water Conservancy District
    - New Escalante Irrigation District
  - Possible funding available -- \$250,000
  - 7-year project – 5 or 6 years left
  - Issues:
    - First year post-construction of new reservoir = extensive sedimentation
    - Vegetation = 100% exotic weeds
    - Solution = restoration of native upland vegetation
  - Extensive discussion of pros and cons of ERWP involvement
  - Interested ERWP members to meet separately to further explore opportunities
- One change to Science Committee 2012 work plan
  - Cottonwood assessment – remove word “legacy” and postpone to a future year





Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 3/8/12  
Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office, Cedar City, UT  
Meeting Summary P. 9 of 13

### Education and Outreach Committee Update

- Strategic communications plan – items completed:
  - One-pager
  - 2011 Accomplishments
  - ERWP Facebook page – live and active  
<http://www.facebook.com/EscalanteRiverWatershedPartnership>
  - Working on updated newsletter
- ERWP materials made their way to DOI Secretary Salazar's office
- ERWP publicity – BCA activities
  - Amazing Earthfest – ERWP materials will be there
  - BCA traveling display – available to other partners
  - Sign about beaver at Wide Hollow reservoir
  - Working with BLM and FS for interpretive sign at Calf Creek and Posey Lake campgrounds
  - Talk with trappers
- How to engage the Town of Boulder, City of Escalante, Garfield County Commission?
  - Recruit volunteers in community on various projects
- John Spence is writing a book chapter about the first 2 years of ERWP
- No objections to Education & Outreach Committee 2012 work plan
  - Youth Corps outreach to schools and recruiting

### Action Plan Committee Update / CAP Action Plan

- Final two targets (wet meadows and montane riparian) have been completed
  - Committee reviewed data collected over summer 2011 by Grand Canyon Trust and existing FS data
  - Revised integrity tables
  - Reviewed previous analysis of threats, strategies and action items and decided no changes to Action Plan were necessary
- Action Plan is now “final”
  - It is a living document, in that it can and will be changed as actions are taken and new information suggests revisiting strategies or action items
  - Changes to the Action Plan will be initiated at the committee level
  - Significant changes to strategies or action items should be approved by the full partnership



### Wild & Scenic Rivers Working Group

- Bill passed in 2012 UT state legislative session that relates to wild & scenic rivers
- Working group will make recommendation at next ERWP meeting

### Funding Committee Update

- Funding Committee reviewed all committees' proposed work plans and budgets, asking the following questions:
  - Are the actions linked to the Action Plan?
  - Is there overlap / redundancy between committees?
  - Has funding been identified / secured? Are there any shortfalls?
- ERWP has \$1.7 million worth of projects in 2012
- Committee-specific observations:
  - Woody Invasives – has a few shortfalls
  - Headwaters – FS selected Escalante River Watershed to receive 5% off-the-top of the regional budget for restoration projects
    - Possibility of being selected again in 2013, and receiving 10%
    - \$780,000 – main canyon Escalante River, Birch Creek
    - \$320,000 – Colorado cutthroat trout
    - \$200,000 – road maintenance
    - \$200,000 – motorized travel plan
    - \$60,000 – Iron Springs vegetation project
  - Science – has some shortfalls
    - Will postpone some projects until funding is identified
  - Streams – mostly in-kind partner work, so not shortfalls
  - Education & Outreach – has some shortfalls
- Some funding sources have still not been confirmed; some have not yet been pursued
- ERWP needs to build capacity to do grant writing
  - Mike Wight suggested that conservation corps may have capacity for grant writing
- Walton Family Foundation has clarified that in the future they should be viewed as a “high quality match”, not as a primary funder
  - ERWP is well on its way to meeting that goal
- Kristen Jespersen introduced – funding program coordinator at Tamarisk Coalition
  - Will identify diversity of funding possibilities
  - Will help find sustainable funding opportunities
- ERWP members should start tracking in-kind and volunteer time



Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 3/8/12  
 Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office, Cedar City, UT  
 Meeting Summary P. 11 of 13

- Mike Golden suggested that ERWP project leads and committees need to plan for the outyear re: funding requests
  - Need to look out one year ahead
  - Should start the process of projecting for 2013 NOW

**How Are We Doing as a Partnership? (aka Thorns & Roses)**

| Going Well / Do More of It  | Could Improve   |
|---|---|
| Process helps group work through high emotion (high temperature) issues | Hope to see partnership expand to encompass full watershed  |
| Facilitation  | Will the partnership last?  |
| Lot of great work getting done on-the-ground                            | Get other agency managers here <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Switch venue</li> <li>• Specific invitation to agency officials (do it via agenda item)</li> <li>• Invite Landscape Cooperative</li> </ul>  |
| Pilot projects  | Funding difficulties  |
| Focus energy and resources on one geographic area                       | County Commissioners / conservation districts feel this is an "environmental group" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rob MacWhorter and Ron Wilson meet with County Commission</li> <li>• Use happy landowners as spokespeople to go to conservation district meetings</li> <li>• ERWP representative → conservation district meetings</li> </ul> |
| Diversity of expertise → more than sum of its parts                     |   |
| Rob MacWhorter having vision that this is a whole watershed             |   |



Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 3/8/12  
Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office, Cedar City, UT  
Meeting Summary P. 12 of 13

**Escalante River Watershed Partnership  
March 8, 2012, 11 am – 5 pm**

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

**NOTE DIFFERENT MEETING LOCATION** (for this meeting only)

***Directions to New Meeting Location:***

From the North on I-15 – Take exit 62 and turn left at the top of the ramp onto North Main Street. Go through first traffic light and turn left at the second traffic light (approximately 1.5 miles) onto Fiddler's Canyon Road (KB Express on your left – NE corner- at this light). Go past movie theater and car wash on your right and turn right onto N. Wedgewood Lane. The DNF SO and Cedar City Ranger District Offices are less than 0.1 miles on your right.

From the South on Main Street (accessed via 200N/SR56 from I-15 Exit 59 or directly from I-15 Exit 57). Head north on Main Street from 200N/SR56. Turn right onto Fiddler's Canyon Road (KB Express across the road on your right – NE corner- at this light). Go past movie theater and car wash on your right and turn right onto N. Wedgewood Lane. The DNF SO and Cedar City Ranger District Offices are less than 0.1 miles on your right.

Meeting Schedule

Thursday 3/8, 9:30-10:15 – Science Committee meeting, Dixie NF Supervisor's Office

Thursday 3/8, 10:15-10:30 – Education/Outreach Committee meeting, Dixie NF Supervisor's Office

Thursday, 3/8, 11-5 – full partnership meeting, Dixie NF Supervisor's Office

Thursday, 3/8, 5-7 – social hour at Toadz, <http://www.clubtoadz.com/>

March 8 Full Partnership Meeting – Agenda

|             |   |                  |
|-------------|---|------------------|
| 11:00-11:15 | Introductions<br>Housekeeping   | Facilitator      |
| 11:15-11:40 | ERWP presentation   | Noel Poe         |
| 11:40-1:00  | Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Woody Invasives &amp; Restoration (30 min)</li><li>• Woody Invasives Restoration Plan (15</li></ul> | Committee Chairs |



Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 3/8/12  
Dixie National Forest Supervisor's Office, Cedar City, UT  
Meeting Summary P. 13 of 13

|           |  |                               |
|-----------|--|-------------------------------|
|           | min)   |                               |
|           | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tamarisk Coalition symposium (15 min)</li><li>• Headwaters (10 min)</li><li>• Streams (10 min)</li></ul>   |                               |
| 1:00-1:45 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>LUNCH</b> (\$7 includes sandwich, pasta or potato salad and cookies<br/>– <b>pre-order to Mike Golden by 3/2)</b></li></ul>   |                               |
| 1:45-2:50 | Committee Updates – cont'd. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Science (20 min)</li><li>• Action Plan (10 min)</li><li>• Wild &amp; Scenic River Designation (15 min)</li><li>• Education/Outreach (20 min)</li></ul> | Committee Chairs              |
| 2:50-4:30 | 2012 planning / Funding Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Committee Work Plans</li><li>• Committee Budgets</li></ul>   | Amber Hughes<br>Linda Whitham |
| 15 min    | <b>BREAK</b> (as needed during Funding Committee update)   |                               |
| 4:30-4:40 | Upcoming Events  | All Partners                  |
| 4:40-5:00 | Additional Agenda Items (if any)<br>Schedule Next ERWP Meeting<br>Field Trip Opportunities   |                               |
| 5:00-7:00 | Social Hour at Toadz (food and drink available for purchase)<br><a href="http://www.clubtoadz.com/">http://www.clubtoadz.com/</a>  |                               |

