

Animas Watershed Partnership
Steering Committee Meeting
Thursday, April 3, 2014
1 pm to 3 pm
Harrison Water Engineering Conference Room, Durango CO

Meeting Notes

Introductions and welcome to Jon Scott, AWP Vista Volunteer

Attendees: Ann Oliver, Chuck Wanner, Aaron Kimple, Melissa May, Gary Thrash, Pete Nylander, Jon Scott, Dave Tomko, Pam Starr. Not enough Steering Committee members were present to have a quorum, so invoices and meeting notes can be reviewed but not voted on. Jon Scott, AWP's new Vista volunteer, introduced himself. He is working on community outreach. He spent last quarter working on a solar project in SW Utah which is an Americorp program. Jon worked in agriculture for awhile and was a local planning assistant in Tennessee.

Jan Retreat and March Meeting notes

Ann had provided notes from the retreat in an earlier email. Pam provided the March 13, 2014 notes in an email sent to steering committee on March 25, 2014. Aaron did not receive the March meeting notes. Pam will add Aaron to the email list of people to receive the AWP meeting notes. Ann reviewed the Retreat notes when she received them and did not see any big issues. She asked that everyone review the Retreat notes and the March 13 meeting notes and let her know of any changes required.

Financials

Pam provided the 1st qtr Profit and Loss statement and Income/Expense Tallies for the BoR grant and the NPS 319 grant. Chuck asked for a spending forecast for each grant to include recurring expenses, "where we are with respect to our projected annual budget". Pam will set up a forecast based on budgets created for grant applications. There were no outstanding invoices. The San Juan RC&D has paid all invoices as presented and approved by the AWP steering committee and has requested reimbursement from the CDPHE NPS 319 grant. The current reimbursement request includes invoices for Keith Fassbender, MSI, Ann Oliver and the San Juan RC&D admin fees. Pam will request reimbursement from the Bureau of Reclamation (this is a quarterly reimbursement request) for the invoices approved of by the AWP steering committee and paid by the San Juan RC&D by the end of April. The invoices currently include Marsha Porter-Norton, a computer, printer, external hard drive, and registration for the SWCD water seminar for Ann and Jon. Ann will have more invoices to be applied to the BoR grant after Steering Committee approval.

Review and approve invoices.

Since there was not a quorum, the invoices were only reviewed. Ann will email the invoices to the Steering committee members for approval. Ann presented her invoices for the 319 grant, the BoR grant, an invoice for Jon's mileage to Paddle Trails meeting (BoR grant), Keith Fassbender's invoices (NPS 319 grant), SJRCD meeting notes invoice (NPS 319 grant). Melissa reported that the all of the San Juan County New Mexico gravel pits are infested with halogeton.

Current Business

Updates

Florida River Habitat and Water Quality Improvement Project. Keith has completed another section of fence and has begun the irrigation improvements. CDPHE has extra funds available. Ann isn't sure if the grant is 319 funds. Keith Fassbender's downstream neighbor is interested in doing similar work. Ann put together a budget for extending the riparian buffer another mile downstream. The CDHPE thought it was possible to "tack on" the additional funds to the existing grant. Ann provided the CDPHE with the information requested to consider giving the additional funding to the existing grant. Ann has scheduled a meeting with the downstream landowner.

Filling the NM governmental seat. Melissa is an official Steering Committee member representing Aztec. (Yay!) Melissa attended the Aztec City Commission meeting. It will be a pretty informal relationship. When something comes up that might be relevant to the City of Aztec, Melissa will go meet with the City Manager and give a report to the City Commission if necessary. Melissa will represent the City Commission and the Conservation District.

Jon's Office. The lease for the Conservation Legacy is ready for signature. Ann submitted a proposed revised budget to the BoR that included changes to the cost of the VISTA, line items for a lease and insurance. Once the budget is approved, the Conservation Legacy lease can be signed. Aaron reported MSI will be moving to an office on Hwy 3.

Lower Animas Watershed-Based Plan sampling. Dave reported on the status of the sampling. All sites are identified. They need some Farmington and private landowner permissions for access prior to the sampling. He met with Jimmy Hodges, New Mexico State Engineers Office, who provided info about ditches, spillways etc. First sample will be taken the week of April 21, 22, and 23. Funding will be going till June 2016. Melissa will be doing edits to subcontracts early next week. There was discussion of the length (number of months) of sampling, whether the sampling should be 1 or 2 full years and leaving the writing till the last five months. Melissa might be able to involve the City of Aztec in the project. Melissa would like to meet with people involved in water quality from the City of Aztec. At the joint meeting, Sally said that the State had nixed the stormwater thing that they wanted to do. Ann would like to know more about that, might be an opportunity to work on a grant with them. Dave will discuss more details with Paul. Melissa asked for help with MST sampling. Jon will help with the sampling. Daniel is no longer with the SJWG. The SJWG is pursuing a replacement with the goal to get a new VISTA in November.

Payne RV Park Groundwater Discharge Permit –There is a final public hearing for Payne RV Park to get their permit for the sewage lagoon. Jon recapped the sewage lagoon discharge permit. The sewage lagoon is going to be 2200 gallons per day. The current regs are 2000 per day per property which is trying to be updated at the state level to 5000 for the standard permit without the ground water discharge. Currently, if the flow exceeds 2000 per day then a discharge plan is required. The Payne RV Park application probably has not changed since the AWP first commented on the application. The Payne RV Park hearing is the 23rd. Written comments can be made until the 9th or in person at the hearing. The AWP submitted a comment letter in December. It was not stated to whom the comments were submitted. If the AWP makes new comments, a draft of the comments will be sent to the Steering Committee for approval and edits before being submitted (it was not stated to whom the comments would be submitted). The AWP will reach out to the Animas River Water Quality group who is focused and organized around the sewage lagoon permit. Melissa will find email address for contact with group.

Four Corners Paddle Trail Conservation and Stewardship Mtg. Dave reported on the meeting. The short focus was to have each member group provide a short paragraph outlining goals, activities, studies that are being done, outreach components. It provides an opportunity for the groups to incorporate the knowledge of the other groups and provide a better education opportunity to students and a more regional outreach to the public. Pete talked to the Tribe's water resources division person who has been going to the meetings; the tribe is participating in the meeting but not taking a position yet. Next public meeting is May 1st. Jon will attend the meeting. The AWP should make clear its position of advocating for water quality not river access. It was agreed that the AWP should not take a stance until more information is available.

SJWG Presentation to San Juan County. Dave reported on the MST study presentation to San Juan County. Dave presented a first year summary of results to BHP Billiton. Dave will be interviewing with a reporter and will send a link to article after interview.

AWP Presentation to La Plata County. Buck is presenting the AWP to La Plata County Tuesday, April 8, 10:00am.

New Business

Meeting with New Mexico Finance Authority. Paul has convened a meeting with New Mexico Finance Authority, Thursday April 10, 5:00pm. The meeting will explore potential funding sources that NMFA, NMED and EPA can provide. Finding new funding sources is critical since federal funding of 319 grants is being reduced. River Stewards Initiative funding available. Pete, Ann, Chuck and Jon will be attending the meeting.

CO Healthy Watersheds Grant Opportunity: Jon reported on the grant opportunity with funding for collaborative watershed restoration efforts. Deadline for application is April 30. Ann will touch base with Bonie Pate about the possibility of combining CDPHE's new funds with this grant opportunity. Ann talked to Barb Horn about getting some river watch sites on the Florida and that could be a part of it.

Review of Draft By-laws. Was tabled to be discussed at the June Steering Committee meeting.

Location and Agenda Ideas for Spring AWP meeting. The SPRING AWP Quarterly meeting is currently scheduled for May 1, 2014, in Ignacio. Ann asked for help with topics. Suggestions for topics included: the City of Durango could present on what they are doing to improve water quality in their community, what are their water quality concerns, inputs into the Watershed Base Plan; series of presentations on the Animas River as habitat, macros; joint presentation by Cities of Durango, Farmington and Aztec and what they are doing for stormwater management programs. Ann will talk to the city to find out availability for May or June.

Next Steering Committee Meeting: June 5, 2014, Farmington

Aaron has a draft of the wrap up of all the data of the first year of the Florida sampling and will provide that wrap up soon.

Aaron provided the agenda and information for the Connecting for Conservation workshop. Ann is on the agenda to participate in the "School of Hard Knocks" panel discussion. The workshop is scheduled for May 20 – 21, 2014. The goal of the workshop is to start an ongoing process for facilitating and supporting partnerships. Water and water quality will be a focus of the meeting. The cost is \$25.

Ann asked for members to send ideas for quarterly meetings.

Chuck has a conflict with the June 5, 2014 steering committee meeting.