

Coal Creek Watershed Coalition

MEETING AGENDA

May 13, 2009 4:00-5:30PM

Crested Butte Town Hall

Attendance: Marlene Crosby, Harvey Castro, Steve Glazer, Steve Bogatt, Rosemary Carol, Professor Kevin Alexander, Gay Austen, Scottie Wiley, Tyler Harpel, Anthony Poponi, Amy Weinfurter, Tara Tafi. A sign-up sheet was passed around to record attendance.

Housekeeping

Announcements (4:00-4:15)

- 1) On Friday, May 15th, the Coal Creek Watershed Coalition (CCWC) will take trip, guided by Kevin Alexander and Gay Austin of the Forest Service, to the fen .
- 2) On the afternoon of either May 20, 21, or 22, the CCWC will hold a water sampling training class for volunteers. Scottie, Steve Glazer and Rosemary expressed interest in attending and will coordinate with Anthony to find the best time to meet.
- 3) Gay announced that David Cooper plans to put piezometers and monitoring wells in the fen to monitor the interaction between the fen's acidic surface water and it's deeper, more basic water, for the Forest Service and the Colorado Natural Areas Program the fen is in a State Natural Area. These should not be disturbed or pulled out. The study, which will also examine water movement and stratification in the fen, will last as long as these wells remain intact and in good condition.

Approval of Minutes for March and April Meeting (4:15-4:20) Steve Glazer made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Harvey seconded the motion which passed unanimously without abstentions.

Additions to the Agenda (4:40- 4:22)

The 2008 Annual Water Quality Monitoring Report was also discussed, and will be delivered to the Advisory Committee prior to the next board meeting.

Agenda Items

1. Treasurer's Report (4:22-4:26)

The CCWC balance is currently \$1380.35, and includes the addition of the MillerCoors/River Network award of \$1000, which the CCWC received for being one of eight national finalists for their Watershed Protection Grant. Small transactions included a withdrawal of \$25 to fund the CCWC's presence at the Rural Philanthropy Days in Crested Butte in June, a conference that builds organizational capacity and connects regional grant-seekers with grant-makers. Fifty dollars was withdrawn to pay Bookie for registering the CCWC with the Secretary of State, since the CCWC forgot to register itself in time. In the future, Bookie will take care of this for the organization.

The CCWC will also receive a reimbursement of \$200 for its sponsorship of PooFest which will be paid by the Non-Point Source grant instead of by the organization itself. At PooFest, the CCWC gave a presentation to the crowd, had its logo included on PooFest t-shirts and posters, and tabled during the after-party at the Eldo. At any future PooFests, the CCWC will try to conduct its tabling during registration, rather than at the after-party.

2. ISDS Program (4:26-4:32)

Amy and Anthony are working with Crystal Lambert and Richard Stenson from the Gunnison County Environmental Health Department (EHD) and Shannon Spratt and Mike Pelletier of Gunnison County Mapping/GIS Office to develop a plan for the ISDS work in Irwin. A letter is being drafted by the EHD to inform Irwin residents of the planned work, and to remind them of the regulatory requirements for their septic systems is currently being drafted. Over the summer, Amy and someone from the County will map out leach fields, sampling ports, septic systems, and conduct intensified nutrient sampling near the Irwin townsite. The leach field maps will guide surface water sampling, but the systems themselves will not be monitored directly. Residents are required to do this on their own as part of the permit requirements. The work will focus on the town site of Irwin, rather than on Trapper's Crossing, because of Irwin's closer proximity to Coal Creek. The CCWC will follow up with Richard to determine if this mapping and sampling will include all residents (including those with septic systems that were "grandfathered" in and do not have to meet the new requirements) or just those with new systems.

Anthony and Steve Glazer edited the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the CCWC's involvement in this project, and Richard is currently reviewing it. The board will be presented with the final draft before it is finalized. The MOA includes CCWC volunteers in its discussion of liability. Work on the ISDS program will begin as soon as field conditions allow.

3. Water Wise Program (4:32-4:44)

The Water Wise Program is funded by a \$5000 grant from the Non-Point Source Outreach and Education Program and will educate residents of the Town of Crested Butte about Non-Point Source Pollution, the ways households contribute to it, and steps individuals can take to conserve and protect water. The Office for Resource Efficiency (ORE) is the fiscal sponsor for the grant, and Arin Billings of ORE is acting as the coordinator for the program.

As part of the program, ORE and the CCWC assessed the town's storm water collection system and released a report in the summer of 2008. They also sampled upstream, downstream, and at Butte Avenue Bridge, and conducted a survey of resident attitudes towards water quality protection. The survey results indicated that residents rarely made a connection between runoff from their yards and the water quality of Coal Creek.

The workshop will take place on May 28th, from 5:30-6:30 pm on the Town Hall patio. Dr. Jerry Frank, who runs Western State College's Water Workshop, will give an informational presentation on the definition of non-point source pollution and how it

affects a watershed. Krista Hildebrandt from the Alpengardener will then discuss water use in landscaping and gardening. The goal in these presentations to prevent non-point source pollution from becoming a continued or increasing threat to Coal Creek.

As part of the event, 50 residents will also receive free "Home Kits," which will contain environmentally friendly home and garden products that encourage recipients to conserve and protect water. Arin and Amy will visit homes to help install the kits, which recipients will customize according to their needs. The kit contents will include detergents, cleaners, a free soil nutrient analysis to determine if and how much fertilization is needed, an irrigation analysis, and some gardening products. Gay offered to donate books on noxious weeds, which will make a great addition to the other gardening products.

Steve Glazer suggested repeating the workshop since many people who own homes are not yet in town, but may be here in June or early July. Water Wise was scheduled for this time in order to inform people as they begin to work on their yards, but if the turnout is low, a second workshop could be held or other efforts can be made to reach local residents.

Harvey voiced his concern that too much time may be diverted to a project that's tangential to the CCWC's mission. As of the last report to the grant, Anthony had spent 6.8 hours working on Water Wise over several months. The group agreed this was a minimal time commitment, though Harvey noted that small side commitments add up, and the organization should be careful of the number of projects it gets involved in. Rosemary suggested that in the future the CCWC could streamline its reporting process, and set up a format that makes updating the Water Quality Monitoring Report much faster and easier.

4. Summer Sampling Program (4:44 - 5:31)

The consultant contracts for SGM Engineering and Professor Alexander were distributed to the group for comments. On Friday, May 15, the CCWC plans to look at the snowmelt along Kebler Pass Road with both SGM and Professor Kevin Alexander. In response to Rosemary's question, Professor Alexander described the sampling strategy as a living document. Steve Glazer asked how the sampling strategy would integrate with Marlene's work and asked if Gunnison County partner with the CCWC to cover the cost of the BMPs. Marlene responded that the County will need to be informed when SGM begins putting in new structures, so that the County can take steps to avoid accidentally damaging them and make sure the CCWC gets any appropriate information relating to its work on that segment of the road. The County's response to this project might be to add BMPs to other areas, based on the results from this study.

A permit is not needed to work on Forest Service land. The CCWC will determine if it needs a Watershed Ordinance permit from Town or the County before beginning this work. The group agreed that the CCWC should also make sure to include Marlene when discussing and finalizing its plans for the BMPs, and to maintain transparency

in the planning process. The CCWC will also coordinate with the County to time its sampling with the County's magnesium chloride application.

On the subject of the consultant contracts, Tyler suggested that someone be designated as the primary contact for issuing work. Professor Alexander and Anthony will act in this role and any questions or comments about SGM's work should pass through them, so that the engineers do not get conflicting advice or directions.

Steve Bogott, a Western State College student of Environmental Studies, will work with the CCWC for two months as a full-time Summer Associate. He will assist with sampling and field implementation in the study of magnesium chloride transport and sediment loading. With the help of Becky Sears of Western State College, Steve applied to the Thorton Foundation, which funds biological research at Western State College, and received \$1500 to help offset the project expenses and his own mileage. Steve's salary will be paid by AmeriCorps, at no cost to the CCWC. Steve may also conduct some work at the abandoned Forest Queen Mine (Mine) site, as the CCWC lost its recruit for a second summer associate scheduled to do work at the Mine.

-Program Overview

Amy has been sampling at Coal 00 and Coal 01 every other day since the beginning of April to catch the spring runoff. Watershed-wide sampling will occur towards the end of May and in the middle of August and October. Before June 30, the CCWC will remove the abandoned industrial batteries from the Forest Queen Mine. The CCWC will find an appropriate facility to safely dispose of the batteries. Steve Renner of DRMS would also like to verify the sampling that the EPA conducted at the Forest Queen Mine, which must also be completed by June 30 before the funding available for this activity expires.

-Roadway BMPs and study

Marlene provided an overview of the County's roadwork and how it might apply to the CCWC's work on Kebler Pass Road this summer. Apart from paving roads, the County also uses chip-seal and magnesium chloride to maintain the roads. The County began using these methods, which they receive a great deal of positive feedback about, because many of the gravel roads in Gunnison County have very sandy gravel sources and little plasticity, making it difficult to get gravel to hold down on a road. This can lead to courdory or washboards that make for dangerous driving conditions. Applying magnesium chloride stabilizes the road base to prevent washboards from forming, in addition to preventing dust deposition on plants. Additionally, magnesium chloride applications help facilitate road maintenance. The County applies water and a surfactant to help the magnesium chloride penetrate into the roads. Of all the time spent maintaining the roads this way, Marlene estimated that 2-3 hours would be spend actually applying magnesium chloride on 2 of the 5 days of total work. Additionally, the County has improved its application methods. It now uses a single source method and telescoping bar that allows trucks to more precisely deliver the application. Steve Glazer asked about the supplies of magnesium chloride, and whether they contained any heavy metals. Marlene planned to ask their supplier about this.

Marlene also discussed the specific conditions of Kebler Pass Road. Left to its own devices, the road's fine particles blow away, creating dust, impairing visibility and creating washboards along the road. Applying magnesium chloride prevents the County from the need to continually grade the road. The road was chip sealed up to the trailhead when air quality issues arose in Crested Butte about 10 years ago. This year, the County is considering chip sealing areas where they cannot easily keep up with maintenance issues, and areas where people drive too fast. The County has 860 miles of road to maintain, and so cannot afford to revisit a place 10 times over the course of a summer. At the moment, Paonia is the nearest source of gravel, which raises the County's hauling costs. The final sites will depend on these costs, and how many materials the County can afford to bring to Gunnison County. The sites being considered for chip seal include the curves at the Bouillon King Bridge and the bridge at Horse Ranch Park, where aspen trees drip dew onto the road creating pot holes. The group also mentioned the fork of Ohio Creek Pass and the fork between Splains Gulch and Forks as areas where chip seal or paving might be helpful. The County has funds from a grant that can be spread out over two years, and Marlene estimated that the county could be able to chip seal 1.5 to 2 more miles along Kebler Pass Road.

Steve Glazer mentioned an increased turbidity at some beaver ponds in Evans Basin and suggested the CCWC try to identify the sources of this, and if roadway runoff or the nearby gravel pit could be among the causes.

5. Additional Agenda Items

Adjourn - Next Meeting Date: Wednesday, June 10th, at 4:00 pm