

Animas Watershed Project
Meeting Summary
April 2, 2008

On April 2, 2008, the Animas Watershed Project (AWP) group met at the City of Aztec City Hall. The meeting was conducted from 6 pm to 8 pm. Attendees were: Lynne Krueger (City of Aztec), Jimmie Fisher (Lower Animas Ditch), Doug Ramsey (San Juan RC&D), Abe Franklin (NMED/SWQB), David Tomko (San Juan Watershed Group), Aaron Chavez (San Juan Water Commission), Barb Horn (CDOW), Mark Short (landowner), Regi Wahl and Paul Montoia (City of Farmington), Tami Sheldon (SUIT WR), Aaron Kimple (Animas Riverkeeper), Amy Kraft (SWCD), Chuck Wanner (SJCA), Bonie Pate (CO WQCD), Chris Sturm (CWCB), Buck Skillen (Trout Unlimited), Tyler Scheid (B.U.G.S. Consulting), and Janet Wolf (Coordinator) – 19 total.

[Please see the website at www.ecosphere-services.com/resources for copies of meeting materials and handouts as well as the power point presentations used at the meeting]

The meeting began with a brief welcome, around the room introductions, and a history of the AWP. All attendees were encouraged to update their contact information at the sign in table and to provide the Coordinator with any information/leads on any new stakeholders to add to the contact list.

The mission statement was reviewed as a reminder of what had been drafted in June 2007. Any comments on the mission statement will be accepted and discussed at the May meeting.

The Planning Document was reviewed and each topic was briefly discussed. Components of the document include:

- AWP information access through the Ecosphere Environmental Services web site. Attendees made several recommendations on resources to add to the web site. These additions to the web site will be on-going.
- Stakeholder contact information updates (on-going),
- April Meeting,
- Attendance at the WQ Forum April 3 & 4 and how the group will be promoted; and
- May Meeting.

The planning document can be accessed on the website, address noted above.

The contracted Coordinator scope of work was reviewed and includes:

- Coordinate a stakeholder group

- Develop a Watershed Plan
- Submit five proposals for future projects
- Develop Sampling & Analysis Plan
- Develop Geographic Database – water quality/land use
- Implement small demonstration project in NM
- Coordinator Quarterly Reporting

Summary of EPA's Nine Minimum Elements to be Included in a Watershed Plan

Tyler Scheid introduced the EPA's *Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect our Waters*. He provided a summary of the six steps in watershed planning and summarized the nine minimum elements to be included in a Watershed plan.

Of the nine minimum elements, some data associated with the first (identify causes and sources of pollution that need to be controlled) and second (determine load reductions needed) has been collected or is available. Elements 3 through 9 have yet to be completed. These elements are to develop:

- management measure to achieve goals,
- implementation schedule,
- interim milestones
- criteria to measure progress,
- monitoring component (note a sampling and analysis plan has been completed for this element)
- information/education component, and
- to identify technical and financial assistance needed to implement plan.

May Meeting – The next meeting date was set for May 14, 2008 in Durango. Location TBD, either Rec Center or Fairground meeting room.

Proposed Agenda Topics for the May meeting include:

- Presentation of a timeline associated with the remaining minimum elements which require data collection (the timeline will be consistent with existing work plans)
- Draft strawman strategy document on how the information associated with these elements will be collected,
- Draft document for newcomers so that information does not have to be reiterated at each meeting – a time saving tool.
- Research on upcoming education opportunities;
- Development of a one-page brochure on watershed
- Presentation of existing back ground data – time may only allow for a summary list of documents known to date; more details about this topic in future meeting if group is still interested in more detailed information

Additional Topics:

Additional topics were included on the agenda for discussion time permitting. The first, an update on the memorandum of understanding with the Southern Ute Indian Tribe (SUIT), was briefly mentioned; however, no representatives for the SUIT were available to discuss this topic so it will be addressed between meetings by Chuck Wanner and he will provide an update at the May meeting.

Mr. Jimmie Fisher with the Lower Animas Ditch provided information to the group on research associated with Switch grass (*Panicum vergatum*). He provided a handout and for attendees to look at and there was subsequent questions and answers. Doug Ramsey committed to following up with Jimmie on the use of switch grass after discussion with the NRCS. For more information on Switch grass, just google the word and quite a few articles will come up.

Next a discussion regarding how to handle the grant funding component of the Coordinator's contract was discussed. The suggestion was made that once the group evaluates the needs associated with the Watershed Management Plan, then grant projects may be identified. This information would be used to search for grant opportunities. The organization called the Watershed Assembly was identified as a resource for grants.

The last topic on the agenda regarding recommended resource documents to be posted to the web site was covered earlier in the meeting; however detailed here. Suggestions for including the following resources was made:

- Links to all agencies involved in the AWP;
- Links to non-profit groups with similar watershed projects
- Links to any projects for watershed protection
- List of organizations that support AWP or are stakeholders
- A way for stakeholders to monitor the progress of the Watershed Management Plan and process
- Upcoming Events/calendar
- A copy of the Sampling and Analysis Plan
- USGS WQ data to share.

Action Items:

1. Doug Ramsey – Discuss Switchgrass with NRCS and provide information back to Jimmie Fisher by May 1, 2008
2. Chuck Wanner – discuss SUIT memorandum of understanding with SUIT. Update AWP at May 14, 2008 meeting.
3. Janet t - current contact list to Abe Franklin for his review. Complete
4. Janet – add resources to web site for stakeholder use – on-going
5. Janet – contact and involve Colorado permit holders – on-going

6. Janet – draft a document for new stakeholders. Information on history of the group, mission state, and other pertinent information – May 1, 2008 (distribute prior to May 14 meeting for comments)
7. Janet – draft a brochure or 1 –page document to provide as part of educational outreach – May 1, 2008 (for discussion at May 14 meeting)
8. Janet – Create a list of potential outreach opportunities to promote the SWMP. Ex: Delores River & Animas River Festivals, Farmington River days, and San Juan County Fair. May 1, 2008 for discussion at May 14 meeting.
9. Tyler/Janet – create a timeline incorporating the EPA’s nine elements and strategies for completion – presentation at May 14 meeting

Decision Points from the April 2, 2008 Meeting:

1. Future meeting formats will be dictated by where AWP is in the watershed planning process and how much stakeholder involvement is recommended;
2. Grant opportunities will likely be the outcome of the watershed planning process needs;