

Meeting Minutes
Gunnison Basin Selenium Task Force
Steering/Technical Committees
June 17, 2004 10am to 3pm

Attendees: Sonja R. Chavez de Baca (Fac. /Coord. GBSTF), Rick Isom (Painted Sky RC & D), Paul von Guerard (USGS), Mike Baker (USBOR), Aung Hla (CSU Extension), Dave Dearstyne (NRCS), Robert Johnson (Town of Paonia), Fred Fisher (Shavano-NRCD), Randy See (WCC), Barb Osmundson (FWS), and Jan McCracken (Delta County).

I. Technical Committee Meeting

- A. Review/Discussion of RFIP for the Assessment and Watershed Protection Program Grant (AWPP) (Paul von Geurard):** Paul gave a quick overview of the Draft RFIP and the work plan description for the EPA AWPP Grant. Questions and discussion with the Technical Group focused on how we could get data to support predictions of the effects of land use change on selenium loading. Paul noted that Dan Champion who has done water budgets and deep percolation studies in the Grand Valley over the past 30 years was an excellent resource to work with. These areas which are now developed will be identified as one of the study sites for developing new water budgets and deep percolation data. Paul will work with Fred Miller to see if we couldn't get Dan to come back to Montrose or to see if we have deep percolation and water use data for the Gunnison Basin.

Other sources of water quality data were discussed. The Group asked if there were water quality data sets on selected streams where we could look at "before and after." There exists data for streams such as Lewis Wash for example, but it doesn't contain selenium data. Inferences regarding selenium concentrations can be made using selenium/salinity relationships. Montrose Arroyo was also noted as being a good place to start looking at the effects of changing land use since we have information for this area.

Aung Hla asked why the work plan focused on deep percolation. It was noted that deep percolation is one of the bigger issues in terms of Se sources as we have seen in the Montrose Arroyo area and there currently exists data for conditions for deep percolation. We are interested in: (1) what happens when you change water use? (2) What happens in regard to Se loading in newly developed areas? Is the effect positive or negative?

Sources of in-kind match were also discussed. Potential sources include the Colorado River Water Conservancy District, EQIP, USGS, NIWGP, and USBOR. Paul and Mike will be looking into all of the above.

The group discussed who within the scientific community might be interested in working on this study/issue. The Task Force would be looking for a graduate student(s) from either CU or CSU to work on this project.

- B. Review of Task Force Biography for the 2004 State of Colorado's Watershed Report (Sonja):** A rough draft of Task Force's biography for inclusion in the Colorado's Watersheds Report was presented to the Group. Sonja received input from the group on the status of projects in 2003/2004. The biography was submitted on June 29th. A copy will be distributed to the entire Task Force via email.

- C. Funding for Canal Lining (Sonja):** The Task Force briefly discussed selenium efforts being led by Tad Foster of Foster Law. This statewide effort to bring attention to selenium issues may be a source for funding in the future. Mr. Foster has been leading email and conference discussions on organizing a forum on selenium issues. The outline of the forum is emerging and it has been suggested that it “be general and address what the different basins are currently doing and what regulatory, political or other strategies are available before moving to the studies phase.” A two day forum is being proposed in late October, the 27th and 28th.

An additional source of funding may also be the Watershed Initiative Grant or what is now known as the Targeted Watersheds Grant. Sonja will work with Dan Beley (CDPHE) to get more information on this program and to determine if funding can be used for construction projects such as canal lining.

D. Public Outreach: Removed from Agenda

- E. Agenda for Joint Se Meeting and Tour:** A Draft Agenda for the Joint Meeting and Tour was discussed. It was decided that the tour would take place in the morning and the joint meeting would be held in the afternoon. The tour group would meet in Delta and move south toward Montrose. Paul and Mike will organize getting everyone into vans and getting a final count of participants. Fred has spoken to Randy Meaker and he is willing to be on his farm on July 8th. Marc Catlin will conduct the tour of Loutzenhizer Arroyo and will be available on the 8th. A presentation by NRCS of the Landowner’s Educational CD was also added to the agenda.

- F. Website Maintenance & Mailing Update (Sonja):** Sonja discussed the information she had received from the web host we have contracted with in the past. At the time of this meeting Sonja had not been able to make contact with our account manager and web designer (Erin Smith, Internet Inc, Montrose). Sonja was able to contact Sitehosting.com and found that the cost of hosting our website through was \$35.88/quarter. Fred Fisher offered to pay for our website hosting through the Plan Grant. Sonja asked the Task Force if they would like to consider having her take a web design so that coordinator could be responsible for website maintenance. There was positive response from the group. The issue will be discussed again at a later date.

Subsequent to this meeting Sonja was able to finally reach Ms. Smith. The information she obtained from Ms. Smith is as follows: Under Ms. Smith we are currently paying \$35/month for web-hosting (not \$35.88/quarter as sitehosting.com relayed to Sonja). The reason is Ms. Smith is a reseller for sitehosting.com and she has a mark-up. There are no additional services received by going through Internet Inc. and the group will have to pay \$35/hour for editing and \$45/hour for design through Internet Inc. Fred Fisher has agreed to pay for our web hosting until September of 2004 under Ms. Smith. Continued funding of the website hosting may occur through one or more of the following: (1) the Phytoremediation Grant (through 2004), (2) the Grand Valley & Gunnison Basin Selenium Task Forces, and/or (3) cost sharing with the Counties/Cities.

- G. Upcoming Watershed Seminars & Forums (Sonja):** Reminder to the Group that the NPS Forum and the Clean Water Action Conference will be occurring on September 9, 10, & 11th in Glenwood Springs. Sonja asked the Task Force if they would be supportive of her

attending. The general response from the group was that if it benefited the Task Force then I should consider attending.

II. Steering Committee (1pm to 3pm)

- A. **Update to Task Force/Steering Committee on the morning session (Sonja).**
- B. **Request by Grand Valley Group to move our meetings to Wednesday (Sonja):** Request approved by committee. All subsequent meetings will be held on the 3rd Wednesday of every month.
- C. **Request to formalize a Task Force “Working Group” (Sonja):** Sonja asked the Task Force if they would be supportive of having a “working group” to which the Coordinator could get immediate direction or responses to on questions she may have on a daily basis. The assistance she would be seeking would be in regard to day-to-day operations or would be of a nature that she didn’t think she needed to bother the entire group. The members attending were supportive. The following individuals are members who have been contacted by the Coordinator in the past and who will continue to assist her: Mike Baker, Dave Kanzer, Paul von Guerard, and Rick Isom. All other member attending said that they were available if they could help in any way.
- D. **Update from Grand Valley Group (M. Baker):** The Grand Valley Se Task Force continues to focus on tributary issues: What do you do re: se loading in the tributaries with major irrigation return flows? If they meet the standards at Whitewater (i.e. in lbs. removed) would we meet the standard at the state line? Characterization on tributaries will help the Grand Valley Group decide where to focus their remediation efforts. The Grand Valley group is also in the process of advertising and hiring a coordinator. The Grand Valley Group is also supportive of sharing in web-site maintenance costs. Further discussions regarding the website will take place at the Joint Meeting on July 8th.
- E. **Draft Agenda for Joint Steering Meeting on 7/8/04:** A draft meeting agenda was started by the Grand Valley Se Task Force for the July 8th joint meeting. Items C & D were removed for later discussion. Item B: “Identifying Joint Public Outreach Activities to Support our Wise Water Use Campaign” was identified as being of central importance. It was suggested that the Task Force should ask Greg Trainor of DRIP (Drought Response Information Program) of Grand Junction to speak to our Group about his experience developing DRIP and their goal of meeting a water conservation goal of twenty percent. Randy See volunteered to act as a liaison to the DRIP group and will invite Mr. Trainor to speak at our meeting on the 8th.

Further discussion occurred on who the existing water use leaders might be? Sonja/Mike/Paul will work together to try to create a list of Water Use Leaders and will focus on trying to create objectives for our wise water use outreach efforts with them.

Other topics added to the Joint Meeting Agenda include asking the Shavano Conservation District to present their Landowners Education CD and to further discuss sharing the existing selenium task force website.

- F. **Communications – Purpose/Goal of Maintaining the Website:** Task Force Members present felt that it was important to make a strong effort to maintain the existing website. The website was noted as being an important tool for:
 - 1. Transferability of information;

2. Repository;
3. Education; and
4. Outreach.

The Task Force also discussed other communication tools including the “Why Should You Care” brochure. The Task Force felt that we should move forward with using the document so that we can explain our group’s interest in wise water use. Mike will work on another draft and get it out for review.

- G. Update on AWPP – EPA Request for Initial Proposal:** Update to the entire Task Force on our morning discussion regarding proposal.
- H. Monitoring Needs:** Monitoring needs are an important item in the Gunnison Basin Selenium Task Force Action Plan. Needs include: (1) Long-term data management, (2) need to monitor remediation projects, and (3) concern over the need for funds to carry out the above. Further discussion will be held at the next meeting of the Technical Work Group.
- I. Request by Western Colorado Congress for Task Force to provide letter of support to the City of Delta re: Water Wise Landscape & Model Land Use documents developed by DOLA.** A group of citizens of the City of Delta expressed their support for our message regarding water efficiency. The citizens are starting a dialogue with the Delta City Council to develop BMPs and a draft ordinance for water use efficiency measures. Through Randy See, a request was made for the Gunnison Basin Selenium Task Force to draft a letter saying we encourage the use of BMPs (draft letter provided) and the adoption of the two DOLA documents. Mr. See felt that this letter would be a good opportunity to start interacting with city councils and elected officials. Dave Dearstyne and Jan McCracken expressed concern regarding the Task Force’s encouragement of the use of the DOLA documents without reviewing them and preferred that our group instead: (1) write a proclamation encouraging wise water use to reduce selenium loading and that it be hand delivered to the Boards/City Clerks, (2) have Aung Hla or others review the documents to comment on how applicable they may be to the Western Slope, and (3) see if Mr. Hla could use these documents in his BMP work.
- J. Agenda Items for 7/15/04 Meeting of the Technical Work Group:**
- Monitoring Needs
 - Soils Presentation by Dave Dearstyne
 - Public Outreach
 - Workshop Presentation Topics

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 pm.