



Education Working Group
Meeting Notes
Tuesday, March 17, 2015
8:30 PM – 10:30 AM
CWSD Conference Room

Present:

Linda Conlin, River Wranglers

Toni Leffler, CWSD

Nicole Lutkemuller, Alpine Watershed Group (AWG)

Melanie Hornsby, BLM

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

Courtney Walker, CWSD

Rich Wilkinson, Carson City Open Space

1. Brief Announcements/Two Minute Updates

- a. **GREENevada Meetings** – Courtney explained the GREENevada group as a partnership of similar interests sharing resources and collaborating. Let her know if you are interested in attending a meeting.
- b. **Potential Teacher Workshop at NWRA Conference (June 2015)** – Mary Kay is putting out a save-the-date for June 16-17, 2015. This is a two-day workshop titled “Waters of the Western Great Basin” with breakout sessions for the Tahoe Basin, Truckee Meadows, and Pyramid Lake on the first day after a tour of the geothermal plant. The second day would have a breakout session for the Carson River and Walker Watersheds. The workshop provides the opportunity to break out into pods for grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12 for networking, sharing ideas, and discussing the educational standards in more depth.
- c. **Project WET Workshop (May 30 at River Fork Ranch)** – Linda explained that this workshop is a collaboration between Sierra Nevada Journeys (SNJ), River Wranglers, and The Nature Conservancy (TNC). This workshop may be postponed until the Fall.
- d. **Floodplain Management Forum (April 22, 2015)** – Courtney explained that the Floodplain Management Forum would be April 22, 2015, 9:00 am to 3:30 p.m. at the Dayton Community Center in Dayton. Topics include the Truckee River Flood Project, remapping of the floodplain, the NOAA mapping tool, the Forest Service East Fork project, and the Douglas County project on the East Fork impacting Virginia and Rocky Sloughs. The \$10 registration includes lunch.
- e. **Get on the Bus Tour (June 9-10, 2015)** – Courtney explained that the two-day bus tour is to show participants the entire Carson River Watershed, traveling from Alpine County to Carson City on the first day and from Carson City to Stillwater on the second day. The \$120 cost includes lunch and snacks. The tour was scheduled with the intent that teachers can attend the week after school lets out and before their vacations start.

Education Working Group
3-17-15 Meeting Notes

- f. **Other CRC field trips** – Courtney explained that since the bus tour can't cover everywhere and all topics, specialized field trips are being planned of Heenan Lake Fish Hatchery next spring and a second field trip this fall (location TBD).
- g. **Trout in Classroom Update** – Linda reported that fish releases are starting. The Dayton High School's Trout in the Classroom program is producing an abundance of fish. Today she took fish food to them from the hatchery in Yerington. The Silver Springs Elementary School was also raising trout in the classroom but unfortunately the custodian unplugged the chiller over the weekend and there was a problem with the filtration system, so all the fish are dead. As difficult as this is, the children are learning about the hazards fish face from this experience. Dayton High will be turning over their fish to Silver Springs Elementary to release. Fish releases are scheduled for this week, one in April and one the end of the month.
- h. **SWAG** – Courtney explained that CWSD has obtained funding for SWAG and ideas had been discussed, like magnets, wildflower seeds, sunscreen, lip gloss, a bandana with the watershed map on it, etc.
Action: Courtney will provide the group with a sheet of options and pricing.
- i. **BLM RMP - Education and Outreach** – Courtney reported that Dean Tonenna had recently met with a group to explain how to review the Resource Management Plan (RMP). There are five alternatives being considered.
Action: Review the outreach and education sections.
- j. **Other** – Rich explained about new signage at access points for Carson City Open Space properties, like Ash Canyon. CWSD is also installed rumble strips in three motorized access trails. In Lyon County there are areas going into El Dorado and Gold Canyons where people are transporting weeds into the canyons. Mary Kay commented that the signs look very nice and she has received positive public comment about them. Melanie mentioned that a BLM intern will be doing a field office sign inventory which will be rolled into a Sign Plan and then move regionally. Courtney explained that it would be helpful to partner with BLM and determine high priority areas to place the same signage.
- k. Linda and Rich are working with the Carson High School ROTC Program to learn about non-point source (NPS) pollution and will teach the students how to wrap a tree to protect it from beavers, and will be out on the river on Sat., Mar. 21, to remove old wire and extend it to un-girdle the trees. River Wranglers has used some of funding from the Conserve Carson River Work Days to buy chicken wire and are expecting about 100 kids. Mary Kay offered map tubes to put chicken wire into to make rain sticks as a project.
- l. Melanie reported that the BLM has an Environmental Education team taking over for Deb Snyder who left recently. There will be Environmental Education Days in April and Sept. BLM

Education Working Group
3-17-15 Meeting Notes

is working with TNC to involve schools for the half-day events. They will take pods of kids through stations addressing topics like wildlife, weeds, etc.

- m. Rich explained the Buzzy's Ranch Wetlands Enhancement Project for which Carson City has done modeling and is seeking comments for ideas of how to lay the wetlands out. There are extra copies of the project map at the Open Space office. They may send out mailers and make public meetings a part of the public comment process.
 - n. Nicole explained that the Aspen Festival is scheduled for Oct. 10-11, 2015, (Columbus Day weekend) in the Hope Valley area. The Alpine Watershed Group (AWG) would like to make it more like an environmental education Fair this year similar to the Earth Day event but focusing on aspens and the history of the area. They are looking for partners to man tables, lead tours/hikes, etc.
 - o. Nicole also mentioned the Annual Markleeville Creek Day scheduled for Sept. 12, 2015. AWG is requesting specific organizations to help lead the restoration activities for Creek Day and expand the event.
2. **BLM Adopt-a-Space Program Presentation (20 min.)** – Melanie explained that last spring BLM initiated an anti-litter campaign targeting illegal dumping, staying on existing trails, and picking up your trash after target shooting which is going live now. They have had workshops to recruit people and showed a presentation to the public to teach people to get GPS coordinates so BLM could get areas adopted out. Southern Nevada's slogan was "Don't Trash Nevada." The new BLM slogans are "The Desert is Not Your Dumpster" and "Let's Talk Trash." They talk about bigger picture of how people are littering, like with tires. The elderly can help monitor areas and report to BLM even if they can't pick up trash. Melanie handles the paperwork. She said BLM must have a Volunteer Service Agreement to provide garbage bags, tools, etc. There needs to be a lead person for each project. BLM is committed to provide dumpsters or dump fees. They want to provide recognition for groups, like Hills Angels, maybe on a sign or kiosk. They plan to encourage commitment levels for team building and partnerships. BLM partners with bigger companies like Southwest Gas, Comstock Mining, etc., to help pay dump fees or provide refreshments.

Agreements run from Sept 30 to Sept 30 of each year, which is BLM's fiscal year, and can be renewed. Their Field Manager has encouraged public service announcements (PSAs), so they have billboards, a commercial, and three PSAs on TV on local channels and on Charter. They may be able to add an environmental education component for kids, like a field trip to the Waste Management disposal site to teach them where their trash goes. Her office is working on a Facebook page.

Action: Linda offered to put before and after pictures of sites which have been picked up by volunteers on the River Wranglers' Facebook page. Courtney invited Melanie or someone from

Education Working Group
3-17-15 Meeting Notes

BLM to come regularly to the Education Working Group meetings.

March 28, 2015, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., there will be a volunteer trash pickup at what BLM refers to as the "Mother lode" off Flint Road by the landfill. Trash from the landfill blows against and over the fence onto adjacent BLM land which is part of a land transfer to Carson City. Rich noted that a church group has adopted the area for clean up three times a year.

Action: Courtney will distribute a flyer about the event to the CRC email list.

Mary Kay suggested organizing a group to take care of "C" Hill. Rich said that there is a Muscle Power spin off group lead by Mark Kimbrough whose goal is to inventory all the trails, including private property, to plan for future trails connectivity. Carson City is concerned about maintaining the trails and is working with the Eagle Valley Trails Committee. Carson City may make "C" Hill a trail head with parking.

3. Environmental Education Program Planning (10 min.) -

- a. **Discuss next steps based on last month's meeting (Linda)** – Last meeting Brenda said this should be a standing Education Working Group (EWG) agenda item since the EWG is the steering group for the Environmental Education Program. Action: Include an environmental education article in every edition of *The Flow*.
- b. **River Wranglers Job Advertisement (Linda)** – Linda has been working on job description for an Environmental Education Assistant for River Wranglers. She has funding to have someone to help her for the fall school year.
Action: Put on CWSD website with a link noted in *The Flow*. Linda suggested "liking" the River Wranglers' Facebook website as a means of sharing what River Wranglers does.

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

- a. **Draft Outreach and Action Plan (Courtney) - Next Steps to achieve plan** – Courtney explained that the Outreach and Action Plan is part of the Watershed-Literacy Grant. It is a living document which is complete for the moment but will continually be updated. The group came up with Suggested Actions, including introducing the Plan to Carson River Watershed environmental educators. The idea is to hold a workshop or event with educators to introduce the Plan and determine if they are willing to help implement it. We want to maintain existing partners and create new ones. We want to eventually hone down our main messages to create consistency in using those messages throughout the watershed. We started working on watershed survey with NDEP, TNC, and CWSD funding. CWSD has hired a firm, Responsive Management, to conduct a telephone survey and is working on the contract. The survey is a good way to tell how many people are getting info from the current efforts and how to focus those efforts.

Education Working Group
3-17-15 Meeting Notes

Action: Courtney will send out the Action Plan to the Education Working Group.

- b. Draft Carson River Watershed map back panels (Courtney)** - There is a concern that the current tag line (“The Carson River Watershed: Our Lifeline in the Desert”) does not include the headwaters. Results of Survey Monkey shows two popular tag line options: “The Carson River Watershed: Our Lifeline from the Headwaters to the Desert” and “The Carson River Watershed: Connecting Communities from Headwaters to Desert.”
- Activity - Decide on tagline revision based on survey results**
Discussion about including the headwaters. Don’t want the tagline to be too long. Emphasis that water is critical to desert area. Headwaters to Terminus. Mountains to Desert. Sierras to Stillwater.
- Actions: Courtney will run another Survey Monkey with the options to: 1) keep the same tagline, “Our Lifeline in the Desert”, or change to “Connecting Our Communities”, or “Neither - give suggestions.”
- c. Watershed-Literacy Survey**
Activity - Create and fill in outline for general question topics and themes, determine which behaviors are most important.
Courtney expressed concern over the group not including key people to do this exercise. The survey company needs a map, a list of zip codes, general question topics and themes to ask, what types of behaviors we want encourage people to do. Brenda and Courtney’s initial and brief brainstorm follows the CWSD website topics. Responsive Management will develop questions, with our input. Mary Kay suggested asking for their list of questions to refine to meet our specifics. Melissa Shaw may be doing an internship with CWSD to research demographics within the watershed to determine the differences between the counties. Melanie suggested that the survey need to capture the local range of ethnicities. Courtney noted that Responsive Management can do the survey in Spanish also.
- Actions: Courtney will get the list of topics Responsive Management might already have. She will also share the Sipes link with Mary Kay. Mary Kay will give Courtney a copy of the Tahoe Basin survey.
- d. Children's Museum** - Field trip to the Children's Museum after the next EWG meeting. – Topic postponed to next meeting.
- e. 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. (NOTE: This item is from the previous agenda as we didn't get to this item.) – Topic postponed to next meeting.

5. Set date for next meeting – Thurs., April 9, 8:30-10:30 a.m.