

LTWRC Steering Committee Meeting: February 9, 2015

Guests and New LTWRC Steering Committee Members

Amy Jacoby: CUSP and COCO

Jara Johnson: CUSP and COCO

Greg Overton: Big Elk Meadows

Committee Chairperson

Gordon will remain as Steering Committee chair until May 2015 (he said his seat at BTCD is term limited), and has also volunteered to lead the Big Thompson River Coalition. Gordon believes that the committees should be chaired by landowners on the river. Hiring and other-decision making can be shared between the two coalitions. There were no objections.

Governance Document Updates

Deirdre Daly will act as the fiscal subcommittee chairperson. She will coordinate with COCO to review reports and comment. There were no objections.

Amy Jacoby will attend LTWRC meetings to represent COCO. COCO will hold a non-voting membership (an ex-officio seat as fiscal agent).

Greg Overton, Cary Karcher and Jeff Weber may be co- neighborhood steering committee representatives for Big Elk Meadows (similar to seats shared by other reaches)

Gordon will contact Ron Blackmer to determine whether he will continue to represent Weld County east of I-25. If not, Seth Hyberger, from the town of Milliken, may step in.

Deirdre will contact the Nature Conservancy and or the Forest Service to ask if they would be interested in filling the Environment and Recreation seat

Another seat will be added for the Big Thompson Conservation District. Since COCO is a non-voting position, this will not change the number of voting seats (remains at 15). BTCD will also serve as an ex-officio fiscal agent seat where appropriate.

Activities and Updates

Watershed Coordinator and Program Assistant

The hiring team for the Watershed Coordinator and Program Assistant will be Terry Parish, Deirdre Daly and Denise Cote. They will look for a Watershed Coordinator who is not only knowledgeable about river science, but can also raise money and manage projects. Gordon has recused himself from hiring decisions.

Both positions will be hired at the same time, otherwise there would be a two week delay for the assistant.

Gordon suggested a cross-coalition meeting to identify specific criteria for the positions. Jeff Crane will send a message out to the other watershed.

Job Posting Recommendations:

Craigslist

Warner College of Natural Resources

Listserv for State Open Space

Colorado Watershed Assembly
The Nature Conservancy
Sierra Club
Twitter
CSU, CSM, and CU alumni job boards
Workforce Center
High Plains Journal – Kansas
Association of Conservation Districts - Colorado and National
Colorado Rural Water
River Keepers Alliance
American Rivers
High Country News
River Network
Info Mine
Colorado Non-profit Association
Department of Transportation
Natural resources and parks through the county professional organizations
Publications for more active participation

Timeline:

- Jan 31: Grant Deadline (Complete)
- Feb 18??: Awards Announced
- Feb 19 – Mar 6: Jobs Posted
- Feb 19 - Mar 26: Contract completion
- Mar 16 – Mar 26: Interviews
- Mar 27: Job offers
- Mar 27 – Apr 10: Office, internet, phone, equipment set up
- Apr 10: Employee Start Date

Planning Grants

In January LTWRC applied for three planning grants: Sediment transport, floodplain rehabilitation, and wildlife habitat. If all three grants are awarded, RFP's must be prepared for each one individually. A template can be provided by Jeff Crane.

We anticipate waiting 4-6 weeks for signed contracts.

Timeline:

- Mar 13?: Awards announced
- Mar 17 – Mar 27: Request For Proposal generated
- Mar 30 – Apr 10: Response to RFPs from consultants
- Apr 13 – Apr 17: Consultant selected
- Apr 20 – Apr 25: Contract Completed
- Apr 27 – May 12: Work completed

Infrastructure Grants

A non-governmental entity can apply for the infrastructure grants. The money must be spent within 2 years from grant issue. NOI's are due February 13. The grant application deadline is May 29.

Dawn Hagan is working on the grant for a new bridge at Blue Mountain.

Big Elk Meadows may be applying for a grant for dams. Mirror Dam is nearly complete and work has begun on Rainbow Dam. After relying on surface water for many years, the well water systems are now working in Big Elk Meadows.

All of the infrastructure grants will be in competition with Larimer County. Larimer is applying for the 12.5% reimbursement on previous projects.

Due to the complexity of the project, the stream measurement gauges and emergency alarm system will not be addressed with this infrastructure grant. Deirdre is working with the 6 fire departments and Lori Hodges, Emergency Manager for Larimer County. At this time Larimer County has requested a FEMA hazard mitigation grant for the Big Thompson only. Terry Gilbert told her after they hear from FEMA, the LTWRC can look at where gauges would be placed and where the system would communicate, perhaps Boulder. He will help with finding sources of money. Lyons, Pinewood and Big Elk want a Verizon cell tower. At this time they are relying on a phone tree for emergency purposes

Suzanne Bassinger said that Larimer County is looking into a Ready-Ops system to mass call, text and email, patching radios using different frequencies. Cell towers do not come with the program.

Implementation Grants

LTWRC will submit a request for \$300,000. Added to the already awarded implementation grant of \$170,000 the total will be \$470,000.

Peggy will step away from assisting on the implementation grant since TetraTech will bid on it. There will be competitive bid requests.

Timeline:

- Mar 1 – Mar 16: Round 1 Grant Request generated
- Apr 3: Awards announced
- Apr 4 – Apr 17: Request For Quote generated
- Apr 17 – May 1: Responses to RFQ
- May 4 – May 8: Vendor(s) selected
- May 11 – May 22: Contract completed
- May 25: Work begins
- Oct 1 – Nov 13: Round 2 grant request generated

Ag Grants

Larry Lempka – The CD will send out a letter and survey to applicants about what went well and what didn't go well. Of the ag grants requested 15 of 66 award letters were issued. Between March and December 75 to 80 emails were issued from the Department of Agriculture with new requirements. ie; conforming with the National Historic Preservation Act .

Water Supply Grant

Kevin McCarty -- The WSRA grant of \$60,000 is under BTCD. Kevin is looking for somebody from CSU (charges 43 percent overhead) to assist with the study. Jeff Crane recommends leveraging the grant and to contact Reagan or Brian Bledsoe from CSU or Amy Beatty at Colorado Water Trust. Kevin has contacted Deer and Ault, but they are pricey. Kevin is trying to make sure that all stakeholders concerns and needs are addressed.

Overview of the Grant: The Little Thompson has a water supply issue. The roundtable grant intention is to use the money to determine needs, timing and supply of water. The grant is for a Needs Assessment.

Once completed, additional funds will be requested for a program for the plans and process phase to identify potential solutions, such as possible reservoir sites or recharge sites, including bringing water from the north fork. Multi-use flood control may be a component for a reservoir. The second phase could ~~plan~~ includes identifying a site and finding a way to develop it. Irrigators own the water rights, but everyone else needs to be represented also. Mountain communities have issues with domestic water. The goal is to find common ground with all users, have an advisory committee that represents all of the interests, including recreation and open space, river-front landowners, and irrigators. It is anticipated to be a 10 or 20 year program.

Other Grants

The pinch-point on the bridge at CR 17 near the Lempka property should be addressed in the sediment transport study. Based on the study recommendations, the coalition can then apply for implementation grants to do repairs. Peggy will use the hydraulic modeling performed by the state.

The CDBG-DR round 3 is for approximately \$59 million.

The second round of implementation grant guidelines have not been set (FEMA).??

John Andrews asked for \$78 million in NRCS for fire damaged and flooded areas. The NRCS grants will work property by property over two years.

Volunteers

Another Larimer County Conservation Corps grant might be issued for this year. The grant requires that a government unit worker, such as a BTCD employee, be on-site with the crew. LCCC can use Skid-Steers but not excavators. Other volunteer groups ready to work on the river include Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, and 15 groups that have already signed up through Larry Glover. This year the focus will probably be less on debris removal and more on re-vegetation and erosion control.

Greater Thompson Non-Profit

John Giordanengo's non-profit has been hired to help develop the NGO. The panel is currently working on the vision and mission statements. It is driven by the coalitions to address strategies and tools that apply to common needs across all watersheds.

The Greater Thompson NGO will be a non-profit organization that supports all of the individual watersheds in the overall Big Thompson Watershed. The NGO will do regional planning with partner agencies. The NGO will seek regional/national/international funding opportunities. The NGO will maintain a central body of data pertinent to all watershed chapters.

CURRENT GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE RECOMMENDATION:

- The NGO will be guided by a Steering Committee made up of Watershed Chapter representatives and agency partners.

POSITIVES:

- One strategic voice to partner agencies for all watershed chapters.
- Identification of common needs across all watershed chapters.
- Funding opportunities possibly not available or practical for individual watershed chapters.
- Shared data, expertise and process tools (GIS mapping, RFP, RFQ, Contract Mgmt, Project Mgmt, Grant Writing, Regulatory compliance highlights, etc.)
- Leverage of on the ground resources across multiple watershed chapters.
- Regional approach to emergency planning, warning and response.

NEGATIVES:

- Potential loss of setting strategic directions within watershed chapter.

- Requires commitment of each watershed chapter to provide representatives to the NGO.

Other Issues

Gordon spoke with the three Larimer County commissioners to get their support for coalition efforts. Weld is not as concerned, but has placed Gordon on the agenda for their upcoming meeting. He will remind them that water quality and quantity is an issue for Weld County residents and businesses.

Upcoming Meetings

DOLA/CWCB grant review meeting on Wednesday, Feb 11.

In order to work with Seth Hyberger's schedule, the 3rd Monday might be considered for future LTWRC steering committee meetings, if there were no objections. For now the meetings will stay on the 2nd Monday. Denise has the building booked for the year. There may need to be some additional meetings to complete the RFP's.

Boulder will host a meeting here at the transportation department to discuss the 83rd Street bridge on March 10 at 6:00 pm.

Terry Gilbert, Larimer County Planning Department, would like to attend the March LTWRC meeting to discuss collaboration and communication with all watershed coalitions in the county.