

Southeast Utah Riparian Partnership Fall/Winter 2018 Meeting Notes

Date & Time: November 27th, 9:00 am – 3:00 pm

Location: National Park Service Headquarters Conference Room

Attending:

- Liz Ballenger, National Park Service (NPS)
- Jake Deslauriers, Utah Conservation Corps
- Kara Dohrenwend, Rim to Rim Restoration
- Josh Doucette, NPS
- Kenny Gordon, Grand County Community Economic Development
- Tim Graham
- Makeda Hanson, UT Division of Wildlife Resources (DWR)
- Shannon Hatch, RiversEdge West
- Jacob Higgs, Grand County
- Tim Higgs, Grand County
- Jason Johnson, UT Division of Forestry Fire & State Lands (FFSL)
- Page Kannor, FFSL
- Jason Kirks, Bureau of Land Management
- Rebecca Mann, US Geological Survey
- Tony Mancuso, FFSL
- Tamsin McCormack, Plateau Restoration
- Teresa Nees, Mesa County
- Alizabeth Poutcek, Rim to Rim Restoration
- Kelli Quinn, NPS
- Pamela Riddle, BLM
- Jacob Suter, NPS
- Shannon Wadas, RiversEdge West
- Linda Whitham, The Nature Conservancy
- Gerrish Willis
- Chris Wood, UT Division of Wildlife Resources
- Steve Young, NPS

Partner and project updates:

- Kara worked with with the County, PD, and Sheriff to put together River, Trails, Conservation Assistance Grant proposal
 - Awarded through NPS to work on issues around Mill Creek
- Liz Ballenger is working on Salt Wash in Arches
 - Large tamarisk removal project to stop flooding across the road
- Teresa Nees has been involved with the Middle CO Weed Management CWMA project, was invited by co-chair Liz
 - Flowering rush coming down the CO River; something for Utah to keep an eye out for
- Makeda Hanson
 - DNR out of Price is having their first weed conservation management meeting next week
 - Didn't get a burn this year
 - Contractor will be starting soon

- Linda Whitman is currently undertaking a large native fish project at the Matheson Preserve.
 - Later this spring UCC will be in to do weed removal for WRI contract

Meeting Outcomes:

- Provide overview of recent work, follow-up from action items during last meeting, and garner partner input on what would be most useful to them with regards to SURP priorities
 - It has been a very busy year for most partners; good time to stop and check-in on what's missing, new priorities, etc.
- Tony will give update on USGS report
- Geodatabase discussion
- Updates on WRI proposals
- Moving forward, Kara and Shannon are going to have a check in phone call every two-weeks

Monitoring Reporting:

Kara- Vegetation Monitoring

- By January there will be a draft vegetation monitoring report for people's comments:
- Monitoring work has been going on since 2007
 - Monitoring includes line intersect transects; compare veg over time and sites to each other
- 14 or 15 sites along the mainstem of the Colorado and same amount up Mill Creek
- Final report will have summary as well as detailed site reports for each location
- Site report has land use history, veg manipulation, perimeter species
- Observations- by looking at relative native cover vs. exotic cover has been interesting- seen quite a change, more native cover than expected in some areas
- Last year of data 2016/17
- Changes in understanding over time- what we thought we could say based on the data.
- This year not as much knapweed (might be drought related)
- Will be wanting info from partners

Tim Graham - Beetle Monitoring

- Up through 2012 had different monitoring methods (population explosion phase)
- 2013 saw dramatic decline in beetles, only 4 surveys done, most of tamarisk had not re-foliated well
- 2014/15 population crashed- surveys had been reduced and didn't know until too late to do additional surveys (by only doing 4 surveys miss entire life cycle)
- 2016/17/18- 8 surveys, manageable, overlap with life cycles
- 2017 vs 2018 not much difference.

- Larvae had similar story. Next year will be dependent on what winter is like.
- Canopy estimates- look at percent green vs yellow and brown, how much regrowth. Very little original foliage in 2018.

Kara-

- USGS has been doing similar work in similar time frame to what Tim did; we would like to gather all the info to put together. This would be helpful for land managers.
- Question as to what would be helpful in field:
 - Were soil samples looked at?
 - Yes RRR took them in 2011 (unfortunately post flood); USGS has them as well for their sites. Denver University as well for some county sites
 - Should we wait for next round of beetle to come in after tamarisk has now come back?
 - Tim G- tamarisk removal when nothing else is done- don't know how long it takes to kill a tree. Not going to happen overnight. Some evidence that re-sprouts have more resistance to beetle. My sense is be patient- you are not going to eliminate the species (someone should go to native lands to research tamarisk). Dead looking tamarisk are still serving ecological purposes – small treatment areas are more successful (higher soil moisture with tamarisk even if not a lot of cover).
 - Beetles have been here for a while, but there are a few tamarisk that have not been touched- will there be a dominance of tamarisk over time that the beetle does not prefer and therefore become more resistant?
 - Tim G - yes that will probably happen. Co-evolutionary dance- there will be evolutionary changes in the beetle but extremely rare for the beetle to move to other vegetation. Beetle is designed to eat tamarisk. Genetics are not static though.
 - Saw more flowering this year?
 - Tim G - In 2014/15 saw more flowering, this year not so much. Started tracking flowering in 2014- we are seeing seedlings increase.
 - Are you measuring depth to water or saturated soil? Are roots less affected by drought?
 - Tim G - trees responded to drought in 2012. Shannon- would this be helpful to people? Steve- Glen Canyon would be a good testing site for water table depths- easy to get to and huge water table change. Same thing is true in the tributaries- down cutting of washes, sediment, salt, etc.
 - Has NPS done anything for tamarisk mortality?
 - Nothing quantitative, just observations. Qualitative data may still be helpful.
 - Did Kara do any seeding at sites?
 - Kara- there were some sites with seeding and nothing else done. Minimal change over time may warrant some additional treatment/changes
 - Steve- There is theory the water table changes as you move away from the river due to hydrostatic reasons- looking to do 20-foot pole plantings. Don't know if water table

does come up. USGS did ground water study- under peer review right now- looking at water budget for entire Moab valley- a lot of variability. Adjudication process has a lot of information as well. Kara - not so much on the river but should still have some good info.

CO River Conservation Planning Report:

Tony:

- USGS report and associated data are now available <https://my-beta.usgs.gov/crcp/>
- Report encompasses river from CO/UT state line to Lake Powell
- On website go to: downloadable data
- Have completed ground truthing for some of the native species
- Can prioritize for example best bang for the buck
- Recovery; to determine definition, you can go into component layers to know exactly what that means
- Stretch of river was picked because of TNC funding in part, prioritization with restoration and to help partnership

Geodatabase:

Tony:

- Subcommittee process to compile geodatabase
- Working with REW to compile all legacy data, taking all of our projects and putting them in one place and in one format- will be hosted by REW.
- Currently in the process of gathering legacy data
- Walton Family Foundation money is paying Phoebe from USU to work with us
- Shannon- idea is all Walton funded watershed will correlate
- Contact Tony or Gabe to get data put in same format and to enter into the geodatabase

Shannon- moving forward, each of you will be empowered to go out and put in your own data

- Example of DRC database
- Can have planned treatment, active restoration, monitoring files
- Data can overlap to see who did what
- Ben Bloodworth (REW) will have a check on his end when data gets added

Tony- geodatabase right now is a simple set of data sets- tables will be related to each other

- Will be able to go to an app on your phone (ArcCollector), to utilize the database in real time; can view old projects and plan new projects
- Help inform on potential for planned projects- what did well and what didn't do well in the past.

- Planning more informed restoration projects- state of the art as we can with as much information as we can
- Collecting legacy treatment data but don't have a plan yet for planned treatments.
- Next steps to get engaged: when map is up and running it will be shared with everyone and data can still be added (USU the hook for a limited time period)
- App on phone will come last.
- This will be open access (except for private lands possibly)
 - You will be able to see projects across local, county, state and federal projects.
- Get simple photography uploaded- simple presence data.
- By the next full partnership meeting we should be able to have a more complete project.

Partnership Updates:

Kara- Updates on what has been going on in the last 6-8 months.

- Will do another quarterly report after this meeting
- WRI- UCC work largely complete; there are some items to finish in 2019
- Cottonwood project in campgrounds were not watered this year to see what happened. The ones that did not survive will be removed.
- Only cut tamarisk that we know are alive vs. removing standing dead

Jake:

- As of today- 1 week on TNC property, 10 acres of knapweed
- Knapweed pretty much died this year due to droup
- 54 acres of Grandstaff
- Courthouse wash treated
- 5 acres of BLM Castle Valley
- 25 acres of Cane Creek- 50 % treatment but looking more like 100%
- UDOT requires a lot of involvement in the right away
- New River Rapid had large treatment
- Thousands of plantings this year (lower Goose, Onion)
- Tried to work around bird closures
- Westwater will have similar treatment to other areas
- Did a lot of re-treatment on previous areas, re-sprout were 2-5%

Kara – WRI 2.5

- Focus on legacy projects
- Mostly hand crews with UCC
- Time to get database up to point where it can be utilized
- Are we removing for sake of removing or because there is a need?

Shannon - Values of SURP

- Shared values, vision 2023; both formulated at Strategic Planning Meeting in June
 - We are already working on implementing steps to achieve the vision
- Outcome of June meeting was to re-visit specific mission
 - If you have suggestions or like segments let Kara and Shannon know
- Question- is there enough attention being given to maintenance of already treated areas (in mission statement)? There has been a lot of money put towards removal and it makes more sense financially to maintain what has already been done. Should put more attention to that in the mission or vision.
- Shannon- we should look to have something by January to finalize. Can send out Survey Monkey poll to get partners' input.

Future Partnership Work and 2019 Budget:

- Outreach updates
 - Had a TI press release
 - Moab Travel Council put together an informational packet for visitors that includes info on SURP
- Funding
 - Is it useful to have coordinators? If so need to have fundraising.
 - How to we proceed without ROR funding?
 - Estimate need is 400-500 hours to cover Shannon and Kara's time
 - Hours for each task are broken out in roles document in packet
 - \$12,000 from TNC to cover Shannon's time.
 - We need information from the group on actual budget costs.
 - If people can fill the gaps on the budget that would be helpful
 - Hard to fund soft projects- what can the group do to better support the group?
 - ROR sparked joint WRI proposal; created a different way of working together and having multiple projects
 - Real benefit obtaining funding for especially for hard to fund items
 - Will put together a spreadsheet of where the gaps are- everyone needs to participate
 - As a critical piece to asking for funding, need to have a resource online- who and how do we make donor asks?
 - If we can finalize a plan in February that would be best, since ROR was dispersed in March
 - This group has never done a collaborative budget exercise; doing so would really help with transparency
 - Are there other organizations that could support coordinator roles?
 - Tony- Sovereign Lands provides funding for SURP
 - Tony figured out a way to sole source data between multiple agencies without going out to bid; useful tool

- Future goals for SURP- set up 5-year-sole source contract
 - It's helpful to have data on how we spend money and outcomes; SURP provides some of those data
 - Nice way to dress up reports to annual conferences
 - Pam – BLM is working on flycatcher projects with FWS, trying to get formalization with fish habitat
 - Work on endangered species projects could be a potential funding mechanism
 - Proposed looking at projects done in the past, areas that were not suitable and now are, wetland mitigation banking.
 - Programmatic- once manipulated 30% of watershed have to stop= monitoring very important.
 - Big picture for funding
 - BLM doing away with soil, air and water program- being absorbed into other
 - It's helpful to know where the money is coming from for match purposes
- Partnership worth
 - Tim H - this group has brought more people together to do something over a larger area and not worry about jurisdiction.
 - Makeda- helping with WRI, evolution with this group, now more of a project type focus instead of just talking about updates.
 - Jake- this partnership has helped to create unified treatment prescriptions (something that wasn't done previously) which has been incredibly helpful
 - UCC has an individual placement program through USU for a capacity position
- Funding committee?
 - Do we have a funding committee?
 - Hasn't worked well in the past but it might not hurt for a few people to get together to talk about grant options, other opportunities
 - Could pool what we are already doing for WRI, strategically pick what we are going to put effort into
 - Years ago Jake did a pitch with REW for Dolores River Restoration; would be helpful to do a similar project and make a specific ask for capacity at the Salt Lake City level. Jake to work on!!! Work with Justin Jimenez.
 - Rim to Rim and REW are good avenues for funding asks; can serve as fiscal agents

2007 Management Plan:

- Do we want to revise the 2007 plan?
 - How does this fit into the budget for 2019?
- When the plan was initially written, there was a lot less known, fear of the beetle. We have different tools now
- Thought about not doing until the monitoring reports are done

- Strategy is to get the budget, monitoring, reporting done, core team does the first stab at Management Plan- should include various agencies involved and their marching orders, coincide with private land treatments
- Tony thinks that it would be valuable to revise and shorten
- Plan would be a good tool to provide funders; provides legitimacy
- Value based plan vs. programmatic, goals
- As opposed to providing site by site info, it may be best to focus more on best management practices
- As each government agency has their own specific management plan, the SURP plan should provide more of an overview
 - Jake volunteered to put together best management practices
- Core team will work on revising plan; needs further discussion