



RWEACT Board Meeting Agenda

July 18, 2106 – Windsor Hotel in Del Norte

9:30 – 11:30 a.m.

Introductions

Approve minutes from previous RWEACT Board meeting (none)

RWEACT Reports (written reports or 5 minute presentation)

- Emergency Managers
- Economic Recovery / Communication
- Hydrology
- Natural Resources
- Forest Plan Revision
- Executive Director

Other Reports

- Current Fire Situation

Financial Update

- Snapshot (CWCB and EIAF)
- Second Quarterly Report

New Business

- 501c3 Status
- Appointments of Kevin Terry and Heather Dutton to board (approve or not)
- Bylaws (approve or not)
- Officer election (approve or not slate of officers)
- Brief discussion on roles of board / staff / committee chairs
- Next steps for Strategic Plan
- Next steps for Work Planning
- Framework for Policies and Procedures
- Brief discussion on Board of Directors growth and next steps
- Update discussion on proposed Task Order #9
- Upcoming grant deadline for Wildfire Risk Reduction opportunity

Adjourn

Next meeting: _____



Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team

Windsor County • Mineral County • Rio Grande County

info.rweact.org

April 14, 2016

RWEACT Meeting Summary

Presentation of Concept Proposal with Rio Grande National Forest and National Wild Turkey Federation

Location: Windsor Hotel, Del Norte

Present: Dan Dallas, Travis Smith, Karla Shriver, Tom Spezze, Ramona Weber, Terry Wetherill, Kristie Borchers, Heather Dutton, Jamie Nogle (NWTF), Jeremy Gallegos (CPW), Martha Williamson, Randy Ghormley, Kirby Self, Kevin Duda, Dale Gomez, and Dale Pizel. Present (by telephone) include Rebecca Barnard (NWTF), Dena Holmes (NWTF) and Susan Thompson.

Travis Smith welcomed the group.

Tom Spezze introduced himself with information about his role within the National Wild Turkey Federation. He introduced biologist Jamie Nogle and Rebecca Barnard (national programs coordinator) who offers guidance and assistance with Stewardship Agreements and working with partnership organizations.

Tom Spezze provided information that the NWTF dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and preservation of the hunting heritage. He specifically mentioned Save the Habitat. Save the Hunt. Initiative goals which include conservation or enhancement of 4 million acres of critical habitat, recruitment of 1.5 million hunters, and open access to 500,000 acres for outdoor enjoyment. Colorado is a headwaters state (Colorado / Arkansas / Rio Grande / South Platte & Platte rivers) which impacts all neighboring states. Three handouts were distributed.

Rebecca Barnard spoke about stewardship from the NWTF's position, that Stewardship was temporarily authorized in the Farm Bill for about ten years, and permanently authorized in 2014. NWTF was involved in Stewardship efforts even during the pilot prior to the Farm Bill. NWTF has 87 projects across the country; 40 currently ongoing and 40-acre project to a Region 3 project \$9.5 million. The NWTF has a good track record of bringing in match dollars, early adopter of Stewardship. NWTF solid partner of the Forest Service; our goal is to make sure that future stewardship projects are successful. Rebecca said that there are ideas of what stewardship is and what stewardship isn't and it can become the wrong tool or used well. About two years ago, the NTWF is the fifth largest purchaser of all timber now about fourteenth. Dena Holmes is the national Stewardship Coordinator who spoke about her role with NWTF. Tom spoke about the broader mission of the Turkey Federation to move the conservation needle. This seems like a good fit to expand the partnership with the Forest Service, RWEACT, and NWTF.

Travis Smith mentioned the strategic visioning document of RWEACT "to act in the interest of public safety while serving as a watershed protection, forest health stewardship and advocacy organization, in partnership and through the administration and management of a stewardship agreement with the Rio Grande National Forest of the Rocky Mountain Region." Thanked Tom Spezze for bringing in the NWTF; driven by mission statements and if we can bring our individual organizations

Dan Dallas reviewed the beginnings of RWEACT, tied this work to the original purpose of the Forest Reserves, which is watershed protection. Public safety and improvement / habitat protection of the Upper Rio Grande watershed.

Martha Williamson asked the status of agreements with the USDA Forest Service and the NWTf. Rebecca answered that the NWTf has a Master Agreement with each Region in place and can work in any national forest as long as it meets NWTf mission and the seven goals of forest management. The Master Agreement is an umbrella that allows NWTf to enter into specific Stewardship Projects. Randy Ghormley asked about the expiration date: the Master Agreement expires in 2018 or 2019 and a new Master Agreement will most likely be issued and projects can be tiered to either Master Agreement.

AMERICAN WESTERN WILDLIFE FEDERATION

AMERICA'S WESTERN WILDLANDS

Wildlife habitat in the West spans from desert to high mountain tundra. The diversity of its vast countryside is what makes it a destination for hunters, travelers and wildlife watchers. Maintaining this diversity requires our help. Join us as we fight to **KEEP THE WEST WILD.**



FORESTS Catastrophic wildfires have destroyed more than 15 million acres across the West in the last 15 years. That's more than six times the size of Yellowstone National Park.

WATER The West's waterways are the lifeblood of plants, animals and people. Invasive species such as salt cedar and Russian olive rob us of this precious resource.

PRAIRIES are being taken over by invasive species, like junipers and cheat grass, which are choking out native species that benefit wildlife including wild turkeys.

THE NWTf WILL WIN BACK THE WEST

- **Our volunteers, wildlife biologists, foresters and partners** have joined forces to actively manage forests and grasslands for the betterment of wildlife and the people who enjoy them. Habitat management such as thinning forests and prescribed fire will keep these areas healthy and help reduce future catastrophic wildfires.
- **We are fighting** the war against invasive species to restore native ecosystems for more productive waterways and wildlife habitat.



AMERICA'S WESTERN WILDLANDS

SAVE THE HABITAT. SAVE THE HUNT.



www.nwtf.org

AMERICA'S BIG 6 of WILDLIFE CONSERVATION



The endowments isn't just what's on the other side of the glass, it's where we find most alone. We are the National Wild Turkey Federation - the leader in upland conservation - and we're committed to making America the best it can be for the people and wildlife who call its forests, grasslands and riverbanks home.

We've divided the country in six areas, focusing our efforts to keep forests healthy, water clean and stop critical habitat loss. Our volunteers are unmatched in their devotion to wildlife and wild places. Our expert staff has pioneered the way in effective conservation delivery. Our partners offer a network of support that enables us to achieve success. Join us as we tackle what matters most to hunters, to wildlife, to America, even more of our own future.

SAVE THE HABITAT.
SAVE THE HUNT.
NWTF

Save the Habitat, Save the Hunt.

The Hunt, is a 10-year initiative to conserve or enhance 4 million acres of critical upland habitat, create 1.5 million hunters and open access to 500,000 additional acres for hunting. America's Big Six of Wildlife Conservation allow us to focus our effort on the most critical upland habitat needs.

AMERICA'S WESTERN WILDLANDS

- Improves forest health
- Improves water quality
- Restores native prairie

AMERICA'S GREAT OPEN SPACES

- Improves forest health
- Improves water quality
- Restores native prairie

AMERICA'S CROSSROADS

- Improves water quality
- Improves forest health
- Restores grasslands

AMERICA'S COLONIAL FORESTS

- Maintain healthy hardwood forests
- Stop habitat loss
- Increase water wildlife survival
- Increase habitat diversity

AMERICA'S SOUTHERN PINEY WOODS

- Stop habitat loss
- Improve forest management
- Increase habitat diversity

AMERICA'S MID-SOUTH BEE

- Improve water quality
- Stop habitat loss
- Maintain healthy hardwood forests



Rebecca Barnard led a discussion using the April 2016 Leveraging NWTF's Stewardship Contracting Expertise proposals for the Rio Grande National Forest. As the Agreement Holder, it is important to understand numbers, making projects profitable and watching every dollar; working efficiently as a go-between so that the project is implemented according to the FS specifications.

Rebecca Barnard led a review of Option 1 – NWTF could hold the agreement and subcontract to RWEACT who would be the subcontract overseer. Option 1 could also fund a joint position (such as a retired FS/CSFS, project inspector; this has been successful to save biologist's time and to seek additional dollars for the project. Travis asked for an example of the Option 1; Rebecca mentioned the Mule Deer Foundation. In Stewardship projects, there's a 20% project value match to be brought by the partner to the table.

Rebecca Barnard provided an overview of Option 2 – NWTF provides consultation; would not be a signatory or for bringing dollars to the table or for successful implementation (This would potentially be RWEACT); NWTF would be available by phone / by email / expertise to Forest Service and to the partner as the project is developed and gets underway (would be most appropriate if not a priority project / landscape nearby or staff or capacity nearby). The caution with Option 2 is that RWEACT doesn't have the experience for stewardship so it may not be efficient for NWTF (time or money) to enter into a consulting role. Work out an arrangement with the partner who would be responsible for paperwork / project implementation.

Karla Shriver asked for clarification about Option 2 and the statement about field staff not available unless NWTF administers; Kristie Borchers asked for clarification that the overall Master Agreement would be with the Region and just a project sheet would need to be developed or a further Agreement needed. Dan Dallas asked Rebecca to review Stewardship Authority; for a Stewardship Contracting process a bid process would

be held (ranking / scoring criteria must be in place) – IRTC and IRSC (timber and service contract); for-profit organization or a non-profit organization can bid / receive the contract (as a nonprofit, NWTF is not set up for this); don't want to compete with timber companies; there is no match requirement. The Third Tool is Stewardship Agreements ... this is the tool that NWTF uses 95% of the time; no bidding process; FS doesn't put Agreement out to bid; work together to define project boundary, what is the habitat work to be accomplished; conversations specific to funding – three funding sources:

- Fund Source 1) appropriated FS dollars or retained receipts (leftover dollars from IRTC or IRSC that have remained on the Forest specifically for habitat work; can allocate these stewardship dollars as part of the funds that will accomplish the project – These dollars must be matched at a minimum of 20%. Prefer to be 30-35%. Regional forester approval required for less than 20% match (unlikely).
- Fund Source 2) is partner dollars (raised by organization already; outside grants and bring those dollars – state agencies; water quality grants / etc. In-kind contributions of equipment, travel time, volunteer staff etc.
- Fund Source 3) is timber dollars. Partners do not need to match the timber dollars that are used within the life of the project (new rule).

Stewardship Agreements are not intended to be a moneymaker for the Forest Service or for the partner. Costs can be covered but an organization cannot project from a Stewardship Agreement. Sole source agreement so FS / partner doesn't lose money; modified annually (add or subtract work). Stewardship Agreement can be ten years in length (contracting efficiencies with the Forest Service), can be timber and can be service – the partner does the RFP for timber bids, for service work (reviews requirements as the partner adhering to the FS specifications, administration comes from the partner).

Dan Dallas says we do not have the means on this Forest to enter into a Stewardship Contract (we don't have the budget / means to sustain contracts). Some of these other tools should be reviewed for appropriateness. The Rio Grande National Forest staff – specifically Dale Gomez and Randy Ghormley – have leveraged significant amount of wildlife dollars with partners (Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, etc).

Dan Dallas is thinking specifically of La Garita Hills project. Dale Gomez reiterated that we have been successful with grant seeking efforts to fund wildlife habitat projects; how does this partnership further leverage or the use of Stewardship Agreements make this more efficient? Rebecca Barnard answered this that a pooling of multiple organizations may increase leveraged dollars; and specifically encumbered Forest Service dollars (fire funding) to keep the habitat projects moving forward. Dena Holmes said that a Technical Proposal can include the wish list; once you have a Supplemental Agreement, it can be modified / more funds can be brought to the table.

Randy Ghormley (Forest biologist) asked what the minimum timeframe for a Stewardship Agreement NWTF interested in and Rebecca Barnard answered that it's typically six to eight years; the scale of efficiency should be reviewed; small projects could be considered but larger landscape-wide projects are ideal. He asked for clarification of how a project is implemented to Forest Service specifications; Rebecca Barnard said that at a minimum of one day per year annual review with Forest Service to review protocol, contracts, accomplishments, remaining items, etc. Randy Ghormley gave an example of identifying a certain number of snags left and spaced; upon further research or understanding – could they be clumped? The response was that if it hadn't perhaps been yet contracted, it could be handled.

Jeremy Gallegos asked about moving forward with potential projects and does the Rio Grande National Forest fall within or not the emphasis area for the NWTF? From the map, we fall within the Eastern edge. Tom Spezze answered that the NWTF would work anywhere the partnership exists and is efficient; like to prioritize in focus areas but based on conservation metrics. The map polygons are not as important as the people around the table.

The partnering potential and the capacity building opportunity – rather than the emphasis on turkey-specific habitat – is bigger / broader emphasis, says Travis Smith. Heather Dutton asked that if RWEACT is a

subcontractor in this scenario, does that limit RWEACT to be able to have a Stewardship Agreement within this Rio Grande National Forest in the same geographical area? Rebecca Barnard said that no; that RWEACT could move forward with another Stewardship Agreement with Supplemental Projects (either in conjunction or separate; all with own authority). Financial resources / staffing resources would be a limiting factor and small projects can be as challenging to implement as larger, landscape-wide projects.

NWTF is working on a visual representation of what the Stewardship Best Tool is for the specific Project / Scenario, what's the right mix of funds and needs per Forest, etc. If no merchantable timber, then perhaps Challenge Cost Share would be the best tool. Rebecca Barnard mentioned again that the best partner with expertise in stewardship can help train additional partners.

Tom Spezze said that perhaps this Stewardship Agreement may look differently than RWEACT originally thought and that partnership with the NWTF may manage all the details of the project. Tom Spezze said that perhaps the next meeting should be focused on all the tools in the Stewardship toolbox. Ramona Weber mentioned that we are in the process of a transition from boots on the ground to coordinator.

Dale Pizel believes that any avenue to help the Forest Service / BLM manage is worth pursuing. Randy Ghormley says that we have about 260 vertebrate species on the Forest (besides Making Tracks, Every Species Counts, Taking Wing, about eight initiatives). Internally, we may need to look at how species blend together for the best leverage. Heather Dutton mentioned that it may be worthwhile for RWEACT to huddle up, talk to our local guys and where we are at and where we can go – not only are we looking for partners but we also want to be a good partner.

Karla Shriver asked if RWEACT would be funding travel time for NWTF; Kristie Borchers reviewed pending Task Order #8, a possible Task Order #9; and Energy Impact #9083 for Capacity Building.

Travis Smith thanked Rebecca Barnard and Dena Holmes for their involvement.

The next meeting focused on the Stewardship Agreements will be determined.

Meeting Summary
May 5, 2016

Present: Zeke Ward, Travis Smith, Kristie Borchers

- Start date: June 1, 2016
- Review of prior commitments for Zeke Ward (estimated seven days)
- Review of pay rate – Not To Exceed \$60,000 for the 12 month period plus travel
- Contract with Zeke Ward and Hinsdale County (to be generated by legal counsel)
- May 18th Hinsdale County BOCC agenda item (Zeke will attend)
- May 18th evening CWCB event in Del Norte (Zeke will attend)
- Borchers will deliver hard-copy organizational files for review to Zeke
- Need to release a public service announcement (need several sentences from Zeke)
- Email set up for zeke@rweact.org
- Business cards will be ordered with email address / website / cell phone
- Visioning with Karla Brown will occur in July
- County meetings will occur in June
- Borchers will check on IRS status for RWEACT
- Current board has six members, Trinchera Ranch is going to be asked; additional members from other counties will be identified
- Borchers will provide bylaws (not approved until we have seven board members) to Zeke
- Borchers provided current list of projects to Zeke
- Borchers provided hard copies of each of the current Task Orders (all but 6 closed); 8 not yet approved
- Roundtable portion of the Assessment to come out of RWEACT funds / we need a TO 9
- Zeke will continue to attend Willow Creek Reclamation Committee meetings the first Wednesday of the month / any potential conflicts of interest will be determined / stated
- Borchers will provide staff contact information to Zeke (Steve Belz, Emma Regier / Heather Dutton, Ashley Rust, Terry Wetherill)
- Review of additional items that Zeke may want to attend
 - May 17th Tabletop Exercise 10:00 a.m. at the Elks Lodge in Creede
 - May 24th pre-Forest Plan Revision meeting with Agnew::Beck at the Annex, 2:30 pm, DN
 - May 31st RWEACT / FS staff meeting at 10 a.m. Divide Ranger District, DN

FS/RWEACT Meeting Summary May 31, 2016

Present: Kristie Borchers, Steve Belz, Emma Regier, Jody Fairchild, Kevin Duda, Dale Gomez, Kevin Terry, Martha Williamson, Zeke Ward, Heather Dutton

Introductions

Review of Existing Projects

Emergency Managers / Communication

- Tabletop Exercise
- Weather Spotter Training / weather radios
- Doppler – radar (temporary); Borchers will check and restart this conversation
- Ham radio (Bristolhead)
- Hill 71 – Zeke Ward (common for solar – use concentrated solar with a Fresnell lens)
- Upper RG Early Warning & Notification Plan (June 2016; FS will also review for update)
- Communication (meeting with partners in June 2016) including public affairs / pocket statements

Economic Recovery

- Looking for Economic Recovery money
- Prospectus
 - press release for known activities (ATV tours), delivery services (snowmobiling), other ideas; processing fee (no hunting / no additional river use)
 - Advertising / link
 - National Forest (not only local forest)
 - Everyone competes equally
 - Preference is not given to those who already hold permits
 - Categorical Exclusion possible work

Multi-disciplinary

- Bridging the Gap / Fall / Summit – Mountain Studies Institute / FS / RWEACT / other partners
Michael Blakeman / FS specialists coming (conference / tour) – Kirby spoke / BAER team
Possible Topic – Climate change focus / science that surrounds / affect management
- Forest Plan Revision process
Agnew::Beck Consulting (RWEACT involved with the presenting of invoices)
RWEACT will attend / provide comments (need comments by June 10th)
If we want to comment as an organization, a letter would be valuable
Specific to RWEACT stated mission & goals; commenting only on the inventory

Hydrology

- Rain gauge / stream gauge up from Little Squaw has been removed from the wilderness
- Special Use Permit / Zeke Ward will be signing it (couple of weeks)
- Travis Smith will look at with Steve Belz / Rio Grande Reservoir watershed
- Most of the gauges from 2013 will stay where they are
- Texas Creek one will be packed out and relocated up above Rio Grande Reservoir
- Pole Creek area has landslide & bowl watershed
- Little Squaw Resort – could reprogram to work off one rain gauge / stream gauge (at the camp and the one three miles up)
- Riverhill Campground will be open this year

- Notifications: call/text Michael Blakeman and Riverhill hard-phone line for campground hosts
- Host will be provided with information about what watch / warning / advisory means / actions

Natural Resources

- Test Plot Monitoring (monitoring will begin again within the month)
- Water Quality Study (9 probes that sample seven characteristics); School of Mines working on
- Boreal Toad Project (FS / CPW / RWEACT) – construction project
- Upper Rio Grande Watershed Assessment (review of scope)
 - \$100,000 RWEACT
 - \$ 67,000 Roundtable
 - Smaller group of Forest Service / Willow Creek Reclamation / Trout Unlimited / RWEACT has been meeting and will oversee
 - Kevin Terry said that the assessment from a fisheries perspective – put all the information everywhere / allow TU to plan and build into a larger plan and why we are approaching certain projects first
- Haypress Dam – evaluated by experts determined to be stable; replaced some gates; water was sitting in Rio Grande / replaced; treatment was 100% from Roaring Fork - new population

New project discussion

RAC – opportunity for funding (other counties have to approve – maybe Box Canyon)

Task Order #6 remainder set-aside for Natural Resources Committee (\$19,000 or so)

Additional new proposed Task Orders can be presented to the RWEACT board

Economic Recovery funds being sought

- Boat ramps (making low cost but built to last) for ingress / egress points along the river
 - Prioritized list:
 - 1) Palisades (new parking, Load & Launch, picnic tables)
 - 2) Rio Grande Campground
 - 3) Wagon Wheel (if survey done)
 - 4) Box Canyon
 - Additional ones Marshall Park – seems to be hardened; some work could be done to improve ease of access; Include Collier with these discussions
 - Single panel kiosks – need signs Stewardship / ethics of using boat ramps / be aware of public property / search & rescue information (make sure vessel is identified)
- Bathrooms – Ute Creek and Hanson's Mill/Wheeler (double vote is approximately \$36,000-\$40,000)
- Signage (Move Up Not Out) – more of those for our campgrounds
- Interpretive signs – West Fork Complex fire / logging related (spruce fir ecology); Workman Creek / toad projects (Fern Creek)
- Travel Management Portal Kiosks
- Paving or graveling in more permanent way the winter parking lot at Lobo Overlook
- Mountain biking – mapping / trailheads / markers (need volunteers to use MTB app)
- Timber stand improvement projects for forest health (campgrounds should be in good shape, possible WUI areas?) Possible hydroaxe projects summer 2017
- 30-Mile Resort appropriate for funds?
- Below Rio Oxbox two acres received a possibility for boat dock/ramp?

Highest priority determined for boat ramps – budget to be provided, original design, 404 permits, Trout Unlimited can help with original design costs, construction management help provided, FS / County could help with equipment, in conjunction with Boreal Toad project may reduce mobilization costs (leverage funds).

Discussion about possible projects for Task Order #9 (bathrooms), cost-share, OHV grants; check appropriateness of match with CWCB / State Trails, water quality.

Discussion about cutthroat population projects (Hope Creek, Kitty Creek) that would include measuring discharge this fall. Kevin will work further to develop this project.

Next meeting: July 7th at 10 a.m. at the Divide Ranger District, Del Norte, Colorado

RWEACT / FS Meeting Summary

July 7, 2016

Present: Heather Dutton, Emma Regier, Zeke Ward, Kristie Borchers (phone), Steve Belz (phone), Dale Gomez

Emergency Managers – Zeke Ward provided an overview of the Alpine Gulch project versus a Hinsdale County emergency backup generator; review of the May 17th tabletop exercise and Zeke Ward thanked the Forest Service for the simulation; Borchers will follow up with Linda Smith and Terry Wetherill about the updating of the Upper Rio Grande Early Warning and Notification plan; Martha Williamson asked that we make sure the local Forest Service office is notified early in the plan; brief discussion about the Task Order #8 line items for emergency managers (\$11,000 budgeted for drone but will have two cameras); Zeke provided overall concept of challenges at Hill 71.

Economic Recovery / Communication – Martha Williamson provided an update on the Prospectus were due on July 1st; received seven or eight proposals; the Divide Ranger District will be pulling together a panel in the next several weeks; Zeke indicated that we will be updating the website; the group should have received a Save the Date flyer for the August 4th Biomass Utilization Workshop (the Beck Group / FS / Upper Rio Grande EDG); Bridging the Gap 2.0 is being planned for September (with Mountain Studies Institute and other partners); brief update with Forest Plan Revision (ongoing) with Agnew::Beck Consulting. Martha Williamson mentioned Gila National Forest fire boards following a large fire there in 2013; Martha will send photographs on to the group.

Hydrology – Steve Belz provided an update that a rain gauge / stream gauge is installed at Sky High Bridge (he let Michael Blakeman know; this is on private property); needed a longer STI cable so Steve Belz will be fixing this is about a week to make this operation live; we still need to find a location for the upper Rio Grande; next week, Greg Pierson from Freemon's Ranch and Steve Belz will be removing the Texas Creek location so this wilderness-placed one will be relocated out of the wilderness.

Natural Resources – Emma Regier provided an update on the Test Plots; it has grown up so much that additional marking with flagging was required; brief discussion about comparisons; August annually is the benchmark; Dale Gomez asked about a report; Emma said that an interim report is available; discussion about timing for the ongoing of the Test Plot monitoring (will probably be going to annual monitoring from monthly); Zeke asked about data comparison. Heather Dutton provided an update on the Water Quality Study and Ashley Rust who will be presenting results at the Roundtable in August. Dale Gomez spoke about the boreal toad project. An agreement is in the works with the Restoration Foundation; a probable contractor (Mike McClure) and Dale met at the site yesterday about construction costs; hoping to break ground late July / August; Dale will work with Heather on a written proposal; we anticipate two sites with two each for a total of four ponds. Emma Regier is working on putting together the RFP for the Assessment piece (will be available soon); will also figure out the additional subcontracts (like with Trout Unlimited; Willow Creek, etc); after RFP is completed, will convene another Advisory Committee meeting.

The prioritized list for remaining 2016 field season funds in the Natural Resources was discussed at the May meeting. Kevin Terry has worked with Chris Pitcher to determine projects. Based on our budget, we may be able to install two boat ramps. Martha discussed the NEPA process which only still requires the archaeologist's approval so an August time frame may work; Heather Dutton will let Kevin Terry know to contact Martha for her staff.

Heather Dutton provided a brief update on the Cutthroat Trout – that Haypress is being refilled; Dale Gomez said that Roaring Fork had been treated last year and shocking this month found non-native so treatment will occur again this year. It is not unusual to have to treat twice. Further discussion will occur through the fall for Hope Creek / Kitty Creek project as it relates to cutthroat populations for a future Task Order and as it relates to the Assessment.

Martha Williamson reiterated the need for bathroom replacements. Heather Dutton mentioned the possibility for DOLA (Del Norte received riverfront grant); Borchers will forward the OHV grants and Scenic Byway grants. These run \$36,000 to \$40,000 per facility; the Counties could help with overall pushing of the projects through; discussion about modifications to reduce costs including transportation costs; Martha will send Zeke information about specifications.

Wildfire Risk Reduction grant are coming out for the fifth round which funds fuels treatment, capacity building for watershed health organizations, and equipment such as chippers; Heather Dutton spoke with Adam Moore about partnering with Ptarmigan Meadows; Adam Moore suggested that RWEACT look into it for a capacity building or equipment. Heather Dutton will forward to Borchers. Due August 8th with a \$1 million available in sources.

Heather asked about biochar studies and Zeke and Heather will talk further.

Zeke provided an update of the one-day Water Workshop he attended in Gunnison; he also met with Rio de la Vista about bringing expertise in with projects, perhaps the Upper Wright's Ranch Looking for smaller projects that require little permitting, lower cost, and demonstration opportunities. Zeke did a presentation to Chama group; doing a presentation to the Upper Rio Grande Economic Development group; attending upcoming Roundtable meeting; going to La Jara, New Mexico, meeting tomorrow; and presenting an update to the SLV County Commissioners on July 25th, as well as specifically to Costilla Board of County Commissioners. The Upper Rio Grande and Saguache RACs merged which means that the membership begins over; brief discussion about possible RAC projects. Discussion about funding opportunities for bear boxes for campers in USDA Forest Service campgrounds.

Next meeting: To Be Determined around availability of the Assessment RFP (Emma Regier, lead)

The “additional information” attached to the nonprofit corporation’s Articles of Incorporation is amended to read as follows:

**RIO GRANDE WATERSHED EMERGENCY ACTION TEAM,
a Colorado nonprofit corporation**

This corporation is being formed for the purposes aligned with its mission statement. The mission of this corporation is “to promote partnerships and actions that provide for public safety and resiliency of communities and watersheds of the Rio Grande Basin of Colorado.” This corporation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational, and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations described under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

**Bylaws of
Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team
(dba, RWEACT & RWEACT-WIn)**

**Article I
Offices**

Section 1. Principal Office

The principal address of the Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team (referred to herein as the “corporation”) is located at **3528 State Highway 114, Gunnison, Colorado 81230, P.O. Box 721, Lake City, CO 81235**

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Section 2. Change of Address

The designation of the address, county or state of the corporation’s principal office may be changed by amendment to the corporation’s Articles of Incorporation, or as otherwise provided by the Colorado Secretary of State.

The Board of Directors may change the principal office within the named county by noting the changed address and effective date below, and such changes of address shall not be deemed, nor require, an amendment to these Bylaws.

Section 3. Other Offices

The corporation may have offices at other places, within or without its state of incorporation, where it is qualified to do business, as its business and activities may require, and as the Board of Directors may designate.

**Article II
Nonprofit Purposes**

Section 1. IRS Section 501(c)3 Purposes

This corporation is organized exclusively for one or more of the purposes as specified in Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code and in the Articles of Incorporation as filed with the Colorado Secretary of State.

Section 2. Specific Objectives and Purposes

The Mission of the corporation is *“to promote partnerships and actions that provide for public safety and resiliency of communities and watersheds of the Rio Grande Basin in Colorado”*

The initial, enabling funding for the corporation came with Governor’s Executive Orders 017-2013 and 022-2013 as a result of the West Fork Complex Fire, which burned nearly 90,000 acres of the Rio Grande National Forest. A formal “state of emergency” was declared in the counties of Hinsdale, Mineral, and Rio Grande due to the massive fire. Therefore, a primary goal of the corporation was and is to provide for public safety and the immediate protection of watersheds through collaborative, public/private partnerships and processes, which provide both short and long term public benefits to the Rio Grande Basin and the region.

The objectives of the corporation are:

1. To continue to provide protection of public safety and critical infrastructure within the funding guidelines provided by its fiscal agents, Hinsdale County and Rio Grande County, as well as those provided by the Colorado Water Conservation Board and the Office of Emergency Management, respectively, for the dispersal of state funds authorized under Colorado Governor's Executive Orders 022-2013 and 017-2013.
2. To solicit funds and grants that facilitate a broad spectrum of conservation stewardship efforts on public and private lands throughout the Rio Grande Watershed in Colorado.

Article III Organization

Section 1. Affiliated Entities

The corporation will be made up of stakeholders that support the mission and objectives and purposes as outlined in Article 2, Section 2 above. The corporation's Board of Directors will encourage wide representation and participation in the corporation's meetings and activities. The corporation is a non-membership based organization.

Section 2. Board of Directors and Executive Committee

It is the intent of the corporation's Board of Directors to establish a Rio Grande Basin-wide representation of a voting Board made up of 9 to 12 voting members representing the stakeholders listed below. REMOVE: and a non-voting, advisory Executive Committee. REMOVE: This will be accomplished by appointment of the 9 "voting" Board members and appointment of the 15 "non-voting" Executive Committee members. Initially, the existing Board of the corporation will appoint a new, 9 member Board of Directors and the new 9 member Board will appoint the members of the Executive Committee.

The Board shall consist of one director each from the following stakeholders for 9 to 12 members:

1. Hinsdale County Commissioner or Hinsdale County BOCC Appointed Representative
2. Mineral County Commissioner or Mineral County BOCC Appointed Representative
3. Rio Grande County Commissioner or Rio Grande BOCC Appointed Representative
4. Conejos County Commissioner or Conejos County BOCC Appointed Representative
5. Alamosa County Commissioner or Alamosa County BOCC Appointed Representative
6. Costilla County Commissioner or Costilla County BOCC Appointed Representative
7. Saguache County Commissioner or Saguache County BOCC Appointed Representative
- 5-8. Rio Grande CWCB Director
- 6-9. Environmental Representative
- 7-10. Water User/Agriculture Representative

- ~~8.11.~~ Local Business Representative (Wood Products)
~~9.12.~~ Recreation/tourism Representative

Members of the Board of Directors (or their alternates) who are unable to attend a meeting in person may vote by telephone (by attending the meeting remotely), or e-mail through an established process identified in the Procedures. Directors must contact the Secretary or such person as the Secretary designates (designee), at least one day prior to a scheduled meeting, to make arrangements to use alternate voting privileges. The Secretary, or designee, will provide forms, as necessary, to enable members to vote through alternative means.

The Board of Directors votes to approve new Board members.

When possible and available, remote attendance by teleconference to a Board Meeting constitutes attendance.

The Executive Director for the corporation will work directly for the Board of Directors.

~~ADD Best practices will be utilize for inclusiveness with representatives from local nonprofit organizations, regional, state and federal public land management agencies and partners in participation with the five standing committees listed below and in project work. Whenever possible, all projects will be collaborative and in close partnership with regional collaborators.~~
~~REMOVE The Executive Committee shall serve an Advisory function to the Board and shall be comprised of the following 15, non-voting members:~~

1. USFS-Rio Grande National Forest
2. Colorado State Forest Service
3. State Office of Emergency Management
4. Rio Grande Water Conservation District
5. SLV Rural Electric
6. SLV Ecosystem council
7. SLV Development Resources Group
8. Co RG Headwaters Restoration Project
9. NRCS
10. DWR
11. CPW
12. TU
13. DOLA
14. County Emergency Management
15. Watershed Hydrologist

~~REMOVE The Executive Committee and Executive Director will serve as the search committee to identify any future potential directors.~~

~~REMOVE Federal and state agencies may fill seats on the Executive Committee in an ex-officio advisory capacity (non-voting) only.~~

ADD In addition to the Board of Directors for leadership, RWEACT will have Standing Committees including Natural Resources which will include the Hydrology function, Emergency Managers, Economic Recovery, and Communications. All RWEACT Committee leaders from the these Standing Committees will serves Hydrology, Natural Resources, Forestry, Emergency Management, Economic Development and Communications Committees will serve as "staff" and in an advisory capacity to the Executive Director.

Section 3. Officers of the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors will elect officers from among themselves. Officers of the Board will include Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer or Secretary/Treasurer.

Term: Officers shall serve for a term of two years.

Officer terms shall be staggered so that the entire slate of officers does not turn over in any given year. To help provide continuity, the Vice-Chair may serve one term as Vice-Chair, and may subsequently serve as Chair for the next term. Officers shall be nominated by Board members during the last official business meeting of each even year, and confirmed by a majority vote of the Board of Directors. Elections will then take place during the first official meeting of each calendar year.

Each officer of the Board shall serve until his or her successor is elected. Officers may resign before completion of their term, by providing sixty (60) days written notice to the Secretary or designee.

The Executive Committee officers will include Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer or Secretary/Treasurer and a Secretary.

The Board of Directors retains all powers and duties identified.

Section 4. Termination of Board Participation

Any Board member, or entity with a representative on the Board of Directors, may terminate participation at any time, by giving sixty (60) days written notice of termination to the Board of Directors.

The Board may take action against any Board member who regularly fails to attend meetings and has three unexcused absences in a year, or who fails to participate in necessary activities of the Board, up to and including removal from the Board.

Directors are expected to operate according to best practices in ethics and professionalism and as further stated in Procedures.

Section 7. Membership Fee

The corporation is a non-membership organization.

Section 8. Committees

In addition to the Standing Committees, Committees and subcommittees may be formed as needed to perform tasks identified by the Board of Directors. Each committee shall serve at the pleasure of the Board, and may be longstanding, or short-term. Committees work under the direction of the Executive Director and all meeting notes, meeting notices, agendas, project updates, and any outcomes of any interactions or meetings shall be reviewed by the Executive Director or an assigned staff member. Meetings and actions of all committees shall be governed by all provisions of these Bylaws concerning meetings of the Board of Directors, with such changes as are necessary to substitute the committee and its members for the Board of Directors and its members, except that the time for regular and special meetings of committees may be fixed by resolution by the Board of Directors or by the committee.

Section 9. Decision Making

The corporation shall operate using the established and accepted Robert's Rules of Order.

It is the intent of the Board of Directors to achieve consensus on all action items and all reasonable efforts will be made to attain consensus. In the event that consensus is not achieved, and a quorum vote is taken (see Section 16, below), 50%+1 will carry the vote.

Section 10. Compensation

No compensation will be authorized or paid to the Board of Directors. Reimbursement for business-related expenses (such as travel to a meeting deemed to be for the benefit of the corporation) may be made in accordance with a Travel/Miscellaneous Expense policy as approved by the Board.

Section 11. Board Policies

The corporation will establish formal Policies under which it will conduct official business. These Board Policies will include but not be limited to: 1) Conflict of Interest Policy; 2) Non-Discrimination Policy; 3) Eligible Employees Policy; 4) Financial/Procurement Policy, Travel/Miscellaneous Expense Reimbursement Policy, Reporting Policy; 5) Compensation Policy; 6) Drug-Free Workplace Policy. All members of the Board of Directors, Executive Committee, staff, and key volunteers or consultants shall review these Board Policies and shall always conduct business in accordance with these Policies.

Section 12. Powers

Subject to the provisions of the laws of this state, and any limitations in the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws, the activities and affairs of this corporation shall be conducted and all corporate powers shall be exercised by or under the direction of the Board of Directors.

Section 13. Duties

The Board of Directors will have primary oversight for setting the strategic course of the corporation and for the review and approval of major programs and plans. Further, the Board of Directors will review and approve ALL policies submitted by the Executive Director or an established committee with the approval of the Executive Director (including but not limited to procurement, financial, conflict of interest, personnel, safety, and/or operational policies).

Other duties include, but are not limited to:

- a.) Perform any and all duties imposed on them collectively or individually by law, by the Articles of Incorporation, or by these Bylaws.
- b.) Appoint and remove, employ and discharge, and except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, prescribe the duties and fix compensation, if any, of all officers, agents, and the Executive Director of the corporation.
- c.) The Executive Director, with approval from the Board of Directors, has the authority to supervise, hire and fire employees (staff) as deemed necessary to meet the organizational commitments and responsibilities under grants, agreements, and other funding sources, and to fulfill its mission.
- d.) Supervise the Executive Director of the corporation to assure that their duties are performed properly.

Section 14. Meeting Times

The Board of Directors shall meet at such times and places as required by these Bylaws and to adequately fulfill the responsibilities as defined below:

- a.) Provide leadership to guide and implement the Mission Statement and identified goals of the corporation.
- b.) Help to integrate stakeholders' interests in public safety and the health of watersheds and the environment into programs and projects.
- c.) Oversee business affairs of the corporation.
- d.) Help develop funding sources, grant applications, and oversee all reporting.
- e.) Other responsibilities as identified by the Board of Directors.

Section 15. Place of Meetings

Regular meetings shall be held at rotating places of business throughout the Rio Grande Basin in order to accommodate the large geographical area covered by the interests of the members, or at such other places as may be designated from time to time by resolution of the Board of Directors. The Board may opt to schedule special meetings via telephone conference call or web-based electronic meeting systems.

Section 16. Meetings

The corporation shall operate using the established and accepted Robert's Rules of Order. The following meeting rules shall also apply:

- a.) Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held at least quarterly with monthly meetings held as business requires. These meetings may be in person or via telephone conference call.
- b.) Written notice of meetings shall be given to each member, and others as appropriate, at least fourteen days before all regularly scheduled meetings.
- c.) Special meetings may be called by any member of the Board of Directors upon receipt of a written request submitted to the Secretary or designee, at least three days before said meeting is scheduled to be held. The Secretary shall inform the other members of the Board at least 24 hours before said special meeting.
- d.) Fifty-one percent of the members must be present to constitute a quorum. No vote may be taken in the absence of a quorum.

- e.) Special meetings held via telephone conference call must address a specific issue, or issues, which cannot wait until a regular meeting.

Section 17. Conduct of Meetings

Meetings of the Board of Directors shall be presided over by the Chair. If no such person has been designated or in his or her absence, the Vice-Chair shall preside. In the absence of both the Chair and the Vice-Chair, then a temporary, “acting” Chair shall be chosen by a majority of those present at the meeting.

The Board shall elect a Secretary. The Secretary shall oversee the taking and preservation of the minutes of all meetings of the Board, shall assure that the records of the corporation are responsibly maintained and safeguarded, shall attest to all certified copies of official records, shall assure that documents of the corporation as may be required by law are appropriately filed, and shall perform such other duties as prescribed by the Board of Directors or by law.

If the Secretary is temporarily unavailable to fulfill his or her duties, the Board may appoint another qualified person to perform secretarial functions until the Secretary becomes available once again. Each committee shall appoint a person to perform secretarial functions for their committee, and said person shall file a copy of all documentation regarding committee work with the Secretary.

Section 18. Vacancies

Vacancies on the Board of Directors shall exist:

- 1.) Upon the death, resignation, or removal of any director, or
- 2.) Whenever the number of authorized directors is increased by a majority vote of the

Board.

Any director may resign by providing written notice to the Chair, the Secretary, or the Board of Directors. No director may resign if the Board would then be left without sufficient directors to carry out its affairs, except upon notice to the Office of the Attorney General or other appropriate agency.

Directors may be removed from office, with or without cause, as permitted by these Bylaws and laws of this State.

Section 19. Non-liability of Directors

The Directors shall not be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or other obligations of the corporation, except as provided for by the laws of this State. **ADD: Directors & Officers Liability Policy will be maintained at all times by the Corporation.**

Section 20. Indemnification

The Directors of the corporation shall be indemnified by the corporation to the fullest extent permissible under the laws of this State.

Section 21. Insurance of Corporate Officers

Except as otherwise noted under the provision of law, the Board of Directors shall authorize the purchase and maintenance of insurance on behalf of any agent of the corporation (including a director, officer, employee, or other agent) against liability asserted against, and incurred by the agent in such capacity and arising out of the agent's status as such, whether or not the corporation would have the power to indemnify the agent against such liability under the Articles of Incorporation, these Bylaws, or the provision of law.

Article IV

Execution of Instruments, Deposits and Funds

Section 1. Execution of Instruments

The Board of Directors, except as otherwise provided in these Bylaws, may by resolution, authorize the Executive Director to enter into contracts, and execute and deliver instruments in the name of the corporation, and on behalf of the corporation, and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

Section 2. Checks and Notes

Except as otherwise specifically determined by resolution of the Board of Directors, or as otherwise required by law, checks, drafts, promissory notes, orders for payment of money, and other evidence of indebtedness of the corporation shall be signed by the Treasurer and countersigned by the Chair. The Treasurer and Chair may designate the Executive Director or a member of the Executive Committee as alternate signatories, as they deem necessary for specific purposes.

Section 3. Deposits

All funds of the corporation shall be deposited to the credit of the corporation in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the Board may select.

Section 4. Gifts

The Board may accept, on behalf of the corporation any contribution, gift, bequest, or devise for the nonprofit purposes of this corporation, as long as said contribution, gift or bequest does not encumber, compromise or unduly obligate the corporation in acceptance thereof.

Section 5. Financial Policies

The Board shall adopt by resolution written Financial Policies that supersede any or all sections of this Article, without having to revise these Bylaws. An annual budget will be prepared by the Staff and presented to the Board of Directors for adoption.

Article V

Corporate Records, Reports and Seal

Section 1. Maintenance of Corporate Records

The corporation shall keep at its principal office or at such place as the Secretary designates:

- a.) Minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors, of committees, and of all members, indicating the time and place such meeting was held, whether a regular meeting or

special meeting, how called, notice given, and names of those present and the proceedings thereof.

- b.) Adequate and correct books and record of accounts, including accounts of its properties and business transactions, and accounts of its assets, liabilities, receipts disbursements, gains and losses.
- c.) A record of its partners, if any, indicating their names, addresses, and if applicable, class of partnership.
- d.) A copy of the corporation's Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, and all Policies as amended to date, which shall be open to inspection by the Board members at all reasonable times during office hours.

Section 2. Corporate Seal

The Board will retain the RWEACT logo as its corporate seal for its use and may alter the corporate seal. The Secretary or Secretary's designee shall keep such seal and use the corporate seal on all correspondence when possible. Failure to affix the seal to corporate instruments, however, shall not affect the validity of such instrument.

Section 3. Inspection Rights

Every Board Director shall have the absolute right, at any reasonable time, to inspect and copy all books, records, and documents of every kind, and to inspect the physical properties of the corporation.

Each and every partner member, including special classes, and members of the general public, shall have the following rights, for a purpose reasonably related to such person's interests:

- a.) To inspect and obtain copies of records of all voting Directors' names and addresses, and voting rights, at such reasonable times upon written demand to the Secretary.
- b.) To inspect and obtain copies of, at any reasonable time, records of minutes from public meetings, upon written demand to the Secretary.

The Board may establish reasonable fees to charge for copying requested records. Any inspection under these provisions may be made by the person, an agent or attorney, for the person making the request.

Section 4. Periodic Report

The Board, or any agent thereof, shall cause any annual or periodic report required under law to be prepared and delivered to an office of this State or to the members, if any, of this corporation, to be so prepared and delivered within the time limits set by law.

Article VI IRS 501(c)(3) Tax Exempt Provisions

Section 1. Limitation on Activities

No substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation (except as otherwise provided for by Section 501 (h) of the Internal Revenue Code), and this corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provision of these Bylaws, the corporation shall not carry on any activities not permitted to be carried on by:

- a) A corporation exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or
- b) A corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Section 2. Prohibition Against Private Inurement

No part of the net earnings of this corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, Directors, officers, or other private persons, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for service rendered by employees and agents, and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes of the corporation.

Section 3. Dissolution of Organization and Distribution of Assets

- a) A two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors shall be required to dissolve the corporation.
- b) Upon dissolution of the corporation, any assets remaining after payment of or provision for its debts and liabilities shall, consistent with the purposes of the organization, be paid over to a 501(c)(3) corporation or local government for a public purpose. Such distribution shall be made in accordance with all applicable provisions of the laws of the State of Colorado.
- c) No part of the net assets or net earnings of the corporation shall inure to the benefit of or be paid or distributed to an officer, Director, member, employee, or donor of the organization, except that the corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes of this corporation.

Article VII Amendment of Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended by a majority (50%+1) vote of the Board of Directors at any regular meeting, or any special meeting of the Board, provided that the amendment has been submitted in writing to the Board at the previous meeting and included in the minutes of that meeting.

Article 8 Construction and Terms

If there is any conflict between the provisions of these Bylaws and the Articles of Incorporation, the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation shall govern.

Should any of the provisions or portions of these Bylaws be held unenforceable or invalid for any reason, the remaining provisions and portions of the Bylaws shall be unaffected by such holding.

All references in the Bylaws to the Articles of Incorporation shall be to the Articles of Incorporation and Articles of Amendments to the Articles of Incorporation, if any, of the

corporation, as filed with the Secretary of State and used to establish the legal existence of the corporation.

All references in these Bylaws to a section, or sections, of the Internal Revenue Code shall be to such sections of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 as amended, or to corresponding provisions of future Federal tax codes.

Article IX Non-Discrimination

No person shall be denied engagement or employment in the corporation, or be denied admission to or participation in any event promoted or sponsored in whole or in part by the corporation, solely because of his/her sex, race, religion, or ethnic heritage.

Bylaws Addition
November 9, 2015

The original enabling legislation from the Governor's Order 17 and 22 will remain under contract with the local government / fiscal agent of Rio Grande and Hinsdale counties. RWEACT will continue to partner with these entities.

ADD: This version of the Bylaws supersedes the August 3, 2015, version and the November 9, 2015, addition.

Adoption of Bylaws

These Bylaws may be adopted by electronic mail.

The foregoing Bylaws of Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Action Coordination Team were approved ~~via email correspondence~~ as of the 3rd day of August, 2016~~5~~, by the Board of Directors and are hereby certified as being the true and accurate Bylaws adopted on said date.

Travis Smith, Board Member

Karla Shriver, Board Member

Ramona Weber, Board Member

Cindy Dozier, Board Member

On June 7th, 2016, the Department of Natural Resources announced the availability of another \$1 million for wildfire risk reduction projects, through the Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program (WRRG).

Two types of projects will be considered through this grant program:

Fuels treatment projects located in Colorado that reduce the risk of damage to property, infrastructure, water supplies, and other high-valued assets as a result of wildfire and/or limit the likelihood of wildfires spreading into populated areas.

Projects that address unmet needs for capacity at the local level. These grants are designed to provide communities with equipment that will enable them to treat hazardous fuels on state and private lands going forward.

For more information please see the Request for Applications and accompanying documents. The timeline for this grant cycle is as follows:

RFA release – June 7th, 2016

Application deadline – August 8th, 2016, 11:59 pm

Anticipated award date – September 19th, 2016

Project completion deadline – May 31st, 2018

The Wildfire Risk Reduction Grant Program (WRRG), created under Senate Bill 13- 269, focuses on projects that reduce the risk for damage to property, infrastructure and water supplies, and those that limit the likelihood of wildfires spreading into populated areas. Funds are directed to non-federal lands within Colorado. Through four grant cycles, the WRRG Program has now awarded nearly \$10.8 million in grants to 116 projects across 27 counties throughout the state.

In the 2016 legislative session, the Colorado General Assembly passed Senate Bill 16-003, which authorized an additional \$1 million for the WRRG Program.

Save the Date!!! August 4, 2016

Rio Grande Basin Wood Utilization Workshop

Since 2005, eighty-five percent of the spruce forests in the Rio Grande Basin have been infested with spruce beetles. Today, an estimated 500,000 acres of standing dead trees create a wildfire and travel corridor safety hazard. Forest and watershed health could be improved by removing these dead trees and thinning non-spruce stands.

However, removal and thinning are costly activities. Unless nearby businesses can buy the harvested material and process it into a saleable product, mitigating hazards through salvage, thinning, and restoration activities are limited by high removal and thinning costs.

Currently, only a few businesses in the region utilize trees. Therefore, a key objective of this workshop is to foster development of wood utilizing businesses in the area. The agenda is still a work in progress, but it will be aimed at meeting the preceding objective and is expected to include:

- An overview of the current status of the region's forests presented by the U.S. Forest Service
- A review of the various mechanisms by which the U.S. Forest Service and other public agencies can provide forest products based businesses with the raw material needed (i.e., timber sales contracts, stewardship contracts, permits, etc.)
- Two to four case studies of small diameter wood utilization success stories, including key information about business planning for capital expenses, operating expenses, raw material requirements, product sales values, management and labor needs, etc. Note that the case studies presented will be selected based on their applicability to the forests and conditions of the Rio Grande Basin
- A panel of existing forest products based businesses in the region will offer a description of their experiences
- Presentations from local, state, and national economic development groups containing information about how entrepreneurs can obtain funding to begin planning and developing forest products based businesses in the region

Where & When:

The workshop will be held on August 4, 2016 in the meeting room of the new Rio Grande Water Conservation District Building: 8805 Independence Way, Alamosa, CO 81101. Registration is \$10 per person, with lunch, snacks, and beverages being provided. Please call Bonnie Asplin at 719-657-2827 to register. This will be an all day event—schedule details will be provided as they are developed.

Who:

The event is open to the public—so anyone with an interest in forest and watershed health, forest restoration, forest products utilization, and business and economic development is welcome to attend.

Sponsored by:



Upper Rio Grande
Economic Development



SAN LUIS VALLEY
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS



SAN LUIS VALLEY
DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES GROUP

Save the Date



Presentations & BBQ September 9, 4 to 8pm
Forest Management Tour September 10, 9am to 3pm

Bridging the Divide II Managing Forests into the Future At Wolf Creek Ski Area

Join Representatives of: The Rio Grande Watershed Emergency Coordination Action Team (RWEACT-Win), San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership, Southwest Firewise, Southern Rockies Fire Science Network, and the Rio Grande and San Juan National Forests



Eat, Prepare, & Discuss:

- How will our forests change?
- What do changing forests mean for water?
- How can our communities prepare for the future?



Rio Grande Watershed
Emergency Action Coordination Team



For More Information Contact

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