

Governor's Upper Yellowstone River Task Force
Meeting Summary
April 18, 2000
Livingston Depot Center
Meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

I. Introductions

Members Present:

| | |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Mike Atwood, Vice Chair | Brant Oswald |
| Roy Aserlind | Rod Siring |
| Michelle Goodwine | Ellen Woodbury |
| David Haug | |
| Jerry O'Hair | |

Others Present:

| | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Laurence Siroky, Ex-Officio | Will Rizzo | Duncan Patten |
| John Logan, Ex-Officio | May Mace | Pete Story |
| Stan Sternberg, Ex-Officio | Phil Farnes | Julia Page |
| Alan Steinle, Ex-Officio | Lionel Dicharry | Drew Overholser |
| Liz Galli-Noble, Coordinator | Adam Craig | Andy Dana |
| Amy Miller, Administrative Secretary | John Kirby | Dick Blodnick |

II. Prior Meeting Minutes

The March 21, 2000 minutes were approved as written.

III. Review 2000 Workshops

1. *Hydrologic Response to the 1988 Fires in the Upper Yellowstone River Basin* to be held on Saturday, May 13; 9:30 am to 2:30 pm; at the Lincoln School

Liz Galli-Noble explained that the presenters for the workshop are scheduled. John Bailey and/or Mike Atwood will give an introduction on the Task Force. Liz will advertise for the workshop through the local newspaper, the *Bozeman Daily Chronicle*, the local radio stations, and the Livingston Internet League/Dan Murray. Liz is having the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation make posters for the workshop and she will distribute the posters in Livingston and Bozeman. The DNRC Education Grant has been approved for the workshop in the amount of \$1,000 to cover expenses, however the grant will not compensate for food.

A motion was made to approve approximately \$200.00 from the Start-Up Grant to pay for lunch at the workshop. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Riparian/Wetland Management

Duncan Patten, Technical Advisory Committee Chair, reviewed the outline of the workshop with the Task Force. The Task Force will be partners with the Montana Watercourse in hosting this workshop. This workshop is geared toward educating the community about riverine wetlands, and to give them useable information about

managing wetlands. The suggestion was made to have a professional facilitator at the workshop, to promote public participation and to encourage the sharing real life examples from local landowners.

Laurence Siroky suggested moving the issues discussed in Section VII to the beginning of the workshop. He also suggested adding: (1) the history of the State Floodplain Law and (2) a review of the tools used by local, state, and federal staff when managing flood plains.

Liz requested that anyone with further comments or ideas for the workshop contact her within the next week or two. Presently, a date and location for the workshop have not been determined; several options were discussed. Liz will look into availabilities and will report back at the May meeting. A final date and location will be chosen at that meeting.

IV. Announcements

1. Watershed Coordinator Roundtable, May 15 to 17, Chico Hot Springs
 - a. Task Force invited on a river tour with Roundtable participants from 1 to 6 pm on May 17

Watershed coordinators and watershed group members from Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, North and South Dakota will be attending the Watershed Coordinator Roundtable. Liz explained that Mary Ellen Wolfe, Montana Watercourse Director, has invited the Task Force to go on a tour on the Yellowstone River on May 17, 2000 from 1 to 6 pm. The following Task Force members volunteered to participate on the tour: John Bailey, David Haug, Rod Siring, Roy Aserlind, and Brant Oswald. Liz Galli-Noble, and Amy Miller will also be involved. The tour will be informal.

2. Project WET Teacher's Tour of Upper Yellowstone River Basin, August 14 to 18
 - a. Task Force Cumulative Effects Investigation will be one subject covered

Rab Cummings, Project WET Coordinator, met with Liz Galli-Noble, Bob Wiltshire, and Amy Miller to gather ideas for an educational tour of the Upper Yellowstone River Basin. Teachers have the opportunity to earn credits for completing the tour and will take the information back to their students and classrooms. The Task Force was asked to be a part of the tour, a commitment of a half to one day, focusing on one or more studies within the Cumulative Effects Investigation.

3. Flood Plain Managers meeting in Butte on May 16 to 18

Laurence Siroky, DNRC, reported that a Flood Plain Manager's meeting will be held in Butte on May 16 to May 18. The last day of the workshop (May 18) focuses on the permitting process, which is geared toward Conservation Districts. For more information, visit the DNRC website at: www.dnrc.state.us.

4. Irrigator's Field Day – May 3, 9:30 am to 3:30 pm, 10 miles south of Cardwell

Liz Galli-Noble announced that an irrigator's field day will be held at Summit Valley

Turf on Highway 359, south of Cardwell. The event is sponsored by the Jefferson Valley Conservation District, Madison/Jefferson Extension Office, NRCS, and National Center for Appropriate Technology. Topics covered include: irrigation system efficiencies, maintenance and safety, water rights, and species selection. For more information call 287-3215 or 287-3282.

5. Stan Sternberg, Environmental Program Manager for the Montana Department of Transportation, has replaced Joel Marsik on the Task Force as the ex-officio member representing that agency.
6. John Kirby, Co-Chair for the Yellowstone River Conservation District Council, reported that the Council will be conducting a Rapid Aerial Assessment of the entire Yellowstone River. The Rapid Aerial Assessment will cover Park County to the confluence. The Council has secured funding for the project. Warren Kellogg, DNRC, will finalize details about the Rapid Aerial Assessment with the Council at their next meeting scheduled for April 27, 2000 at the State BLM office in Billings.

V. Approved Wildlife Assessment, Rewrite Final Review

Liz and Jerry O’Hair worked on the “wordsmithing” of the Wildlife Proposal and made minor changes. Duncan Patten, John Bailey, Jerry O’Hair, the main wildlife researchers, and other members of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) approved the changes. Duncan commended Jerry O’Hair for pointing out unnecessary or leading language within the draft Wildlife proposal; it simply was something others had missed.

It was reiterated that once a literature review is completed and wildlife experts, management agencies, landowners, and wildlife groups are consulted, the TAC will provide a list of indicator species for review, comment, and approval by the Task Force.

A motion was made to accept the minor changes made to the previously approved Wildlife Proposal, the motion passed unanimously.

Note: Three sentences on page three, last paragraph will be edited to read: “This list will be developed in consultation with wildlife management agencies, wildlife groups, landowners, and local wildlife experts, and using the information developed in Activity A. The list will be presented to the Task Force for review, comment, and approval. Once finalized, this list will represent the set of species that will be targeted in an intensive sampling effort along the river”

Although it does not include permission to do wildlife research, Liz was asked at this stage of the meeting to report landowner permission. She has received four “No’s” to date. Jerry O’Hair reported that he has received several phone calls about giving permission to access private property and people from up and down the Yellowstone River are dismayed about what they are reading in newspaper and magazine articles. The following additional comments were made:

- If the Task Force does not do a Wildlife Assessment, then the US Army Corps of Engineers

- will do one without our input.
- This is a difficult time for landowners.
- People perceive that there is an increase in the government's control of private land.
- There are many issues that landowners must be concerned about: water quality laws, endangered species, TMDL laws, etc..
- USGS used a backdoor approach when collecting information on the Missouri River.
- Private property rights are at risk.
- This is a "modest" wildlife proposal: there are limited funds available and researchers wrote the proposal with that in mind.
- The Task Force needs to do better community outreach.

VI. Financial Updates

Grant spending report:

Amy Miller reported on the following to the Task Force:

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|--------------------|---------------|--------------|--------|-------------|----------|--------------|
| Start-Up Grant-DEQ | Grant amount: | \$49,138.00 | Spent: | \$20,491.58 | Balance: | \$28,646.42 |
| 319 Grant (1)-DEQ | Grant amount: | \$40,000.00 | Spent: | \$28,436.97 | Balance: | \$11,563.03 |
| RDGP-DNRC | Grant amount: | \$299,940.00 | Spent: | \$62,917.30 | Balance: | \$237,022.70 |
| 319 Grant (2)-DEQ | Grant amount: | \$58,000.00 | Spent: | \$-0- | Balance: | \$58,000.00 |

The grant balances reflect expenses through April 18, 2000.

New grant applications submitted:

DNRC, Watershed Planning - \$10,000 for Watershed Land Use Assessment

EPA, Regional Geographic Initiative - \$30,000 for Watershed Land Use Assessment

DNRC, Wetlands Education - \$1,000 for Fire Workshop

EPA TMDL - \$20,000 for Riparian Trend Analysis (April 21)

DNRC, 223 Conservation Districts Grant - \$15,000 for Riparian Trend Analysis

DNRC, RDGP #2 - \$300,000 for Fisheries Phase II and Wildlife Assessment

Michelle Goodwine made a motion was made to approve the following new grants applications: RDGP (#2) for \$300,000; 223 Conservation Districts Grant for \$15,000; and EPA TMDL Grant for \$20,000 (totaling \$335,000) with the understanding that the Park Conservation District would review the grants closely. The motion passed by majority, with Jerry O'Hair voting no.

Note: The chair attempted to reach consensus on the motion; however Task Force members reminded Mike Atwood that consensus was not needed, only majority vote was needed for monetary decisions.

According to the Task Force Ground Rules (revised October 19, 2000), Decisions/Agreements: "Business or monetary decisions may be made by a voice vote of a majority (seven voting members) of the Task Force. The Chair may vote."

Liz asked for all edits to the draft RDGP application as soon as possible. She will make the changes and get second draft copies to John Bailey, Jerry O'Hair and Mike Atwood for final approval by May 8. Liz reminded the Task Force members that support letters are due on April 28, 2000.

Liz also reminded Task Force members to keep a record of their in-kind contributions to the Task Force on a monthly basis, and to submit those in-kind tracking sheets at each Task Force meeting.

Liz reported on the US Army Corps of Engineers FY 1999 funding allocation: the Corps has a remaining balance of \$146,500, Mike Gilbert will release \$80,000 for Topographic Mapping (1:6000 and 1:8000 scales), \$20,000 for GPS survey endpoints, \$20,000 to \$33,000 for National Wetlands Inventory land use classification, and \$13,500 will remain for Corps staff expenses.

The Montana Department of Transportation is deliberating on funding a portion of USGS-WRD research in the amount of \$70,000. The MDT committee meets on April 25, 2000.

VII. Schedule Future Task Force Meetings

Liz Galli-Noble would like Task Force members to call her at 222-3701 if they will be unable to attend scheduled meetings.

Next meetings are:

May 16, 2000, Tuesday, 7 p.m. at the City/County Community Room.

June 19, 2000, Monday, 7 p.m. on the third floor of the Lincoln School (corner of Lewis and B Streets).

VIII. The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Please make note that the location of our next few meetings will vary.