

Gunnison Basin Selenium Task Force  
Meeting Minutes  
April 20, 2005

**I. Coordinator's Updates:**

- A. Congressional Briefing: Task Force recommended that we follow up the congressional briefing with a letter to the staffers with any selenium updates, what they can do to help us, make them aware of the selenium forum, and ask if they wouldn't mind if we sent them quarterly or biannual updates.
- B. Salton Sea: Write them letter, thank, and re-iterate our common needs, potential for them to provide political support for us through letters support for grants or salinity control projects, and emphasize ability to be proactive vs regulatory (TF does not support regulation of NP sources, contrary to our mission).
- C. Budget Status: A budget status report will be sent to the TF via email in May.
- D. CWA Dues: The Task Force felt that only one membership was necessary given the similarity in mission and the fact that the same coordinator was employed by both the Grand Valley and Gunnison Basin Groups. Mesa County graciously offered to pay the \$50 CWA dues for this year (Sept 2005/Sept 2006).
- E. Review Website Changes: members present felt that the set-up and home page were acceptable. Sonja will send out a copy to the rest of the Task Force via email for comments. If no comments are received, she will consider that to mean everyone is giving their "informed consent" to proceed.
- F. NRCS Follow Up: Follow up with a letter to NRCS (Mike will start a letter for me and I'll finish it) thanking them for coming to the joint TF meeting in March and here's ways in which we've identified for NRCS to help with Selenium.
- G. Review of 319 Info & Education Draft: Sonja needs to focus the proposal more on activities that change the culture of the way people think about water. We need to get more people, developers, elected officials, etc. focused on water conservation and wise water use. Sonja will continue to work on draft:

Other interesting notes:

- Section in licensing book for sprayers suggesting what types of grasses grow well where (Marc says that licensing book is really good). Sonja will get a copy from Marc.
  - labor savings
  - money savings
  - demo projects
  - applicable to our area
- Irrigation company (ask Marc) – irrigation specialist for this new irrigation pod that has huge water savings (developed in New Zealand). \$300-500/acre. Currently being used in small subdivisions where people can't irrigate at the same time. Allows people to irrigate at the same time for about half the cost. Will irrigate alfalfa and grass pastures, maybe beans, but not corn. Could have potential in our area. Sonja will get more info from Marc.
- Marc – everyone trying to figure out what to do with their yards especially after building a new house. We should focus on establishing a relationship with for example, Homebuilders Associations and the Colorado Home and Garden. It is also interesting to note that the Town of Montrose is requiring 10% green space for new commercial buildings. It would be easy to get Home Depot to demonstrate xeriscape. High traffic areas are a good place to demo xeriscape,

etc. vs going to a home owner who can't afford much and may not provide much visibility.

## II. State WQCD Monitoring

A. Dan Beley via conference call – State is working with the EPA to develop a more comprehensive monitoring program. The WQCD is emphasizing that we need to be working with 319 grant folks to do some monitoring of their projects. For example, the Task Forces has, in the past, mentioned the need for collecting data at the mouths of the tributaries where UVWUA has been lining or piping canals to see if we can quantify load reductions. One thing we might suggest to EPA is that we monitor in areas where we do remediation/demonstration projects or we may even suggest they help with site work. Dan's group meets tomorrow to make suggestions to monitoring group. Dan is looking for our feedback on developing a "wish list" of monitoring needs:

If we were to create a prioritized list what would it look like?

1. Piping laterals – we should ask Marc for phased work and then we can make suggestions based upon what they are doing.
  - Two laterals being done this fall: two drainages of Cedar Creek
  - Others would be Montrose Arroyo to see if maintaining reductions we saw at the end of that project.  
(Note: Dan isn't sure whether monitoring would be on a monthly, quarterly, or annual schedule, but he emphasized that at this point we shouldn't worry about it and that we can get to this detail if "Step B" moves forward.)
  - Leach Creek in the GV (Phil Bertram's system) where they are doing PAM. USGS has historic data. Current data would be very useful in determining what effect PAM has. This is also an area where there is significant land use change.

(Note: Paul emphasized to Dan that with any water quality work we need flow so that we can calculate loading).

- Celig canal Firestone liner would be a great opportunity to identify potential for determining effect of liners for reducing loading.

In all the above discussion, we may be talking about project monitoring or maybe basin-wide monitoring. The Division in 319 projects could step in as monitoring piece for more detailed type of monitoring work.

Sampling is one thing, but the analysis of the data will require looking at numbers and making sense of them.

The above mentioned work would be very helpful in characterizing the effects of projects, but long term monitoring in for example, Loutzenhizer, Cedar Creek, etc. would be extremely valuable. Quarterly data would be a critical minimum. Again, if we have to look at trends and loads it's critical to have flows.

Suggestions for Grand Valley monitoring:

- Adobe Creek (GV)
- Salt Creek (GV) or Loma
- Indian Wash
- Kana Creek
- Whitewater Creek

- B.** Mike briefly discussed the report on the tributaries in the Grand Valley with Dan. **Within that report it was mentioned that some projects** may not be “feasible”. This led the conversation to an update that Dan Beley wanted to give the group regarding the language of “feasibility.”

Dan mentioned that there was a meeting with EPA to talk about the status of Sand Creek selenium issues. Minutes drawn up and distributed said that the Division of Wildlife, FWS, etc. were “all supportive of ambient standards.” Many wrote in to say that that was NOT what was said.

EPA said they were “comfortable with considering ambient standards where feasible.” Dan wrote to EPA and said please define what EPA considers as “feasible”. For example, if there is no money then does that mean that a project is “not feasible?” Dan encouraging us to stay tuned because this could be a “fork in the road” for both Task Forces.

## LUNCH BREAK

### III. Grant Proposal Planning/Budget Strategies/Reviews

- A. Altria (\$20K):** Can complete some portion of the proposed study, can use as cash match for other grant applications, can use to support coordinator position.
- B. Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG):**
- Delta County (Bruce Bertram) noted that the County is interested in looking at water supply issues (municipal, agric) and if this can play into the CIG it would be helpful.
  - Dave started talking with Rob Molacek about data sources on water quality – this is where NRCS comes in. They have need and desire to get base maps for salinity, EQIP Projects, etc. Rob is going to take a first look at scoping this project (Obj – NRCS and EQIP side, Delta County & River District water supply and Land use, Parallel Projects.)
  - USGS is also looking at how changing irrigation practices are affecting Roberts Mesa & Colby Canyon. Delta County is also interested in retrospective water quality analysis. Paul feels that all these project are tying into a similar problem which is the “effect of land use change.” We need to make sure that we aren’t duplicating efforts so that tasks are complimentary

Dave noted that the current proposal addresses: Hydrography (spatial data like rivers, gages, county lines, canals, well data, etc.), soils data, irrigated parcels, and water use to look at how/where irrigated parcels intersect with high selenium soils data. Still need land use data. Delta County can give more detailed set of water use data.

Questions about whether Phasing CIG was important: Does it make sense to stay on the Grand Mesa Area in Delta County, since most issues are related to water use in the north.

Data base of spatial, quantity, and quality is most important to get in place. The CIG grant would address EQIP in Delta County regarding improvements/projects they’ve done (nothing is in a data base its all in paper format). Salinity Control folks may be willing to jump on board and provide some funding using parallel funds for Mesa County and Montrose County part.

NRCS is looking for temporary intern type folks to work this summer on siting wells, inputting data that’s currently in hard copy files, and getting it into GIS. We can use

this as a template to go the Salinity Control Forum for help for the remaining phases of the project.

Southwest Data Center can serve as home for the intern. It is important that we choose some who can manage and carry out this project.

Rob Molacek is coming up with a rough scope of work for the project.

Dave asking who can participate in phone conference call on Wedn? Paul can get Kirby up to date and ask him to participate. Bruce Bertram could also be available on Wedn morning. Dave's thinking 8am to 9am tentatively.

Task Force will ask Carl Zimmerman to be at our GV meeting in the afternoon to discuss the CIG proposal (Coordinator Note: Carl was not available to attend GV meeting).

**C. BMP Project Status/Planning**

Aung is leaving on the 30<sup>th</sup> of April (rather than the April 13<sup>th</sup> date we were given verbally). Aung has 24 days of leave, 12 of which apply to the BMP Grant. There is about \$16,850 left for personnel, \$19,000 for brochures, and \$6500 in demonstration projects. Total is \$35,800.

This issue is how we finish this project? Painted Sky would prefer to not go through CSU CE because of their standards to rehire. Painted Sky has the option as a non-profit to say that they aren't going to go through CSU CE and would prefer to contract out for this project. It was suggested that someone like "Dick Bartholomeau" would be an excellent private contractor to provide technical background needed to write the brochures and guidance documents (Rick has contacted Dick and he has expressed an interest). As another option, it was also noted that the Task Force should also ask Curtis Swift if he has a master gardener or other person in mind that might be capable, willing, etc. to complete the BMP technical guides. Rick will contact Curt Swift.

Rick Isom thought that CSU CE would still be providing Leigh Fortson for marketing and publishing assistance. Subsequent conversations (via Mike Baker) and email correspondence (via Sonja) suggest that there might be some confusion as to how her services would be provided (free or through BMP Grant funding). Sonja will follow up on the issue with Rick Isom.

Dan Beley put in a request on May 4<sup>th</sup> to extend the BMP 319 Grant Deadline. He has suggested that we move forward with interviewing and trying to find a new BMP Coordinator, but that we not sign a contract until we get final word from the NPS Program.

**Adjourn: 3:00pm**