

Otero County WUI Working Group

January 13, 2016

Summary of Minutes

Participants

Present – Rick Merrick, Frank Silva, James Cadwallader, Dave Venable, Mark Cadwallader, Sue Dreikosen, Kim Kuhar, Scott Lerich, Brent Racher and Vicky Estrada

Rio Grande Water Trust Fund – Presentation

Brent Racher gave a powerpoint presentation on the Rio Grande Water Trust Fund. He shared the devastating effects of recent fires on Albuquerque's primary water sources and the economic and ecological effects of fire on this water source. He then shared the data highlighting the types of vegetative treatments and associated costs needed to improve surrounding watersheds and concluded by describing the on-going process used to organize Sandoval and Bernalillo Counties for watershed funding. The group expressed interest in replicating this same approach in Otero County particularly in the area surrounding Alamogordo. Rick agreed to share information with Susie Galea, the mayor of Alamogordo, and explore opportunities to present this information to Alamogordo community leaders and County Commissioners.

Ground Water Mapping Layer – How It may Affect Focus Area Boundaries

Following last meeting in November, Vicky met with the New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources at New Mexico Tech in Socorro, NM. She obtained hard copies of Publications Sacramento Mountain Watershed Study – The Effects of Tree Thinning on the Local Hydrologic Ecosystem as well as the Sacramento Mountains Hydrogeology Study, both produced by this group. Additionally, GIS data of water monitoring points used for these studies, were combined with City of Alamogordo GIS water data to produce a map highlighting perennial and ephemeral streams, springs, wells and water monitoring points in the Two Goats-High Rolls- Maruchi Focus Area. The working group reviewed this information. The group will use this information to aid in identifying where treatments and monitoring on private land might be most beneficial. Additionally, the group requested that the map, produced by NMFWR, be revised to remove wells so that springs and streams could be more easily identified. New Mexico Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources also expressed interest in helping with future water monitoring in the Sacramento Mountains.

High Rolls Community and Acequia Association Activities

James Cadwallader, community resident and member of High Rolls Acequia Association, shared information about vegetative treatments that had been done to improve water flow along a portion of the acequia in High Rolls. Group discussion followed on how to connect these treatments to other watershed restoration work (like the regional water planning efforts), and how to obtain additional funding to complete the remaining vegetation treatments and acequia improvements needed in High Rolls as well as other communities in the focus area. Vicky will contact the State Acequia Association to bring back additional information to this group about the state funding process, to the next meeting.

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 list of contractors compiled by Steering Committee and the list of vendors. Group was asked to review and provide additional names. Summit topics and potential speakers were shared with the group and timeline for finalizing topics, speakers and agenda was outlined by Rick.

Next Otero Working Group Meeting will be February 17, 2016 at 10:00am at Cloudcroft Ranger Station.