

**GRANT COUNTY ECO WATERSHED PLANNING GROUP
JANUARY 14, 2015 MEETING**

SUMMARY MINUTES BY VICKY ESTRADA

Partnership Video

Due to technical difficulties, the group was not able to view the Partnership Video on Collaborating for Healthy Forests. It was decided that Vicky would send link to this video and everyone agreed to view the video so relevant information could be discussed at the next meeting. Link is media.oregonstate.edu/media;

Identification of Partnership/Stakeholders by Thematic Area

Vicky led a group exercise to identify how potential partners and stakeholders identified at the previous meeting, fit within the priority thematic areas identified by the group. Group members individually marked which category they thought each partner best fit and then we reviewed and discussed as a group. Thematic areas included: 1) Emergency Preparedness and Response, 2) Education and Outreach, 3) On-The-Ground Practices, and 4) Economic Development. Attached (Appendix A) is the list of potential partners identified by the planning group at the previous meeting. Vicky will send out the list of potential partners/stakeholders by thematic category prior to the next meeting.

Membership and Organization

Gabe Ramos shared with the group the letters of interest he had received and the process for getting approval by the County Commissioners. The current mission statement and associated group priorities were briefly discussed as was a draft document on potential changes. Final decision on organizational guidelines will be presented at the next meeting by Gabe Ramos.

GIS Storage of Group Data and Maps

Vicky shared with the group the recommendation made by the New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute (NMFWRI) and how data and maps access would be separated. It was agreed by the group that they wanted NMFWRI to administer the mapping data and all group members would have access to completed maps through the allaboutwatersheds website. Vicky will work with NMFWRI on how to set that up. Additionally the role of the county and the importance of including Western New Mexico University in the GIS work where possible were highlighted.

Priority Treatment Selection Within Priority Project Area

NMFWRI created a map that showed larger priority project area and already completed, on-going, and future planned projects within the priority project area. Group briefly reviewed the map and the list of criteria identified by the group since the last meeting (attached as Appendix B). Group will continue discussion of this topic at next meeting.

Meeting participants Included:

Denisha Lucero, County Administrative Assistant for the
*Gabriel Ramos, County Commissioner
Randy Villa, Grant Count
*Glenn Griffin, Gila Tree Thinners
Tonya Vowles, NM State Forestry
Mick Deubel, Alternative Forestry Unlimited
*Joe Mondragon, citizen
*Ralph Pope, Consultant – Southwest Native Ecosystems Management
*Leroy Holguin, Fire Management Officer, USFS Gila NF
Martha Cooper, TNC
Diane Taliaferro, USFS Silver City Ranger District, Gila NF
Mark Bernal, BLM
Leroy Holguin, USFS Gila NG
Pat Hunt, NRCS
Randy Gomez, Gila NF
Vicky Estrada, consultant representing NMFWRI

*Grant County Eco Watershed Planning Group Members

Potential Partners and Stakeholders

Eco-Watershed Planning Group spent time identifying potential partners and stakeholders that could aid in accomplishing work in the Project Priority Area (identified during the October 1, 2014 meeting).

List of Potential Partners and Stakeholders Include:

Stream Dynamics
Grant Conservation Education Center (GCEC)
Silver City Office of Sustainability
Upper Gila Watershed Alliance (UGWA)
New Mexico Environmental Department (NMED)
Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS)
Freeport (Mining)
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMG&F)
Community Government Representatives
Local Fire Department Representatives
Homeowners/Neighborhood Association Representatives
Grant Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD)
Gila Resources Information Project (GRIP)
Grant County Cattlegrowers
Center for Biodiversity
Public Utilities of New Mexico (PNM)
New Mexico Gas Company
Home Owners Insurance Companies (Farmers, State Farm, Progressive, Geico...)
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Wellness Coalition
Audobon Society
Southwest Solid Waste Authority
New Mexico Forest Industry Association (NMFIA)
New Mexico Department of Transportation
Wood Products and Forestry Businesses and Contractors
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
Mule Deer Foundation
Trout Unlimited
National Wild Turkey Federation
Ducks Unlimited
Aldo Leopold Charter School
Public and Charter Schools Within Grant County
Community Businesses

Priority Project Area Criteria

Group Exercise was completed to determine what criteria each participant used to identify watershed-based priority project area. Group agreed that there are two broad objectives this group wants to accomplish in treating the project area. They are:

- 1) Improve Water Quality and Quantity, particularly as it relates to recharge of community water sources
- 2) Increase/Improve Watershed Resiliency (ability to withstand events like wildfires, drought...)

Various Criteria for Determining Project Priority Area Within Grant County Include (in no particular order):

- Proximity to WUI *
- Prescribed Burn Opportunities *
- Areas Where People Live
- High Fire Risk Areas *
- Potential for Treatment and/or Removal of Wood Products
- Vegetation Type *
(grass, pinyon-juniper, ponderosa pine, and mixed conifer)
- Condition of Vegetation, Limitation of Vegetation Types of High Importance Susceptible to Disturbance (riparian, mixed conifer)
- Areas bordering, close to or upstream from High Fire Risk Areas
- NEPA Planning Completed *
- Areas with Greatest Departure from Natural Fire Regime
- Areas Containing Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species Habitat *
- Large Scale Planning Areas
- ***Developed and Dispersed Recreation*** – I added for group discussion

* Indicates **initial** criteria used to identify priority **within** the priority project area