



River Corridor Working Group

Meeting Notes

Wednesday, July 22, 2015
9:00 AM – 11:00 AM
CWSD Conference Room

Present:

Mitch Blum, HDR, Inc.
Ann Bollinger, Carson City
John Cobourn, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE)
Brenda Hunt, Carson Water Subconservancy District (CWSD)
Ed James, CWSD
Toni Leffler, CWSD
Shyla Lemons, Carson City Public Works
Erik Nilssen, Douglas County
Brian Peters, Alpine County
Karin Peternel, Douglas County
Jean Stone, Nevada Division of Environmental Protection (NDEP)
Mary Kay Wagner, NDEP
Courtney Walker, CWSD
Rich Wilkinson, Carson City

1. Welcome and Introductions - Introductions were made around the room along with status updates.

2. Announcements (everyone)

a. Round Robin and Flash Flood updates from each county –

Alpine Co. – Brian reported that the US Forest Service has started a Burn Area Emergency Response (BAER) Program after Washington Fire, mostly clearing culverts so far. There was some flash flooding down in the valley but nothing major.

Douglas County – Erik reported that there was 1.2” of rain in an hour causing more flash flooding in the Johnson Lane area. Public Works had already planned for the issues of flood modeling to be taken to the Board of Commissioners on August 6 with a request for a storm water utility. Brenda suggested that some of this group might attend in support. John reported that he has been working with citizens from Johnson Lane area where alluvial fan flooding has occurred repeatedly.

Carson City – Shyla reported that in Conti Hills and Ash Canyon there was some flash flooding. Carson City is proposing a new stormwater rate increase again. Culverts need to be kept clean. Public Works received a Federal Lands Access Plan (FLAP) grant for Sierra Vista Lane to deal with erosion every time it rains. The kick off planning meeting will be in August.

Lyon County – Ed reported that there was flooding in 6 Mile Canyon coming from Storey County and Ramsey Canyon near Silver Springs.

Churchill County – Terri reported that one road washed out with the recent storms. Churchill County has been cleaning out the street corner storm drains.

- b. CRC Forum follow-up** – Brenda handed out the survey results from the CRC Floodplain Forum in March which showed that everyone was pretty happy with the forum besides the men's bathroom situation and the squeaky floors. There were 26 respondents to the survey of 64 attendees which is a 40% response rate.
- c. Get on the Bus Tour follow-up** – Brenda reported that the bus tour went really well with a few less stops. The bus was full with 50 people. New sites included Ambrose in Carson City, Ft. Churchill in Lyon County, and a new lunch location at Stillwater because people had requested more opportunities to go down to the river after last year's tour.
- d. CRC Main Meeting Save the Date** – The meeting is scheduled for October 21, 2015. It will feature Daniel Beard, author of Deadbeat Dams and a former Commissioner for the Bureau of Reclamation. Mr. Beard will also speak at the NWRA Symposium earlier that week.
- e. 319 Grant Proposals** – Jean reported that NDEP had released the RFP for grant proposals yesterday, with proposals due September 14. Projects should be for nonpoint source pollution control. NDEP has \$800,000 for grants, of which \$600,000 will go to watersheds with a Stewardship Plan (Carson, Tahoe, Clark), and \$200,000 for everyone else. Projects should promote partnerships and collaboration.
- f. Watershed-Literacy Action Plan (WLAP) and Survey** – The WLAP was developed as a supplemental document to the Stewardship Plan. One of the suggested actions in the plan was to conduct a survey of watershed residents. The survey was conducted by Responsive Management to determine effectiveness of environmental education efforts throughout the watershed. The company called 1,800 people to get 846 respondents. This is a statistically relevant and repeatable survey with a 95% confidence rate, applicable to the population as a whole by +/-3.36%. Brenda wants to do additional cross tabulations for demographics. She wants to make a plan for what we are going to do with the information before putting the survey results on the website. A meeting is scheduled for August 13, 2:30-4:30pm to go through the results and determine next steps. Responsive Management concluded that everyone surveyed loves where they live and are passionate about the area, but they appear to be disconnected in relation to their role in keeping the watershed healthy. They

believe most environmental problems are caused by people but not them. They are willing to act. We can determine what efforts to target as a result of the survey. People in our watershed get information largely from newspaper and TV. Cross tabulations will help target information. The median age of those surveyed was 52, which is a little skewed because those surveyed had to be over 18 years old. The purpose of the survey was to get baseline information, not teach. The initial questions created by Responsive Management and vetted by the EWG. John pointed out that the watershed concept needs to be taught to the public. Erik suggested signage indicating “entering the Carson River Watershed”. Brenda has been in contact with NDOT to see if this is possible through their new stormwater program.

Actions: Survey review meeting to determine next steps, August 13.

Brenda plans to follow up with NDOT to see if they can implement watershed signage with their new stormwater program.

- g. New Watershed Map** – Courtney explained that a few pictures were added and more places were labeled on the new map. The tag line was changed from “A Lifeline in the Desert” to “A Lifeline Connecting Our Communities.” Information from back panels was moved to the CWSD website. To reduce the verbiage from the old map, the new map has a timeline and information that coordinates with the front map and the website. She would like to distribute the box of old maps that are left before distributing the new map. Courtney made the hover-over areas on the website map into flash cards for the Children’s Museum. There is a community interest in having the map translated into Spanish.
- h. NV Silver Jackets Meeting Updates** – The next meeting is August 12. This is a group of federal/state agencies gathered to deal with emergencies as a coalition rather than as independent agencies. There is better local participation in this emergency management group than in similar groups elsewhere. Brenda said she went to the last meeting and found it helpful in identifying existing problem areas and funding sources.
- i. Watershed MS4 update** – Ed explained that Jean, Erik, and Karin have been involved in meetings with Resource Concepts Inc. (RCI), the consultant chosen to update the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) action plan that the counties will adopt. They are looking at additional funding for implementation of projects. They hope the language is expandable to areas which do not have MS4 but do have drainage issues. Shyla and Karin reported that Carson City and Douglas County were notified of an audit of their MS4 programs. Carson City plans go to the public for a raise in utilities funds tomorrow. Brenda has started the annual report for Carson City, Douglas and Storey Counties regarding floodplain management plan progress and will complete it in early August.

Actions: Brenda will provide a progress report on the Floodplain Management Plan

to Carson City, and Douglas and Storey Counties, in early August.

- j. **Other** – Brenda has been working on updating the Stewardship Plan. Chapters 1-5 and 7 have been turned in to our local EPA representative, Stephanie Wilson, for review. She expects to finalize Chapter 6 shortly and the updates for Chapters 8 and 9 are in progress. Appendices and maps are on the back burner for now.

3. Member reports on Floodplain Management Plan progress & updates on suggested actions:

- a. **Update on SA-8: *Low Impact Development (Brenda/Ed)*** – Brenda reported that CWSD received funding from NDEP for a 208 planning grant. CWSD worked with RCI to create a Low Impact Development (LID) report for the watershed. She will go to the counties to talk about next steps in meetings with planners, Planning Commissions, and County Boards. Brenda, Lynn Zonge (RCI) and Lynelle Garfield-Qualls (City of Reno) will be doing presentation to American Planners Association (APA) Conference and the Nevada Water Resource Association (NWRA) Conference (if abstract accepted). They are trying to reach planners and the community and wanted this document to be easy to read and not too technical. LID needs to be part of the fabric of the planning process, like being a checklist item. We want to invite the planners to come to the table, and review all the ordinances that relate to make sure there are no disincentives toward implementing LIDs. LID practices are excellent on new sites, but can also be used as a retrofit solution. LID practices have broad EPA support.
- b. **Update on SA-14: *Secure funding for and conduct watershed-wide unsteady state modeling to identify flood water storage requirements and to look at the cumulative effects of watershed development - FEMA MAS 1-4 projects (Mitch/Ed)*** – Mitch reported that the model is up and running. He is working on getting tributary flows into the model. He has included information from the gages at the East and West Forks in the mountains and will include the Carson City gage data next. He would like to include data from the Genoa, Clear Creek, Indian Creek, Johnson Wash, Kings Canyon gages. There are 15 tributary watersheds coming into the model. He should be done with the modeling by September. Ed suggested that Mitch make a presentation to the CRC at our upcoming October meeting.

Mitch has been working with the Weather Service to create an inundation map from the Carson City gage to the Deer Run gage. The model will run numbered up to 31', the 500-yr event. They are mapping every half foot for depth grid maps. The completed product will be put on the Weather Service web page. This is only the second one to be done west of the Mississippi River.

He is hoping to work with the Weather Service on inundation mapping of the Truckee

River as well. Depth maps will be made available to the counties for their websites to be able to predict where to stage emergency equipment, etc. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will link to these maps. This modeling will allow us (for example) to look at a flood stage at Markleeville and follow the river to see what that correlation is down river and determine whether the water is coming up to flood stage. The modeling protocol for how and when data is stored, managed, and updated will be created. Data will likely be submitted to CWSD for scheduled updates to the model. Mitch is hoping that all the counties will adopt the model update protocol and procedure. Using this system will help skip the modeling step during a LOMR request process.

- c. **Update on SA-5: *Plan for and mitigate cumulative effects of watershed urbanization, and SA-11: Implement and enhance county ordinances for floodplain protection (Mitch/Ed/Brenda)*** - Ed reported that the Request for Proposals (RFP) for ordinance review for floodplains throughout the watershed, except Storey County, was posted on July 6. CWSD will be hiring a consultant to look at everyone's ordinance and create a model ordinance, along with a suite of mitigation measures to keep things consistent throughout the watershed. It will help to have this all in place when the maps are done and adopted. We will have a continuous floodway defined, but it does not currently include alluvial fan flooding. Karin reported that Coachella, CA has similar alluvial fan flooding problems to Douglas County, so she is researching their ordinances. John suggested that alluvial fan ordinances be included in the review.

- d. **Progress on SA-7: *Retention of floodplain lands for flood storage (mapping acreage) (John/Steve)*** – John reported that the floodplain publication he and Steve Lewis have been working on is nearing completion. He noted on the handouts that the map on page 4 of Carson City does not include alluvial fans, only riverine flooding. The brochure has been through peer review to make it more readable. The brochure is text heavy because it's not a simple issue to explain why we should protect floodplain areas from development. He is accepting final comments until this Friday, 7/25/15. CWSD will print the brochure.

John also noted that today in the Record Courier there was a guest opinion to put an Open Space Initiative back on the ballot in Douglas County. There has been a recent controversy over putting large solar power plant in Douglas County, which was voted down. An open space district could buy conservation easements to keep open space green. Ann suggested that the author of the article contact Carson City about including in the initiative the ability to have staff to manage conservation easements as part of a reintroduction of the concept in Douglas County.

John's publication will be included in the Stewardship Plan's "by the numbers" section.

John and Steve would like to do a publication focused on alluvial fan flooding. Brenda noted that alluvial fans will be included in the next Floodplain Management Plan update in a couple of years. Options for mitigating alluvial fan flooding include a transfer of density to be able to cluster homes and leave flooding areas open when planning a subdivision.

Courtney suggested adding a sentence to the publication that better explains why Churchill County flooding is different below the Lahontan Dam, or perhaps create a separate publication about flooding issues and risks below the dam. John suggested having a group discuss issues around alluvial fan flooding. Brenda asked if that could be a piece of the education and outreach portion for MS4. Ed noted that a lot of the alluvial fan areas are federal lands. **Action: This discussion will be put on agenda for next River Corridor Working Group agenda.**

- e. **Update on SA-33: Annual Flood Awareness Week (Rob/John/Courtney)** – John explained that the first week in November is Flood Awareness Week 2015 (FAW), Nov. 2-7, 2015. Rob Palmer and JoAnn Kittrell are leading the planning group. There will be TV and radio announcements/informational ads and more public events than last year. The next FAW planning meeting is next Wed., July 29, at 9:00 a.m. in the Tahoe Room on the second floor of the Bryan Building in Carson City. The group is possibly interested in having something in the Nevada Day Parade as an educational event. JoAnn wants to make it a Nevada Department of Conservation and Natural Resources float.
4. **FEMA MAS 5 & 6 Projects (Ed/others)** – MAS #5 and #6 are starting to look at alluvial fans. CWSD hired R.O. Anderson Engineering to look at how to handle a major flood over Lahontan Dam with a lower threshold for flooding. Another project is evaluating Smelter Creek for two potential detention basins to determine which one would be more cost effective. The construction of a detention basin will require additional FEMA funding. A third project of MAS #5 is remapping the area of Alpine Estates near Jacks Valley. The Eagle Valley Golf Course Drainage A & B remapping is the fourth project. The proposal for MAS #6 was submitted to FEMA yesterday (7/21/15) and includes inundation/water depth maps in the Carson City and Goni areas, Stephanie Lane area remapping, and flood prevention work in the Ramsey Canyon area of Lyon County. Part of the grant will also be used for developing videos/PSAs about the importance of floodplain planning. The plan is to create four videos for different audiences (Public, Public Officials, Developers, and Agricultural Producers), See Floodplains as a Community Asset YouTube at the following link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPdSlp0Lcyk>. Video Quest/Jason Cheeseborough is helping to redo the Leviathan Mine video using a remote control helicopter that takes pictures for aerial footage. We are hoping he can create professional videos at a

reasonable price. FEMA estimated that we are likely to be granted \$300,000 this year. We asked for \$327,000 in the hopes of receiving a bit more. FEMA sees these projects as a continuation of recent projects and given they are very pleased with our success to date, we are hopeful we will receive our full MAS 6 funding request.

5. Other - none

6. Schedule Next Meeting – Brenda will put out a Doodle poll for a River Corridor working group meeting which will likely be after main CRC meeting on October 21, 2015.