

Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 6/4/14
Boulder Community Center, Boulder UT
MEETING SUMMARY P. 1 of 11

ATTENDEES

Michele Straube, University of Utah (facilitator)

Carl Adams, UT Division of Water Quality
Dave Bastian, Utah Conservation Corps
Jeff Bousson, American Conservation Experience
Dennis Bramble, private landowner
Tim Carlson, Walton Family Foundation
Tanya Collings, Boulder Community Alliance
Steve Cox, Boulder Community Alliance/Boulder Town Council
Terry DeLay, UD Forest Service, Dixie National Forest
Jake Deslauriers, Canyon Country Youth Corps
Amy Dickey, UT Division of Water Quality
Kim Dolatta, US Forest Service
Sue Fearon, Boulder Community Alliance
Mike Golden, Dixie National Forest
Marena Grondin, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Shannon Hatch, Tamarisk Coalition
Ryan Howe, Arizona Conservation Corps
Tom Hoyt, Boulder Community Alliance
Amber Hughes, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Grant Johnson, Escalante Canyon Outfitters
Tabitha Kelly, Utah Conservation Corps
Melissa Masbruch, US Geologic Survey
Phoebe McNeally, U of U/Digit Lab
Kevin Miller, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Matt Moore, Canyon Country Youth Corps
Mark Nelson, Boulder UT Resident
Mary O'Brien, Grand Canyon Trust
Noel Poe, Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners
Delacey Randall, Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners
Marjorie Rask, Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners
Sarah Shaughnessy, UT Forestry, Fire & State Land
Carolyn Z. Shelton, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Peter Skidmore, Walton Family Foundation
Peg Smith, Boulder Community Alliance
Craig "Sage" Sorenson, private landowner
Larry Spanne, Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners
John Spence, National Park Service / Glen Canyon
Cindy Staszak, Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument
Adam Stoldal, Utah Conservation Corps
Kris Waggoner, Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners
Jenna Whetzel, Canyon Country Youth Corps
Linda Whitham, The Nature Conservancy
Mike Wight, Conservation Legacy
Jeff Williams, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Clint Wirick, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 6/4/14
Boulder Community Center, Boulder UT
MEETING SUMMARY P. 2 of 11

NEXT ERWP MEETINGS

- Wed-Thu 10/15-16 – Cross-Watershed Network (XWN) peer-to-peer sharing workshop (in Escalante) – more information available shortly at www.crosswatershed.net
- Wed 11/5, evening — community presentation (topic and exact location TBD, in Escalante)
- Thu 11/6, 10-5— full partnership meeting (in Escalante)

COMMUNITY PRESENTATION – TUE 6/3/14 (Boulder Mesa Restaurant)

“Where Does the Water Live? Sources, sinks, and flow paths in the Escalante Watershed”
Presented by Dr. Melissa D. Masbruch, US Geological Survey

- Contact Dr. Masbruch with questions: m.masbruch@utah.edu
- Presentation was very well attended, with extensive Q/A after
- Presentation will probably be repeated, possible in Boulder again and in Escalante

GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Noel Poe will be the new Executive Director of Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners
 - Roger Cole has resigned
- Peter Skidmore is the new Walton Family Foundation representative for ERWP
 - Tim Carlson is semi-retiring; he will still be active on some WFF projects
- Shirts and caps with ERWP logo are available for sale
 - All Conservation Corps crew wear them while working in the field

COMMITTEE UPDATES

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

- Grants recently awarded
 - UPCD/Watershed Restoration Initiative (\$258,802 to BCA/GSEP for Russian olive restoration)
- Pending grants
 - Division of Water Quality, Non-Point Source Financial Assistance (\$114,000)
 - National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, Five Star (\$25,600)
 - National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, DNG (\$75,000)
 - Utah Dept of Ag & Food (\$30,000)

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MEETING SUMMARY P. 3 of 11

- Grant applications in process
 - Conservation Lands Foundation
- Other fundraising efforts
 - Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative
 - Bureau of Reclamation WaterSMART
 - Will apply in 2015
 - National Forest Foundation
 - Coordinating Committee wrote letter to NFF asking them to expand geographic scope of their capacity funding
 - NRCS, Regional Conservation Partnership Program
- 2014 draft budget
 - Excel spreadsheet showing current ERWP budget displayed briefly
 - Not many shortfalls for 2014
 - Updates:
 - Beaver Festival has a \$1500 shortfall
 - Communications Director -- grant proposal to be submitted to continue part-time position
 - Climate Workshop has been postponed to 2016 (therefore no current funding shortfall)
- Cross-Watershed Network (XWN) workshop
 - Co-hosted by ERWP and XWN in Escalante
 - Scheduled for Oct. 15-16
 - Kris Waggoner and Linda Whitham are on the XWN workshop planning group to develop agenda, as is Michele Straube (as part of XWN core team)
 - Coordinating Committee's suggested topics are being incorporated into agenda (topics where ERWP would like to hear about others' creative approaches)
 - Long-term monitoring of system responses to restoration activities
 - Restoration strategies for creating system resiliency
 - Science as a driver of restoration activities
 - Workshop will also provide opportunity for ERWP to showcase its activities, e.g.:
 - GIS database creation
 - Field trip (beaver re-introduction, aquatic passages for trout, woody invasive demonstration areas, long-term monitoring)
 - More information available as workshop develops at: www.crosswatershed.net
- 2014 ERWP Committee membership list was distributed and is available from facilitator

Woody Invasives Committee (Co-chairs, Sue Fearon and Kris Waggoner)
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- Woody invasives treatments are all online
 - Posted to ERWP google drive and emerging GIS watershed resources database
 - Only a few individuals have editing privileges

Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 6/4/14
Boulder Community Center, Boulder UT
MEETING SUMMARY P. 4 of 11

- Data is publicly searchable for primary information by hydrologic unit code (who did the treatment, which herbicide used and amount, number of acres treated, woody debris management, continuing action)
- Google map of watershed (overflight) now available on ERWP website (<http://gsenm.org/erwp-interactive-maps/>)
 - Stopping points with more information about a treatment area
 - Before and after photos of treatment areas
- 2013 Russian olive treatments final numbers
 - Public lands
 - 492 acres – new treatments
 - 790 acres – retreatment
 - 290 acres – monitored
 - Private lands
 - 185 acres – new treatments
 - 435 acres – retreatment
 - 70 acres -- monitored
- 2014 field work – public lands
 - March -- 3 seasonals began (2 GSEP assistants, 1 UCC intern)
 - April-June -- 3 volunteer groups (Wilderness Volunteers in GLCA, Wilderness Volunteers in GSENM, Great Old Broads for Wilderness in GSENM)
 - Conservation Corps crews:
 - June – UCC crew on Dixie NF (funded by NFF)
 - July – Native Conservation Corps crew on GSENM
 - August – Saw and ERWP training in Alvey Wash (2 week training)
 - August 23 and 24 – crews make their way into the Canyon
 - Crews will work Saturday to Saturday and Sunday to Sunday
 - September – October – 2 volunteer groups (Wilderness Volunteers)
 - Russian olive removal efforts to end ~Oct. 31
 - Acres to be treated:
 - 206 acres to be newly treated
 - 1080+ acres to be re-treated
- 2014 field work – private lands
 - Partners:
 - Landowner (access control, grazing management, retreatment)
 - BCA (landowner contact, retreatment)
 - UT Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands (initial treatment, revegetation)
 - Partners for Fish & Wildlife (clearances, revegetation, initial treatment)
 - NRCS (SW Willow Flycatcher habitat assessment, EQIP -- riparian farming and fencing)

Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 6/4/14
Boulder Community Center, Boulder UT
MEETING SUMMARY P. 5 of 11

- Work plan:
 - January – February – Main stem initial treatment
 - March – October
 - Retreatment Boulder and Escalante
 - Initial treatment (North Creek, Main stem Escalante, Center Street)
 - Debris removal
 - Revegetation
- Restoration on private lands featured in BCA's Spring 2014 [Sage Page](#)
- Riparian workshop in Yuma AZ (on Colorado River, sponsored by WFF)
 - Amber Hughes and Sue Fearon attended
 - Collecting and harvesting native plants for replanting elsewhere
 - Valuable for restoration in Upper Valley above demo site (1.5 miles long)
 - Found several willing landowners above headwaters in Upper Valley
 - Technical and funding partnership: 4 private landowners, UDOT right-of-way, Garkane Power, South Central
 - Stabilize streambanks
 - Use EQIP funding through NRCS
- WICR funding
 - 2014 total budget (public and private lands): \$1,226,278
 - Includes 12 separate sources of funds, plus in-kind services
 - Due to improved accounting, percentage contribution from in-kind services has increased substantially and more accurately reflects reality
 - Some funding is for organizational capacity; most is for on-the-ground work
 - UPCD funding awarded to ERWP because of level of collaboration and local landowners' willingness to provide matching funds
- Amber Hughes will be on leave from ERWP for one year; going to work as Invasive Plants Program Coordinator for BLM in Oregon
 - Sue Fearon will take over as co-chair of WICR Committee
- Long-term monitoring plans
 - Mid-July – crew of 4 to set up at least 3 additional sites (2 days / plot)
 - Team of GSENM, NPS and GSEP
 - Will opportunistically do springs and seeps survey at same time
 - Brings total number of long-term monitoring sites to 9, with 1 still to be set up
 - Fall – do statistical analysis of long-term monitoring results
 - 2015 – long-term monitoring at headwaters and bridge demo sites

Conservation Targets Committee (Co-chairs, Mike Golden and Mary O'Brien)

- Native fish pamphlet
 - Text has been edited, but need more text and layout
 - DWR artist doing illustrations (morphological structure of each fish)
- Forest Service monitoring this summer
 - Temperature monitors on every major tributary running off Dixie NF
 - Bank stability monitoring / long term viability in Boulder and Deer Creek drainages
 - Channel cross-section monitoring
 - Fish monitoring
- Sport fish management plan for Boulder Mountain
 - DWR has initiated this planning process
 - Included on the planning team are Forest Service, BLM Southern Resource Advisory Council, DWR, Blue Ribbon Fisheries Commission and 6 anglers (which includes 1 fishing guide)
 - Looked at every lake on Boulder Mountain
 - What fish are there now?
 - What are DWR management goals?
 - Meeting goals? → needed changes
 - Will use sterile or hybrid fish in lakes that have streams running out of them
 - Creates more restoration opportunities in creeks (e.g., McGath Lake)
- Garkane hydropower amendment / Colorado River Cutthroat Trout restoration in Boulder Creek
 - Proposed settlement sets terms and conditions of Garkane's FERC license
 - Flow release from East Creek will be permanent discontinued
 - Replacement flows
 - Fish passage – potential for building a fish trap above Kane Reservoir
 - DWR not moving forward with CRCT restoration this year
 - Not until license agreement and permit conditions finalized
 - Start restoration in fall 2015?
- Reintroduction of CRCT in lower and middle Calf Creek and Lower Creek
 - DWR in discussions with GSENM
 - Would cover campground to the falls (lower to upper falls)
 - Not above the upper falls because there is limited habitat
- Springs and seeps
 - Want to move to assessment on GSENM, but no staff or funding
 - Sampling springs and seeps opportunistically
 - 55 springs found in National Park; few expected in GSENM

Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 6/4/14
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MEETING SUMMARY P. 7 of 11

- Kevin Miller is working with NPS hydrologist to conduct research
 - Long-term vegetation monitoring and characterization of springs and seeps
- Legacy trees (mostly cottonwood)
 - TNC grant to study Fremont cottonwood / gambel oak / Goodings willow below Escalante (some trees live several 100 years and have interesting genetics)
 - Start project by mapping and characterizing tree health
 - Hiring Grand Canyon NP botanist (currently on furlough)
 - Schedule:
 - July – August – gather data
 - By Nov ERWP meeting – report ready
- Q: Will you include Dixie NF in the project?
- A: Piloting the project on Escalante main stem this year to refine methods. Also tie in legacy tree health with terrace formation.

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

- Retreat in early October to plan 2015 science workshop
 - USGS folks coming to retreat
- Reference area network
 - Subgroup working on this includes Dennis Bramble, Mary O'Brien, Joel Tuhy
 - Developing a working definition of "reference area"
 - Active experiments included
 - Have identified major vegetation types for which they would like to see example reference areas
 - Have developed criteria for working with reference areas (e.g., what kind of agreements are needed, balance least bureaucratic with bottom line permanence assurance for valid science research)
 - Existing possible reference areas:
 - Upper Sand Creek (Research Natural Area, Escalante Ranger District, Dixie NF)
 - Proposed South Hollow reference area (private and Dixie NF)
 - Deer Creek (private, southern boundary Dixie NF)
 - Boulder Top (Pleasant Creek, Fremont River Ranger District, Fishlake NF) – adjacent to Escalante watershed, similar conditions and soils)
 - Next steps
 - Propose non-bureaucratic agreements to ensure stability of reference area
 - Solicit additional nominations of possible reference areas

Escalante River Watershed Partnership (ERWP) Meeting 6/4/14
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MEETING SUMMARY P. 8 of 11

- Aspen pamphlet
 - 2 kinds of aspen types/conditions
 - mixed conifer / aspen
 - “stable” aspen stands (not impacted by conifer overtopping)
 - Pamphlet will answer these kinds of questions
 - Why is aspen important
 - Ecological benefit
 - Where is aspen found in the watershed
- Additional invasive species in watershed?
 - Didymo or “rock snot” (related to algae)
 - Two sites sampled in SW Utah
 - Sand Creek likely *is* didymo
 - Death Hollow Creek is *not* didymo
 - Need more samples and an expert to confirm its existence
 - Cannot kill Didymo, can only treat for it and control its spread
 - If and when presence of Didymo is confirmed, need to develop an education plan

Education/Outreach Committee (Co-Chairs, Kris Waggoner and Linda Whitham)

- New url links directly to ERWP website (rather than having to go through Grand Staircase-Escalante Partners’ website first): www.escalantewatersheds.org
- Riparian grazing workshop held in early March
 - Held in collaboration with Conservation District
 - Co-sponsored by Conservation District and Walton Family Foundation
 - NRST were the presenters
 - 70 attendees
 - Mixed audience, including producers and Garfield County Commissioners office
 - Interdisciplinary teams worked on observation and problem-solving skills
 - animal herd, forage, recovery, developing alternative water sources
 - May possibly offer it again in Richfield
 - UT DEQ and GIP could be co-sponsors
 - More geared toward producers
 - Late summer or fall 2014?
- Recent outreach activities
 - Community presentation the night before this meeting
 - ERWP website is live
 - TNC cover article in national magazine
 - Sage Page (BCA) spotlight on ERWP
 - History in Your Attic – photo scan event was so successful, it didn’t make a dent in the number of people with available photos
 - Mostly Escalante residents
 - Will try to offer it again

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

- Watershed Resource Database is underway
 - Formerly known as the limiting factors database
 - Multi-purpose spatial database for data related to the Escalante River watershed
- Objectives of database
 - Serve as a central repository for data
 - Start with a purpose driven project and expand from there
- Technical specifications
 - Projection (UTM NAD83 Zone 12 meters)
 - Processed data (start with processed and add raw data as needed)
 - Photos (to be stored in Google Drive and hyperlinked)
 - Metadata is *mandatory* – any data submitted without metadata “will be sent back”
- Metadata minimum elements (draft list of metadata requirements distributed for comment)
 - Intro information
 - Identification information
 - Usage
 - Attributes
 - Data quality
 - Maintenance information
 - Spatial reference system information
- Next steps
 - Finalize metadata requirements
 - Establish data set delivery standards
 - Start receiving data sets
 - SQL server database is already built
 - Woody invasive species data is populated
 - Publish data to ArcGIS Online for ease of use
 - Create database connections for others

AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROGRAM
REGIONAL CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM
(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

- Jeff Williams, NRCS, gave presentation on these two programs (new or modified under recent Farm Bill)

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MEETING SUMMARY P. 10 of 11

- Program elements are very complicated – refer to slides or website for accurate details
 - Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP):
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/acep/>
 - Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP):
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farmbill/rcpp/>

FIVE-YEAR ERWP CELEBRATION

(PowerPoint slides available from facilitator)

Escalante River Watershed Partnership June 3-4, 2014, Boulder, UT

Meeting Schedule (all in Boulder UT – **NOTE different location than usual**)

Tuesday, June 3

- 5:30-6 – Social time (*Boulder Mesa Restaurant*)
- 6-7 – ERWP community program
 - Where does the water live? Sources, sinks, and flow paths in the Escalante Watershed
 - Presented by Dr. Melissa D. Masbruch, US Geological Survey
 - *Boulder Mesa Restaurant*
- 7 – dinner (*Boulder Mesa Restaurant*)
 - **RSVP by Fri 5/30** to peg@bouldercommunityalliance.org

Wednesday, June 4

- **9-12 – full partnership meeting** (*Boulder Community Center*)
- 12-1 -- Lunch (\$12) and set-up for open house (*Boulder Community Center*)
 - **RSVP by Fri 5/30** to peg@bouldercommunityalliance.org
- 1-3 – Five-year ERWP celebration and community Open House (*Boulder Community Center*)
 - **RSVP by Fri 5/30** to peg@bouldercommunityalliance.org
- 3 – Clean-up (all) (*Boulder Community Center*)
- 3:30-5:30 -- Coordinating Committee F2F meeting (*Boulder Community Center*)
- 3:30-5:30 – Hike to beautiful location (Chriss Lake?) (possibility)
- 6:15 – Meet at Boulder Community Center to 4WD carpool to Tom Hoyt's Deer Creek camp
 - ERWP partners only
 - **RSVP by Fri 5/30** to peg@bouldercommunityalliance.org

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MEETING SUMMARY P. 11 of 11

June 4 Full Partnership Meeting – Agenda

9-9:05	Introductions Housekeeping
9:05-10:40	Committee Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinating Committee (10 min) • Woody Invasives Control and Restoration Committee (20 min) • Conservation Targets Committee (20 min) • Science Committee (20 min) Education / Outreach Committee (10 min)
10:40-10:50	BREAK
10:50-11:50	Agricultural Conservation Easement Program Regional Conservation Partnership Program Jeff Williams, NRCS
11:50-12	Other Partnership Updates Upcoming Events Schedule Next ERWP Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • XWN peer-to-peer sharing workshop – October 15-16, 2014 November 2014, ERWP full partnership meeting
12-1:00	LUNCH (\$12, RSVP by Fri 5/30 to peg@bouldercommunityalliance.org) Set up for open house
1:00-3:00	Community Open House Five-year ERWP celebration