



**Education Working Group  
Meeting Notes  
Wednesday, February 11, 2015  
8:30 PM – 10:30 AM  
CWSD Conference Room**

**Present:**

Linda Conlin, River Wranglers  
Brenda Hunt, Carson Water Subconservancy District (CWSD)  
Toni Leffler, CWSD  
Nicole Lutkemuller, Alpine Watershed Group (AWG)  
Rob Palmer, NDEP  
Duane Petite, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)  
Mary Taitano, NV Dept. of Water Resources (NDWR)  
Mary Kay Wagner, NV Div. of Environmental Protection (NDEP)  
Courtney Walker, CWSD

1. **Welcome and Introductions** - Introductions were made around the room.
2. **Brief Announcements/Two Minute Updates**
  - a. **Conserve Carson River Work Days Wrap-up** – Linda conducted three work days at The Nature Conservancy and four in Dayton Valley at the Rolling A. She submitted the final report on her grant by the required end-of-year deadline.
  - b. **Career and College Day Fairs** – Linda reported that there were two college fairs in Lyon County (Dayton High and Silver Sage High), and she collected the names of volunteers to earn college credits toward college scholarships.
  - c. **DRI Teacher Training** – Courtney reported that on January 31 the Desert Research Institute (DRI) Green Box program held a networking lunch with about 90 teachers from all over the state. She put up a booth for CWSD and River Wranglers, showed CWSD's interactive watershed map, and handed out maps. It was well received.
  - d. **GREENevada Meetings** – Courtney reported that she has attended the Growing Resources for Environmental Education in Nevada (GREENevada) meetings. Initially, GREENevada was a collaborating group from Washoe County meeting to network and share resources with other environmental educators. They are currently expanding to include more of northern Nevada. CWSD and River Wranglers are members. The DRI Teacher Training opportunity came about through this group.
  - e. **Potential Teacher Workshop at NWRA Conference (June 2015)** – Mary Kay explained that she has been in touch with Tina Triplett, the Nevada Water Resource Association's (NWRA) Executive Director. NWRA is planning an annual limnologist's conference on June 15-19 at the Peppermill in Reno. There are a couple of rooms available during that conference at no cost

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that have been offered to Mary Kay to hold a conference in tandem with the NWRA conference, to include a tour of the Peppermill's geothermal plant and teacher training sessions. The tandem conference could include field trips to see and discuss Low Impact Development (LID) projects and river educational facilities, as well as, training sessions on the Carson River, the Truckee River, and the Walker River. Mary Kay is looking for volunteers to help plan the workshop and talked to Sue Jacox of Sierra Basin Outdoor School and DRI folks as well.

**Action: Please contact Mary Kay if you are interested in assisted by being on an organizing committee.**

- f. Floodplain Management Forum (April 22, 2015)** – Brenda explained that CWSD has scheduled a focused Floodplain Management Forum. She has speakers lined up to various flood and floodplain restoration projects. Mitch Blum will present where we are with overall mapping of Carson River from the Alpine County line to Lahontan. The Alpine Watershed Group (AWG) will present the Markleeville Creek restoration, the East Fork project, and Hope Valley with Sally Champion and Shane Fryer. Rob Palmer will speak about what's happening in the state of Nevada and where it's going for floodplain management. CWSD staff is working out the key note speaker and checking out venues. We are currently scheduled for Gold Dust West. **(Update: Venue is not the Dayton Valley Community Center in Old Town Dayton.)**
- g. Weed Forum (February 17, 2015)** – CWSD will host a Weed Forum from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon next Tuesday, 2/17/15, at the Douglas County Community Center. A field trip to TNC's River Fork Ranch hosted by Duane Petite, Mike Hayes, and Jeff Begovich will follow the meeting.
- h. Get on the Bus Tour (June 9-10, 2015)** – Brenda reported that CWSD staff have worked out the schedule for this year's bus tour including Hope Valley, STPUD/C-line, the Dangberg Home Ranch, TNC's River Fork Ranch, and Hwy. 50 erosion control projects on Day 1. Day 2 will include Ambrose, Ft. Churchill Museum/ruins/river, Stillwater for lunch, and Lahontan Dam.
- i. Other CRC field trips** – Brenda explained that she will meld what was lost from the Conservation Tour grant into the 319 grant for two focused CRC field trips per year to expand on the Get on the Bus Tour. One possible focus trip could be the Heenan Lake fishery tour.
- j. Trout in Classroom Update** – Linda reported that the trout eggs were delivered last Wednesday to schools in Nevada. The Shasta strain Rainbow Trout should have hatched by now. The goal of the teachers is to release them before spring break.
- k. SWAG** – Brenda reported that CWSD received funding in the new Watershed Coordinator grant to buy SWAG. This will include bags for the Get on the Bus Tour, combined with other

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SWAG uses. She has found Clean canteens or 10-oz. cups \$5.75/ea. Other ideas include lip balm or carabineers, spray sun screen, coffee cups, or a bandana with a watershed map printed on it.

- I. Flood Model: There is funding in the Watershed Coordinator grant for another flood model with carrying case. Linda suggested checking with Lee Volberding, the shop teacher at Dayton High School, to make the two cases.

**Action: Brenda or Courtney to obtain Lee Volberding contact from Linda and discuss getting students to create two exact cases. One for Div. of Water Resources flood model and one for the CWSD model.**

- m. Eagles and Ag – February 19-22 – NDWR and Courtney will staff a display table with the flood model on Friday and Saturday. The tour will go to the River Fork Ranch every day where other display tables will be set up.

**3. BLM Adopt-a-Space Program Presentation (15-20 min.)** – Brenda explained that this program is postponed. BLM will be having workshops in Reno soon to see if service groups want to be involved in Adopt-a-Space. The Education Working Group (EWG) wants to partner with another group rather than adopt-a-space alone. This is a new program. Melanie is new at BLM, and an intern, Duff Calen, plans to join the EWG. BLM wants to be more active in CRC. The weed management group met with Ralph Thomas, the new Carson District Manager, regarding weed management in the Watershed and how to better coordinate efforts..

**4. Environmental Education Program Planning (30 min.) -**

- a. **Discuss EWG's role** – Brenda explained that Linda's Environmental Education (EE) Program grant has the role doing steering. Brenda wants to have a standing agenda item at EWG meetings to see what Linda needs. Task says: "With assistance from the CRC EWG, update and implement marketing strategy." Identify how we get the word out about the EE programs. Who to contact for newspapers? Identify issues and priorities to be addressed; educators and schools to be contacted. Mary Kay suggested a marketing plug in CWSD's *The Flow* each time that this is available for schools with links to website programs available. Identify workshops that would be available and attend education conferences. We can network with TNC program. Courtney noted that this is also valuable to document what Linda does for when she retires. She also mentioned that CWSD's website EE page is lacking.
- b. **Discuss individual program evaluation processes and creating consistent measures required in 319 grants (Duane/Brenda/Linda)** – Brenda mentioned that the goal is to create consistent measures which are applicable to anyone who has a 319 grant. We need to do better monitoring, evaluation, and assessment of effectiveness. Perhaps use a series of questions to pose to participants prior and following the program. We need to look at whether we really

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have impact three to five years down the road and whether it caused a change in people's actions. K-12 students could begin with series of grade appropriate questions for teachers to pose to students before and after to see if we are increasing basic understanding. Administration of questionnaire can be difficult so we want to make it easy and quick, maybe as part of the lesson. Perhaps the Survey Monkey type of format would work, or having students answer questions before coming on the bus and then after the event and maybe 30 days later.

Linda noted that she and Courtney tried using Survey Monkey with students but can be difficult for teachers who have access to computers only once a week. Perhaps it could be wrapped into lesson to include using computer, following instructions, reading, etc. It is very important to have age appropriate questions. There could be three types of formats: gather pre-test/post-test, format similar questions but only post-test to gather if student felt they learned from this activity, use of technology applying to real world, script that explains survey which will not be graded. Rob suggested using a social media site which can be done in the classroom or at home. Duane noted that TNC grants require that the program they are paying for creates a specific result. There is no money for surveys, especially post-grant.

Nicole noted that the Americorp program requires pre- and post-education and outreach surveys. It is a self-assessment rather than topic-based so it is subjective. Linda starts her contact with schools by telling the teachers why she is here: 1) to help know what a watershed is and 2) what NPS is about. This helps them understand what they are supposed to learn. Duane noted that you're only with some kids 30-minutes verses a day or more with others. Each should be measured differently. We can't currently determine what program is most effective.

We are planning to undertake a watershed-wide survey contracting Responsive Management, Inc. The survey will be random and include all types of people from the watershed. There may be some way to tier off of that to compare with people who have been through a program. The survey will be conducted by phone over two months to 800 people in the watershed. It will be statistically relevant, and be a cross section of the population per county to ensure we are getting a good sample. It will be repeated every five years.

Mary Kay noted that it puts pressure on everyone. The discussion can continue at an offsite meeting with the EPA present to try to keep it on the front burner considering the lack of funding and clear guidance. Duane suggested finding a way to tier it off the broader survey. We can pick any one program, not every educational program. Consistency is important, even state-wide. Duane stated that TNCE particularly wants to put resources behind what is most effective. Surveys can tell how to tweak each program in both a tactical and statistical way. We need to ensure we include other Environmental Educators in the discussion. For instance, Sierra Nevada Journeys, Michelle Hunt (USFWS) and others may already have some of these

measures created that we could draw upon.

**5. Watershed Literacy Grant Updates (25 min.) –**

**a. Draft Outreach and Action Plan (Courtney/Brenda) – Suggested Actions per Objective:**

**Objective 1:** *Determine how existing programs address main messages and reach target audiences.* SA-1 and SA-2 ask participants to buy in and address whether their programs are meeting that. Are their other programs discovered through a round table of environmental educators? Do we need to have another discussion with them to see if their message is the same and get buy in? We need to wordsmith messages. Can this be done in the workshop that Mary Kay is planning?

**Objective 2:** *Continue to conduct existing individual program evaluations.* Mary Kay suggested hosting a workshop with agencies who want evaluations (EPA, NDEP)

**Objective 3:** *Conduct a baseline watershed-literacy survey.* This will be done shortly and we are planning to hire Responsive Management, Inc.

**Objective 4:** *Conduct a gap analysis based on the watershed survey results.* This may be included in survey analysis and could be a role of the EWG.

**Objective 5:** *Conduct a watershed-wide media campaign.* Coordinate with other watersheds to say same message. Use a Public Service Announcement (PSA) like from Maine, Minnesota, or San Diego. Linda suggested signs about entering/existing the watershed. What about funding and contacts? Mary suggested asking ACOE for a non-structural grant proposal in October, the beginning of federal fiscal year. Brenda will ask Melissa Hallis at the Silver Jacket meeting on February 25. It could be like the USGS/ACOE flood chronology project for \$125,000 and match w/CWSD projects. Mary Kay noted that NDEP has funded media campaigns for Clark County so NDEP may be a funding source. NDEP Cooperative Technical Partnership has \$16,000 being used for flood awareness. Mary Kay noted that by the time we get to this objective, we will have a greater understanding of where we stand to pinpoint a message.

**Objective 6:** *Implement an online interactive Stewardship Pledge.* IF everyone remembers the idea for the Stewardship Pledge is from the California Coastal Commissions website. They have allowed us to use whatever information we would like to create our own version of the on-line pledge. In order to create it so that the data entered can be analyzed and queries can be made may prove expensive. We have a quick version of the a Watershed Pledge on our current website, but it is not interactive, nor does let us know if people are taking action. We might consider doing a contest for stewardship actions, like submitting before/after photos of trash collection, etc. Mary Kay suggested making it a school project/contest to create a phone app. Schools want meaningful assignments. Nicole mentioned a YouTube contest in Canada to promote specific topics and the group noted that there was poor response to our contest. Mary Kay noted that this objective is in good order after the public has received other information. She suggested checking with Robb Fellows and Ann Bollinger about a field day for Freemont School to do maintenance of the trail behind the school which could bring about school ownership of the trail and pride in collecting trash around the school.

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- b. Draft Carson River Watershed map back panels (Courtney/Brenda)** – Mary Kay noted that the Nevada state flag is big. A teacher has volunteered to outline how the map contents align with the Nevada Academic Content Standards. Linda commented that the Watershed Map is so much more user friendly. Duane said he struggles with the "Lifeline in the Desert" tag line because it blocks the idea of headwaters. We need to address the importance of the headwaters. Duane suggested changing the tag line to “A Lifeline for Nature and People.” Linda suggested: “Our Lifeline from the Sierras to Stillwater.” Another idea was: “Our Lifeline from the Headwaters to the Desert.” Courtney will send out a Survey Monkey survey to the group with options for a tagline change/revision.
- c. Watershed Literacy Survey** - (See item 4b.)
- d. Children's Museum** – The Children’s Museum exhibit needs rehab. Perhaps the group can do a field trip there with the next EWG meeting.
- e. Additional on-line outreach tool development - See:**  
[http://water.epa.gov/action/adopt/earthday\\_index.cfm](http://water.epa.gov/action/adopt/earthday_index.cfm) and review/provide ideas on adaptation to Carson River Watershed. Brenda noted that our grant with NDEP requests that we adapt the document shown in the link to for a Carson River watershed version and place it on CWSD’s website.
- 6. Other Items (5 min.)** – Mary Kay will meet with Brenda and Courtney about the June 16-17 workshop for teachers, and Nicole would be interested in helping if her supervisors authorize it.
- 7. Set date for next meeting** – Tuesday, March 17, 8:30-10:30 a.m.

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