

**Dolores River Restoration Partnership (DRRP)
Bi Annual Meeting: 12/9/10
Location: BLM office in Grand Junction, Colorado**

Present:

BLM Weed Managers/Ecologists

Mike Jensen	Dolores BLM
Amanda Clements	Uncompahgre BLM
Lynae Rogers	Uncompahgre BLM
Sparky Taber	Grand Junction BLM
Christina Stark	Grand Junction BLM
Troy Schnurr	Grand Junction BLM
Anna Lincoln	Grand Junction BLM

County Weed Managers

Laurie Mingen	Montrose Co.
Karen Eslinger	Mesa Co.

NRCS

Wayne Jipsen	NRCS Area Conservationist - Grand Junction
Martin Mosses	Durango
Russel Knight	Grand Junction
Steven Woltjer	Grand Junction

Conservation Corps Reps

Janet Ross	Canyon Country Conservation Corps Director
Mike Wight	Southwest Conservation Corps, Dolores Coordinator
Rusty Lloyd	Western Conservation Corps Director
Sarah Daugherty	Western Conservation Corps Coordinator

Conservation Organizations/Partners

Peter Mueller	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Margaret Bowman	Walton Family Foundation
Clark Tate	The Tamarisk Coalition (TTC)

Wildlife

Jason Beason	Rocky Mt. Bird Observatory
Patty Gillat	USFWS

BLM Office Managers

Catherine Robertson	Grand Junction
Lori Armstrong	Southwest District, BLM Office

Other:

Marsha Porter-Norton, Facilitator

Agenda

The agenda for this meeting was approved and is at the end of these meeting notes.

Facilitator

Marsha Porter-Norton was introduced to the group. She will be facilitating the meetings of the DRRP and committee meetings as necessary. She emphasized that she wants to work in ways that work for the DRRP and that her focus is on communication, process and collaboration. She has worked in SW Colorado as a facilitator for 16 years and is the current facilitator/coordinator of the Dolores River Dialogue.

Private Land Owner Issues

The theme of private land owner issues was covered many ways throughout the day. There is a need for more engagement of private land owners who wish to be involved on a voluntary basis. Some key strategies that emerged:

- Outreach committee works on this
- Informal communication is key (land owner to land owner)
- Some distrust exists among some land owners related to environmental groups so these groups perhaps are not the first point of contact
- NRCS partnership is vital as well as county weed managers (and other county-level partners)
- This cannot be seen as “have to” but rather, land owners must see the benefit. Need to show land owners how this helps them economically
- Share successes (data, maps, pictures)
- Need to continue to develop key partnerships with land owners that meld and leverage funding (CDOW, DRRP and NRCS funds, etc.). This is a real “carrot” but the Partnership must be strategic and focused about doing these partnerships. Partnership needs to look at the map and prioritize contiguous projects.
- This should be an ongoing agenda item of the DRRP
- NRCS should take the lead where it can. They are trusted and come from more of an agriculture and land owner background/culture.
- A lot of good is already happening with landowners. Let’s build on it.

DRRP “Housekeeping Items”: Staffing

- It was conveyed that the DRRP has a core group that is involved in day-to-day implementation. This is primarily Peter, Clark, Mike Wight, Stacy (not present but with TC) and now, Marsha.
- Peter’s role is primarily a technical one: getting “on the ground” projects done; managing the funding; and doing BLM office interface. He works very closely with reps from each BLM office.
- Marsha’s new roles are facilitating the larger meetings, tracking on “process” items, improving communication strategies across the Partnership, and developing collaboration and communication tools. She is not handling technical aspects of the Partnership.

DRRP “Housekeeping Items”: Including New Agency Partnerships

- NRSC and the Bureau of Reclamation were new partners at this meeting.

DRRP “Housekeeping Items”: How Decisions are Made

The DR-RAP (Dolores River – Riparian Action Plan) identified places to work but Clark and Peter posed this question: *Is the current way funds are distributed to projects working including the methods for decision-making around funding?* It was noted that decisions are made at the project staff level and given as recommendations to the larger group. Members are asked to speak up or consensus is assumed, Clark said. There is criterion for project selection in place via DR-RAP such as values, threats, hydrology, etc. It was noted that the idea is to be strategic and allocate funds to the areas that will have the highest impact regardless of which BLM District the area(s) fall into that receive funds for treatment. The value of the Partnership, Catherine said, is that we are looking at the funding questions in total and not setting up

a situation where everyone is just competing with each other. There was no decision made. This was a discussion item.

DRRP "Housekeeping Items": DRRP Larger Meetings

A value was expressed by several present for the larger DRRP meetings. A decision was made to do a winter meeting each year (January) and then after the field work is completed (early August) ~ ~ and so, there will be two meetings/year. The committees are meeting more often. Peter emphasized that this model is similar to resource management in that the DRRP needs to be "adaptive" and have meetings as necessary on a smaller level where and when necessary. Marsha emphasized that a Web element might be helpful where chat rooms, Webinars, posting of meeting minutes, etc. can help everyone be/feel more connected between the larger bi-annual meetings – given the pretty vast geography of this project (below McPhee to Moab). The group felt that at the larger meetings, the agenda should be very focused and the Partnership shouldn't try to tackle everything. Also, the agenda should be set up so as to actually solve problems and get things done.

DRRP "Housekeeping Items": Subcommittees

A desire was expressed that everyone receive reports from the committee meetings. The larger meeting should also include reports on the work of the committees over the previous six months.

DRRP "Housekeeping Items": MOU

Catherine handed out a draft and explained that this MOU was suggested by the BLM to bring more legitimacy and funding to the effort. Next week, Peter is meeting with the State BLM office to discuss the MOU, and feedback from Members was requested on the draft. Catherine said the DRRP is doing great things and this MOU clarifies roles, responsibilities, etc. This will go out to all partners for signatures once final.

Volunteer Program

Clark reported that there are social goals of the DRRP, and the volunteer program is one way to meet those goals. TTC received a grant to initiate a volunteer program as a pilot to see if it will work. They will be working with BLM staff in GJ, Moab, and Dolores. Eventually, the program will need a place to permanently reside and ongoing funding. SW Conservation Corps is a partner.

Progress Reports

In this section of the meeting, each BLM office gave a brief update on what they have been doing. Note: a summary update on Projects was emailed out by Peter and is below.

Dolores Public Lands Office - Mike Jensen

- * 2nd full year of doing work
- * They have done a project on the main stem with SCC crews
- * 261 acres treated
- * All work is guided by a plan with a restoration focus
- * Monitoring is in place
- * 2 SCC crews worked 8 weeks and completed 91 acres
- * \$21,000 has been spent for stipends for youth on the Dolores and hiring local youth is a focus. An outside evaluation is being done and will likely result in compelling figures related to social goals quantifying how we are helping kids. A request was made by Catherine to get these social goals figures because they are compelling in making the case for more funding from the BLM.

Grand Junction - Sparky Taber

- * He showed a map and Power Point on current and planned projects
- * Private lands have been the focus on one key ranch, Olivia Palmoa
- * CC crews have been used
- * Treatment of BLM lands is the next goal
- * Have also been working on nap weed

- * Projects have opened up places to actually see the Colorado River...this is a tremendous outcome for scenic by-way purposes
- * Have hired 10 CC people who then received \$10K for college or technical school support; surveys proved that binge drinking and drug use was reduced by 75%; environmental stewardship goals increased 63%; other surveys are being done.. these social goals, one person said, can be an asset in opening up doors to some land owners
- * A video is being produced around the social goals and will serve as a very compelling training and can be shown to funders
- * This is a training ground for CC youth to then become fire certified and work on BLM fire crews -- the DRRP is therefore a career pipeline for some youth
- * One goal is to make certification easier (fire)

Uncompahgre Field Office - Amanda Clements

- * 600 acres are affected by beetle
- * Just getting started; using a "go slow" approach doing 4 pilot projects that contrast four approaches; after this pilot phase, we will draft a larger plan that will be presented at a future meeting; NEPA is guiding our work; focusing on biological impacts

Moab

- * The staff person from the BLM office wasn't able to be at this meeting
- * Peter reported that they are doing a larger project this fall around the state line
- * The NEPA document needs to be revised to do continued work

Implementation Plans

In this part of the meeting, more detailed implementation plans were discussed. Note: Peter filled out a spreadsheet detailing the schedule for Spring and Fall, 2011 to 2014, for each BLM office.

Grand Junction - Sparky

- * Handouts were given that showed information related to their polygon #; begin/end date; number of days worked; description of work completed; education and acres
- * A form was shared that helps their project log hours, machine costs, etc. and suggested it could be a useful tool if anyone wanted it; he said it gives more accurate information in terms of costing out jobs (available from Sparky upon request)
- * The next horizon to work on is DOT (Department of Transportation) challenges, and their office plans to meet with this agency this winter around permitting issues and having machines on DOT grounds; this is an area where the larger DRRP might be helpful since the project helps with scenery; how can we use the Partnership to get to "yes" quicker, Catherine posed as a question.
- * A question was asked: How did the collaboration among all the players happen?
Sparky:
 - leveraged partnerships around funding; flexibility; mingling of labor sources; cooperative agreement done
 - special accounts at the BLM were set up
 - Peter/TNC helped pick up some seasonal weed crews as TNC contractor
 - oversight on a daily basis
 - use of GPS in identifying weeds (very important)
 - use of BLM on private lands (it can happen)
 - targeted and specific plan used that takes into account unique aspects of their corridor such as: river access; beetles; where a cottonwood gallery exists; where machine damage would not be acceptable, etc.

Dolores - Mike

- * Have split river into 5 reaches
- * Have developed partnerships to get the work done

- * Have now started to work in Disappointment Creek (a trib)
- * Trying to work with land owners; there is some resistance due to other issues with the DPLO (such as a recent update to grazing policies that some land owners do not like)
- * Our patches are big and extensive but nothing like Grand Junction, Mike Said
- * Working to manage infestations
- * Working with two counties, especially San Miguel and Dolores
- * Really looking at our area on a watershed basis
- * Monitoring completed this year...contracted this out
- * We are really trying to understand what is happening from a geomorphic level and have used cross sections and baseline vegetation data gathering. The questions: Where are various vegetations dominating and how far from the stream bank? How does this information affect where we work and our approaches? Where do we have the best potential for natural vegetation?
- * We are treating around cottonwoods to protect from wildfire
- * Our field office end point is Disappointment Creek and it's a big concern related to salinity – it's a high profile water quality issue for the entire Colorado River

Note: This topic brought up how the Partnership deals with the tribs in relation to the main stem and this was identified as a key policy question to sort through. There are many issues involved: what is in DR-RAP; what does the BLM offices feel is most important; if tribs are a focus, how are they prioritized in relation to the main stem; NEPA issues; etc. This was identified as an area to work on in the future and an agenda item at the next meeting.

Uncompahgre - Amanda

- * She gave a handout and showed a spreadsheet on the wall
- * Their office is addressing where to work from one key angle: habitat structure
- * As a biologist, she said she is concerned about impact of tamarisk removal on the nesting bird population, so they are proceeding cautiously and their plan is to re-plant
- * We are starting a large scale NEPA
- * We have 30 miles of a major river which is not a small NEPA action
- * Doing the pilots
- * Our assumptions: a) we would need to re-plant where we remove 60% or more tamarisk; b) we would need weed spraying everywhere where tamarisk are removed; c) we would be spraying everywhere in the WSA

Resource Acquisition

First, it was noted that the word “fundraising” should not be used because the term doesn’t work for the BLM. A discussion of funds available and needs occurred. After much in-depth discussion, it was agreed that the Funding Committee (aka Resource Acquisition Committee) needed to do a resource acquisition plan.

There are CWCB funds to be spent for 2011. The BLM will not be able to fund projects at previous levels. There are \$236,000 in funding requests out there. A major corporate partner has now backed out due to the recession. There was agreement to help get the UFO pilots funded as a priority as they are getting off the ground. Another premise is to target resources to projects that offer the “biggest bang for the buck.” There is a priority to do treatments on private lands. Margaret emphasized a need to be strategic and look at funding from a whole corridor perspective and that the funding needs to be coordinated. The resource acquisition plan should be multi-year and target public and private resources needed to cover current and future goals.

They will work on a plan and get it out for review. It will be tied to each District’s implementation plans and the DR-RAP. Prioritizing needs to occur.

A handout was given that showed potential funding sources by agency source, application due date, funding levels/ranges, matching requirements, background/comments, and resources (available from Peter upon request).

Note: See chart below for funding levels being sought. Peter emailed this out after the meeting.

Monitoring Committee

Clark handed out a document about lessons learned. She reported that the Monitoring Subcommittee is looking at an overall question/issue which is: *The way that progress is being monitored cannot eventually net information related to the overall goal. What shall we do?* The monitoring is set up at key sites throughout the corridor but the overall goal is stated on a corridor-wide basis. There was much discussion and it was agreed that the Partnership should start with this issue next time as an agenda item as time was running out. Also, the results from a study being done by DU will be available from Anna and it is a comparison of sampling protocols. A key issue: How do we monitor goals appropriately in relation to our capacity? There is another monitoring meeting in January.

Outreach and Education Committee

Mike said that the group had not met but plans to. Many ideas were raised at this meeting for discussion, especially outreach to private landowners.

Submitted by Marsha Porter-Norton

Agenda - Dolores River Restoration Partnership

Thursday, December 9, 10:00am to 3:00pm, Grand Junction BLM Office (lunch will be provided)

I – Welcome and introductions: 10:00 – 10:45

- Facilitator, Marsha Porter-Norton, introduction and ways to support the Partnership
- Discussion of those gathered as Implementation Group – Is this the right set of people?
- Explanation of “consensus” based decision making – How are resources allocated?
 - DR-RAP, Implementation Plans, funding specific work – factors influencing decisions
 - Dolores River – Restoration Action Plan, main stem of Dolores is first priority
 - Tributaries of Dolores River is second priority; however there are tributaries that are higher priorities than many sections of the main stem; other factors may contribute to supporting additional work in tributaries such as specific BLM funding for those areas
- Discussion of proposed new meeting schedule – quarterly Partnership meetings: revolving meeting focus for each?
- Hand out revised Partnership documents: Executive Summary, Monitoring Protocol, MOU, Partnership Contact list, Implementation Schedule, and Progress Toward DR-RAP Goal
- Volunteer program – Clark and Mike Wight

II – Progress Report from 2009 and 2010: 10:45 – 11:25

Subjects include: work completed (acres and type), NEPA update, pilot project plans, funding requested, or other topics

- Dolores field Office – 10 min
- Uncompahgre Field Office – 10 min
- Grand Junction Field Office – 10 min
- Moab Field Office – 10 min

Mike, Sparky and Ann-Marie – If possible, please have sets of before and after photos of one or more of your project areas, and any other documents showing the progress we have made thus far. And, if you have access to shapefile polygons of your projects’ “footprints” please send those to Clark by Monday.

December 6th.

III – Implementation Plans: 11:30 – 1:00

Review Implementation document for each office, including the need to affirm criteria for assessed density and acreage. Identify priority restoration sites over next three to four years, and those sites that are low priority or TBD. Identification of future needs in order to establish Partnership work schedule.

Need to identify what work will be done in 2011 and by whom.

- Dolores – 10 minute
- Uncompahgre – 10 minute
- Grand Junction – 10 minute
- Moab – 10 minute

Discussion of the needs for 2011, 2012, 2013:

Mike, Sparky, Amanda, and Ann-Marie – Please send Peter and Clark your implementation forms or the latest version of your implementation plan by Monday, December 6th.

Other Implementation considerations: funding for field staff; other means to support Office work?

BREAK – LUNCH 1:00 (Working)

IV – Subcommittee Reports 1:30 – 3:00

Subcommittee membership is listed:

- Funding: **Peter**, Chris, Rusty, Tim Carlson, Stacy Kolegas, and Missy Davis
 - Healthy Rivers Grant
 - El Pomar Grant Request from San Miguel Watershed Coalition
 - Future Grant Requests
- Monitoring: **Clark**, Gabe, Nikki, Ann-Marie, Sparky, Amanda, Mike Jensen, (David, Hisham, Chris and Anna – technical support)
- Summary of Monitoring Subcommittee meeting December 8th
- Outreach and Education: **Mike** Wight, Chris Nessel, Peter Mueller, Sparky Tabor, need community members
- Implementation and Private Lands Outreach: Peter, Mike Wight, Clark Tate, BLM Weed/Ecologists staff, and NRCS staff

V – Next Meeting

Dolores River Restoration Partnership Update, The Nature Conservancy
Peter Mueller, North San Juans Project Director pmueller@tnc.org

Draft – emailed 12/12/10

Partnership Vision - A Dolores River watershed dominated by native vegetation, where the threats from tamarisk and other associated invasive species have been mitigated and the riparian areas of the watershed continue to become more naturally functioning, self-sustaining, diverse, and resilient over time. This ecologically focused vision is a step toward the overarching vision of the Dolores River Restoration Partnership of a thriving Dolores River system that is ecologically, socially, and economically sustainable in a multiuse context.

Accomplishments

Year	BLM Office	Treatment of tamarisk and other invasives	Reach of River	Public or Private	Cost
2009	Dolores Public Lands Office (DPLO)	170 acres	Dove Creek Pump Station to	Public and Private	\$120,000

			Slickrock		
2010	DPLO	91 acres	Little Glen Canyon and Disappointment Creek	Public and private	\$300,000
	Uncompahgre	Planned Pilot Projects		Public	NA
	Grand Junction	120 acres	Oliva Paloma Ranch	Private	\$120,000
	Moab	211 acres	State Line	Public	\$230,000 (fire budgets)
TOTAL		492 acres			\$770,000
Dolores Watershed		3,200 acres - riparian			
Priorities		2,200 +-			
BALANCE		1,771 +-			\$1,800,000

Dolores Partnership Funding Acquired

2009	Source	Amount	Target Area	Activity	Expended
	Packard Foundation	\$250,000	Dolores Watershed	Planning, Partnership development, treatments	12/10
	American Recover Act	\$250,000	DPLO	Planning and Treatments	06/10
	Colorado Water Conservation Board	\$100,000	Dolores Watershed	Treatments & Monitoring	06/11
	Walton Family Foundation (WFF)	\$120,000	DPLO	Conservation Corps - Tamarisk	11/09
2010	WFF	\$300,000	DPLO and Grand Junction Field Office	Conservation Corps - Tamarisk	11/10
	Healthy Rivers	\$37,500	DPLO	Cons. Corp	05/11

Dolores Partnership Funding Sought

Year	Source	Amount	Target Area	Activity	Fund
2010	El Pomar Foundation, CO	\$150,000	Dolores Watershed	Tamarisk and other invasive treatments	Southwest CO Community
2012	BLM – Grand Junction	\$130,000	GJFO	Tamarisk and other invasive treatments	Riparian/Range, Wild, and Fish
	BLM - Dolores	85,400	DFO	Tamarisk and other treatments	Rangeland Management
	BLM – Uncompahgre		UFO		

	BLM - Moab				
2013	BLM - GJ	\$130,000	GJFO	Tamarisk and other treatmnts	Riparian/Range, Wild, and Fish
	BLM - Dolores	102,900	DFO	Tamarisk and other treatmnts	Rangeland Management
	BLM - Uncompahgre		UFO		
	BLM - Moab				