

PAC Meeting Minutes May 5, 2021 Rangely, CO

Attending in Person:

Stu Massey	Forrest Nelson	Mike Dillon	Ian Wilson
Don Reed	Chris Collins	Ron Reich	John Leary
Kendra Young	Kari Brennan	Callie Hendrickson	Linda Masters
David Graf			

Attending online:

Deirdre McNab	Mario Sullivan	Kendall Smith	Ed Smercina
Rosaly Coombs	Walt Proctor		

Decisions:

- Linda Masters appointed to the PAC as a Technical Advisor representing Extension.
- The timeline for work on Phase II was accepted (see attached)
- After each Diversion Assessment report is compiled, the report will be delivered to the water right owner(s). At their discretion, that person may allow the report to be used by the PAC or they may keep the report for personal use.
- After each Riparian Assessment report is compiled, the report will be delivered to the property owner(s). At their discretion, that person may allow the report to be used by the PAC or they may keep the report for personal use.
- All reports authorized to be used by the PAC will be housed at the NRCS office.
- Riparian site selection criteria was approved. (see attached)

Future Workshops and Trainings

Diversion Training May 6, Meeker

Diversion Workshops: Rangely May 20th 5-7-PM; Meeker May 27 5-7-PM

Riparian Training May 14th

Riparian Workshops: July 13-14 online, Field Training 1PM July 20th and 8AM - 2 PM July 21st

Reach Meetings

End of May to early June. Liz and Kari will coordinate with chair of each reach.

Callie Hendrickson opened the meeting by introducing Kari Brennan and Elizabeth Chandler as the coordinators for Phase II of the White River Integrated Water Initiative (WRIWI). Kari will be responsible for selecting assessment sites based on PAC approved criteria and coordinating the site visits for diversion and riparian assessments. Elizabeth will be responsible for coordinating PAC activities and writing the Phase II report and compiling Phase III scope of work.

Ground rules for the PAC decision making were reviewed: Consensus is always the goal, but in the event it is not achieved then Robert's Rules of Order will prevail.

Discussion surrounding the handling of assessment reports centered on privacy issues. The PAC feels strongly the goal of Phase II is to be an asset to landowners and property owners. There is widespread concern that infringing, or the perception of infringing on property rights will inhibit participation in Phase II. It was decided that the water right and property rights owners will be provided the completed report. It is their decision to allow the report to be used or not. If permission is denied, the reports will remain the property of the landowner/water right owner, but the PAC can use summarized data in its Phase II work. Example: Three structures were found on the White River that may impair fish movement. We would not clarify any further details of the structures. The completed reports that the PAC is authorized to use will be housed by NRCS. All assessments will be conducted by and reports written by the respective team lead. No person paid by grant funding will be conducting assessments or writing reports.

Diversion selections were reviewed by Kari. She was directed by the PAC to move to the next priority structure/area if the landowner or water rights owner are reluctant to participate. In the event more people would like to have their structures or riparian areas assessed, it will be at the discretion of the assessment teams. It is desirable to do as many assessments as possible. Ian Wilson, Trout Unlimited, mentioned his group is interested in smaller structures and could possibly take the lead on those.

The riparian selection criteria was reviewed by Mario Sullivan. The importance of making sure we get sites that are representative of the White River and Piceance Creek. This would include using disturbed and non-disturbed sites in the assessment process. The importance of multiple use sites was considered and added to the criteria. Selection criteria will include the potential to change the conditions at the site. Example: If the riparian area is damaged by seasonal flooding, it might receive a lower ranking than a site that is damaged by factors that are more easily mitigated such as a trail that is causing erosion.

Next PAC meeting will be coordinated after the Reach Meetings. It was pointed out this is a busy time of year and there are a lot of Phase II activities scheduled outside of the PAC meetings. We will be in contact and schedule the next meeting as needed.

Riparian Site Selection Criteria and Methodology

Mario Sullivan presented the site selection criteria the Riparian Assessment Team will be using. The overall goal of the team is to identify sites that are a scientifically meaningful representation of the entire river system.

There are three broad categories for the selection process: land in agricultural production, land not in agricultural production, and sites that are used for multiple purposes (public access, fishing, agricultural production). The following are the criteria for selection.

Agricultural production

- Access/permission for the assessment
- Most potential for positive change - highly impacted site

Remaining sites

- Volunteer sites - land may be fallow or currently in a conservation easement or involved in a project to improve the site
- Public access points - USFS, CPW Fishing access, River Edge West project sites
- Existing restoration sites

The criteria for the assessments will incorporate:

- Usage Type
 - Disturbed or non-disturbed
 - Agriculture
 - Public Access
 - Conservation Easement
 - Multiple Use
- Geomorphology
 - Each reach was defined using geomorphology, but within each reach there are some variations
 - Erosion
 - Site stability
 - Deeply incised stream - preferred over a wide floodplain area
 - Wide floodplain with good riparian connectivity
 - Rosgen Stream Classification
- Volunteer Sites
 - Established plans for assessing or improving the riparian area
 - Planned financial allotment for improvements
- Native vs. Non-Native Vegetation
 - Primarily Tamarisk and Russian Olive

Sites will be selected using aerial imagery to look for channel and floodplain width as well as the type of vegetation, word of mouth, and the well identified public access points.

