

Escalante River Watershed Partnership Full Partnership Meeting

9:00 am to 3:00 pm, June 14, 2018

Boulder Community Center, Boulder, Utah

Attendees

- Christine Brice, Canyon Country Youth Corps (CCYC)
- Dana Backer, Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- Dave Bastian, Utah Conservation Corps (UCC)
- Joe Zelman, Utah Conservation Corps (UCC)
- John Spence, National Park Service, Glen Canyon (NPS)
- Josh Ellis, private citizen and community member of Boulder, Utah
- Kristen Jespersion, Tamarisk Coalition (TC)
- Linda Whittam, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- Mike Golden, Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR)
- Mike Scott, Utah State University (USU)
- Natalya Walker, Canyon Country Youth Corps (CCYC)
- Nicole Croft, Grand Staircase Escalante Partners (GSEP)
- Noel Poe, Grand Staircase Escalante Partners (GSEP)
- Phoebe McNeally, University of Utah Digit Lab (UU)
- Sarah Haderlie, Utah Conservation Corps (UCC)
- Stephanie Minnaert, Grand Staircase Escalante Partners (GSEP)
- Sue Fearon, Grand Staircase Escalante Partners (GSEP)
- Terry DeLay, Dixie National Forest (USFS)

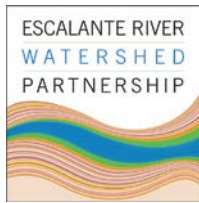
Facilitation Team

- Megan Mustoe: Facilitator

Coordinating Committee Update

[\(slides available on Escalante River Watershed Partnership Meeting Minutes Page\)](#)

- Welcome interim facilitator, Megan Mustoe
- **Coordination and Outreach** (Stephanie Minnaert)
 - Considering new types of work for Wilderness volunteers since initial treatment is concluding
 - UCC Presentation to Escalante High School about conservation careers
 - GSEP became science partner with Escalante High School
 - Media
 - Recent articles in The Wayne & Garfield County Insider newspaper about private land volunteer day
 - Sue Fearon, presented with award by PFW
 - Volunteer events with wilderness volunteers and Sierra Club
 - Journalist visiting region in August to cover success of ERWP
 - Conservation Corps
 - Annual training



- Alternative Spring break crew volunteers in spring 2018
- International students and Hopi Conservation Crews meeting and hiking together during summer 2018
- **Fundraising** (Kristen Jespersen)
 - Fundraising on point for 2018.
- **Other**
 - Strategic planning underway to scope and plan for next five years of Escalante River Watershed Partnership.

Woody Invasive Control and Restoration Committee Update (Stephanie Minnaert)
[\(slides available on Escalante River Watershed Partnership Meeting Minutes Page\)](#)

- Retreatment concerns about people activity in bird habitat
- Two new hires complete project
- Next issue on the horizon is emergence of secondary weedy species and potentially consulting with the county and other resources on herbicides being currently used to suppress weedy species

Action Items

- **GSEP:** Consult with the county on herbicides being used and share information with the group
- **John Spence:** put together a handout of secondary weeds of concern – this could be shared with the city

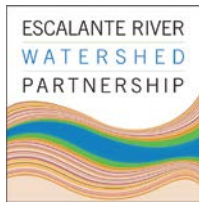
Science / Conservation Targets Committee Update (John Spence, Dana Backer, Dennis Bramble)

- Long-term monitoring required for accurate species composition of areas
- Wilderness inventory on BLM land in Utah with 680 people inventoried and response to SUWA red rock wilderness proposal
 - Wilderness is qualified as 5000 acres of solitude and unconfined areas.
 - 22,5000 acres had wilderness characteristics
- 4 private landowners working together on annual bio-blitzes
 - Knit together a few properties that border the monument – try to work out an arrangement to use these properties for long-term monitoring and science and research projects – willing landowner and interesting sites

GIS Update (Phoebe McNeally)

[\(slides available on Escalante River Watershed Partnership Meeting Minutes Page\)](#)

- New data includes springs and WIC
- Considering photo points with descriptions and adding time lapse photography layers
- Creating citizen science mobile application to identify and GPS undesired species such as Russian olive, among others and may eventually include other weedy species



Russian Olive Invasion Study Results (Mike Scott)

[\(slides available on Escalante River Watershed Partnership Meeting Minutes Page\)](#)

- Russian olive prime habitat was created by historically dynamic riparian areas
- The next question in research is how to prevent the prime Russian olive habitat while restoring the historic species composition and channelization along the waterway

East Boulder Creek Colorado River Cutthroat Trout Restoration Project (Mike Golden)

[\(slides available on Escalante River Watershed Partnership Meeting Minutes Page\)](#)

- Rotenone used in 2000s to restore waterways for native species and resulted in three times the increase in native fish populations
- Colorado cutthroat trout mitigation was part of 2007 relicensing – flow release and habitat restoration – part of agreement was that if recovery not happen then they need to cutthroat restoration in other areas
- First treatment on East Boulder Creek in 2009 provoked public concern and as a response, USFS began the NEPA process and approved the use of rotenone
- USFS decision was appealed and settled to allow USFS and DWR to use rotenone for population restoration
- Still controversial, and USFS and DWR recognizes past mistakes in communicating with the public and interested parties about restoration techniques.
- Research on rotenone exposure on lab rats shows certain amounts of rotenone results in Parkinson's symptoms and that it can affect invertebrate populations in waterways from three months to three years

A Local's Perspective on Consequentialism in Restoration Ecology (Josh Ellis)

- Background in risk management and toxicology
- Believes rotenone is not a risk-free option to remove the invasive trout
- Multiple concerns about the use of rotenone including its effect on the limited clean water in the area
- Believes USFS is only considering a reductionist perspective and should use other mechanical methods similar to how the group removed Russian Olive from the watershed
- Questions
 - The need to reintroduce native species and their ecological role compared to role of current trout species
 - Whether USFS and DWR have considered the effects of rotenone on ecosystem function

Meeting Concluded