



Education Working Group
Meeting Notes
Thursday, April 9, 2015
8:30 PM – 10:30 AM
CWSD Conference Room

Present:

Linda Conlin, River Wranglers

Toni Leffler, CWSD

Nicole Lutkemuller, Alpine Watershed Group (AWG)

Mary Kay Wagner, NV Div. of Environmental Protection (NDEP)

Courtney Walker, CWSD

1. Brief Announcements/Two Minute Updates

- a. Re-cap of Conservation Tours project - March 21, 2015** – Linda reported that this is the project they did with the ROTC from Carson High School. 67 high school students showed up at 7:00 a.m. and worked from 7:30-11:00a. They removed girdle wire and re-wrapped 296 trees at Ambrose.
- b. CCRWD Quill Canyon weed control project with Carson High School - April 14, 2015** – Linda explained that this project will be in tandem with Carson High School. Margie started this project with an advanced biology class by the Quill water tank plant in Kings Canyon last year. The group will go with Rich from Carson City Open Space and Kim Zuch from State Parks to do a habitat assessment and seeding.
- c. Conserve Carson River Work Day (CCRWD) at Ambrose - April 17, 2015** – Linda explained that they are doing training for high school students on 4/13, and for the fourth graders at Empire Elementary on 4/17. In the past, the school didn't want a field trip in April because they were preparing for testing, however, the teachers campaigned their principal to allow the work day for its value to the students and received permission for the work day in April.
- d. Earth Day at Riverview Elementary w/NDA - April 22, 2015** – USDA Rural Development is finalizing their project at Mark Twain to take hundreds of homes off septic systems and connect them to a waste treatment plant, which will create less groundwater contamination. They wanted to educate the students about this and asked if River Wranglers could work with them. The first graders will be planting, the second graders will learn bicycle safety, and third graders will learn about groundwater. Linda contacted Kim Borgzinner to work with her to create three learning stations for the third graders.
- e. Floodplain Management Forum - April 22, 2015** – Brenda explained that the Floodplain Management Forum will go from 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. There will be speakers and tables for displays. NDWR will bring the flood model and Resource Concepts Inc (RCI) will have groundwater and watershed models.

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- f. **Get on the Bus Tour - June 9-10, 2015** – Brenda explained that planning is well on its way. Speakers are all arranged except for the Paiute-Shoshone Tribe and the Washoe Tribe. The Washoe Tribe has a new person in Marie Barry’s position, Alvin Moyle, who starts next Monday. She is hoping to get Caleb Condor or Willie Steve from Paiute-Shoshone Tribe. Dan Greytak is retiring after the Washoe Earth Day event and will be available on occasion if we need him.
- g. **Educator Workshop at NWRA Conference - June 16-17, 2015** – Mary Kay reported that Steve Jacox is taking registrations.
Actions:
- Determine Project WET activity for your session and any materials needed and send to Mary Kay as soon as possible so that Lou and Brian can align them with the standards.
 - Brenda will send the flier to the CRC and it will be in Enviro newsletter. The workshop is called: “Waters of the Western Great Basin.”
- h. **Project WET Workshop rescheduled to September 26, 2015 at River Fork Ranch** – Linda is working with Sierra Nevada Journeys and The Nature Conservancy to do a workshop. They had selected a May date before school is out, but Educator Workshop was too close to it so the date was moved to the fall.
- i. **Alpine Watershed Group announcements** – Nicole gave an update on the short program with Diamond Valley Elementary GATE students (2-7 graders) on five Fridays to do water quality monitoring. The kids loved doing the after school activity last Friday.

Creek Day – Sept. 12

Action: Will need assistance with team leaders.

Aspen Festival – Oct. 10-11

Action: Will need people to host tables.

- j. **Other CRC field trips** – Brenda is looking for ideas for in-depth CRC field trips, two per year, 2-3 hours each, for a more in-depth look at areas than people have on the Get on the Bus tour.
Ideas:
- Spawning area at Heenan Lake.
 - Mix between conservation tour/work day for CRC folks and decision makers to see specific interesting things happening in the watershed. Rent one or two vans, or Mary Kay might be able to get a State van if one rented van is full.
 - One possibility is Soda Lakes in Churchill County. Contact Jorge Guerrero, the Director of Facilities, Parks and Recreation for Churchill County and USFW for canoes.
 - Buckland station to see the bank treatment site. BLM, USFW, State Parks have lands that come to the river which are managed by each but not coordinated. This could be a catalyst to bring those landowners together for better management. Great Basin Bird

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Observatory identified this area as best cottonwood gallery in the watershed and Yellow-Billed Cuckoo's designated critical habitat.

- Churchill County bird field trip. Partner with the Audubon Society, maybe in March 2016 before breeding.
- Shane's OHV grant riparian restoration along the East Fork

k. Trout in the Classroom - Linda reported that all the fish in the classrooms have been released so that the fish don't have to be maintained in the classrooms over spring break. Fish from schools that CK Baily has been working with were released in Baily Pond, which was named after him. CK Baily is an active volunteer with Dept of Wildlife and could be a candidate for the Andy Aldax Award 2016. He works with Lyons Club doing a non-competitive fishing day in early summer. They give out fishing poles to the children.

l. SWAG – Courtney hasn't put together a spreadsheet yet. Linda suggested attaching it to agenda for next meeting if it is available by then.

Actions:

- A bandana with the watershed map would have to be investigated for how to do it.
- Linda suggested a map as a T-shirt iron-on.
- Brenda mentioned Point Reyes visitor center SWAG. They had lip gloss and sunscreen connected together for \$6 from a company from Austin, TX.

m. BLM RMP – Brenda and Courtney are going through the BLM Resource Management Plan update to make comment for CWSD.

Actions:

- Section 2-2 table on Education and Interpretation needs review by members of the group. It is the last section of that table. Comments are due April 27, 2015. Comment the need for BLM environmental education staff.
- Do we want to partner with the BLM Adopt-a-Space Program? Melanie was invited to attend EWG meetings but Katherine Dyer might be a good contact. Mary Kay will invite her to the next EWG meeting.

n. Other – For the Children's Museum, a display like at Pt. Reyes called "Pickle" which shows all the pollution from the beach pickled into colorful jars. Also a display log of "Who Lives Here" which kids lift up. Scat and tracks. Mary Kay mentioned that the Wetlands Park in Las Vegas has great displays also.

3. Environmental Education Program Planning -

a. Discuss next steps based on February's meeting (Linda) – Linda explained that because the EWG is the one that initiated the grant for the Environmental Education Coordinator position, discussing the program is part of the grant requirement. Pre and post test questions should be consistent throughout all of the programs offered in the watershed and should be

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coordinated with the Watershed Literacy Grant.

Basic tasks that Linda is required to address in grant include:

- general marketing/outreach and program development
- outreach to schools and educators
- outreach to clubs and service groups (outside of school setting and into the community setting)
- program evaluation
- reporting

Actions:

- Brenda explained that the last grant developed a marketing plan so with Linda's workload, maybe the EWG could look at that piece as a joint effort to get word out to educators and determine the gaps in the schools we are not reaching. Linda mentioned that the private schools are not being reached in a significant way.
- The group could bring back list of private schools throughout the watershed and contacts with the schools.
- Empower classroom to develop and create their own and give them tools to conduct their own education.
- Workshops should provide tools and education to teachers to get them to a comfort level to engage as well.
- Outreach to clubs and service groups: Linda had an opportunity to go to WNC to do a presentation to a marketing class about River Wranglers which was well received. She got ideas about how to expand and become more sustainable. The professor said the presentation is ready to take to a club meeting as part of their lunch/breakfast meeting to get more buy-in and support for the effort.
- Brainstorm a list of all the service groups and environmental and 4-H clubs that could be reached. Check newspaper calendar for group meetings. It would be nice to have something in mind to enlist their involvement in, like help in a work day.
- Getting more people involved in scheduled activities rather than creating additional activities.
- The Brewery Arts Center (BAC) has an active theatrical and video club who might be interested in the project of oral history and making connections with elders, equipment, and expertise. Perhaps involve the Digitorium at the Carson City Library.
- Marketing workshops to private schools to try to get their teachers to come to Project WET workshop, etc. Linda noted that Teresa Ellis inspired three people from a private school to attend the last Project WET workshop.
- "C" Hill is being scoured and needs trails laid out to use more responsibly. Identify designated pathways and eliminate others. Potential idea is to match high school seniors and community seniors for intergenerational connection to work on "C" Hill.

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- Have a tea for oral history, with chataqua in costume. Explore different venues like the Governor's lawn, the Capital grounds, and Buckland Station.
- Broadcast on PBS or public access TV.

b. River Wranglers Job Advertisement (Linda) – Linda is finishing the advertisement which asks for applications by April 24.

4. Watershed-Literacy Grant Updates (60 min.) –

a. Draft Outreach and Action Plan - Next Steps to achieve plan – Brenda gave suggested actions from the Outreach and Action Plan which is going to CWSD Board for adoption on 4/15/15, and will be included as part of the Stewardship Plan. The Final of the Plan will be sent to Stephanie Wilson of EPA after adoption.

We are on track for achieving objectives and goals of plan already. After survey results, we will be able to move forward on other objectives. Will know what people are willing to do. Actions we might want people to take, like Stewardship Pledge, What You Can Do on CWSD website. CWSD would like to have another roundtable event next year in February 2016 to get buy-in on the plan and hone main messages.

Brenda talked with Mark Duda about the watershed survey and an outline of topics/actions. He and his team will develop a set of draft questions that they will send for the EWG review for comments. The EWG will have a separate meeting to discuss the survey questions exclusively. Initial draft is expected back by next week. Brenda and Courtney will review it and get it back to him. In two to three weeks, we can have a EWG session to discuss it.

Once questions are defined, they will do the survey quickly. Goal of June-July for survey to be completed. Be sure to identify CWSD as survey originator in the phone survey and stress that it is a non-profit organization, not sales, but for educational information. Demographics to include level of education instead of income.

Brenda will send out link to Indiana Clear Choices for Clean Water website. Marketing on-line pledges is something we have been talking about doing. Clear Choices for Clean Water can implement an online pledge using their template. They do follow-up emails, what would be achieved if you did the actions you pledged to. Mary Kay suggested also looking at what Lake Tahoe is doing.

b. Draft Carson River Watershed map back panels (Courtney) - Final comments, new tagline. Courtney noted this is the last opportunity to make comments/changes. The tagline agreed upon is: "The Carson River Watershed: A Lifeline Connecting Our Communities." Suggestions for edits to the back panels included:

- Leave first sentence as it is and not use tag line there but un-bold sentence.

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- “The Carson River connects several rural and urban communities.”
- Add “arid” to the description of area. "The Carson River is a lifeline in the arid climate of the Western Great Basin. "
- Nevada becomes a “battle born” state.
- Send comments by 3:00 p.m. this afternoon.

c. **Additional on-line outreach tool development - See:**
http://water.epa.gov/action/adopt/earthday_index.cfm and review/provide ideas on adaptation to Carson River Watershed. Next month.

6. **Other Items (5 min.)** – None.

7. **Set date for next meeting** – Brenda will do a Doodle poll to schedule a meeting to deal with the survey questions. Next EWG meeting Thurs., June 4, 9:00-11:00 a.m. Mary Kay suggested putting announcements at the end of future EWG agenda.

8. **Children's Museum - Field Trip** - Observations about the Children's Museum exhibit -
Actions:

- Turbidity display needs to address a younger audience. Instead of just putting bottles with various amounts of soil in them to show water clarity, put a toy fish in the water so the children can see that more turbidity makes it harder to see the fish. Perhaps also a duck floating on the top.
- Mod Podge the name tags on the spinner exhibit so that the children can't pull them off.
- Weed display needs to be more interactive to attract kids to engage. Perhaps encase weeds in acrylic blocks hanging from chains to identify with weeds on poster or create a memory match game to flip pictures up on Velcro strips.
- Since animal pelts are displayed high on the walls, provide a display with finger holes to actually touch pelts and identify them with what's on the wall.
- Update the Explore the Carson River Watershed poster.
- Match tracks and scat with animal in flip-up interactive display.
- Put one item above at a time on the EWG agenda to focus on.
- Need a planning session for the Education and Outreach page of the CWSD website.