

Otero County WUI Planning Group

February 17, 2016

Summary of Minutes

Participants

Present – Rick Merrick, Frank Silva, Tony McWilliams, Rebecca Zulueta, Andres Bolanos, Erica Enjady, Thora Padilla and Vicky Estrada

Creation of New Focus Area Based on Groundwater Information and Potential Partners and Stakeholders

The group reviewed updated maps created by Adrienne of NMFWR that separated out wells from other water sources and included 5th and 6th code watershed boundaries. Upon review of this information, the group decided that the Two Goats-High Rolls-Maruchi Focus Area should be divided into two different focus areas as the northern section drains towards Tularosa and involves different communities and partners from the southern section. Thora and Erica identified Mescalero Tribal boundary lines that could be used to divide the two focus areas. It was agreed that since the Tularosa Creek Focus Area included predominantly tribal, municipal and BLM land, planning in this area could happen concurrently with planning in the Sacramento River Focus Area south of Two Goats. Vicky will take these hand drawn maps and have Adrienne put on GIS layer. Group will have one more chance to see this at the next meeting and finalize boundaries for both focus areas.

High Rolls Community and Acequia Association Activities

Vicky mentioned that she had contacted and left messages with the State Acequia Association manager. He had not returned calls but she would continue to contact him and invite him to attend one of the working group meetings in the future to go over state program and funding process.

Westside CFRP Project

Tony gave a brief update on status of the CFRP project. Two units of the project are located in the Maruchi area bordering Mescalero land and a third unit is located in Alamo Canyon to the south. Project funding is to complete the planning for all three units. Discussion is underway to determine if a new CFRP proposal will be submitted to fund the implementation of vegetative treatments in these same areas. According to Tony, treatments would likely include mastication, thinning and burning. Tony mentioned that a public meeting for input on project is scheduled in Rolling Hills this month.

Private Land Project Work in Two Goats-High Rolls-Maruchi Area

Frank mentioned vegetation treatment project planned on Debbie Martinez land. Group discussed possibility of checking with Martinez's to see if a weather station, likely to be available through Soil and Water Conservation District in May, could be located on Martinez land since group is interested in locating a weather station in the general vicinity of Westside CFRP project. Frank with follow-up with Martinez family to see if they are willing to locate weather station on their land.

Sacramento Mountain Wood Industry Summit - Update

Rick provided an update on status of efforts by the Steering Committee involved in planning the summit. He passed out the flyers and draft agenda to group. He reviewed agenda and asked all to provide feedback to him. Rick encouraged all working group members to get the word out about the summit to contractors and potential local vendors.

Next Otero Working Group Meeting will be March 9, 2016 at 10:00am at Cloudcroft Ranger Station.