



## Minutes

Work Group Meeting  
Wednesday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2017  
6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.  
Lander Community Center

Attendees that signed in

Gerald Geis	Hyle Miller	Joe Artery	Dan Hahn
Eric & Tara Carr	Bill Yankee	Cathy Rosenthal	Diana Olson
Ivan Laird	Steve Baumann	Cale Case	Aaron Bannon
Mike Wachtendonk	Anjie McConnell	Sol Brich	

### REVIEW/UPDATE

RaJean went over the last two bulletins and called out timelines and tasks. The bulletins can be found on PACD's website at [www.popoagie.org/water/Healthy Rivers Initiative](http://www.popoagie.org/water/HealthyRiversInitiative). She reported that HRI now has \$100,000 thanks to the LOR Foundation. Jen explained that LOR (Livability Opportunity Responsibility) is a private foundation that partners with rural communities with a focus on improving livability and quality of life through community-driven solutions.

### RIVERFEST AUGUST 12<sup>TH</sup>

MakerSpace will be providing education outreach regarding our water system utilizing manhole covers at RiverFest this year.

### LEVEL 1 WATERSHED STUDY.

In 2003, the Level 1 study explored the feasibility of large storage and irrigation efficiencies. The study reported that large storage was not feasible. This new study will look at micro storage on private property, groundwater use/storage, and irrigation efficiencies. This new study will look again at irrigation efficiencies since there have been significant changes over the last 14 years. PACD will submit an application to Wyoming Water Development Commission which is due August 15<sup>th</sup>. PACD is submitting the application because they qualify as an entity that can accept this kind of funding.

The application timeline is as follows:

- August submit application
- November recommendations are made for the budget
- December decisions are made on who will be awarded money
- February legislative process for funding
- March is the earliest money would be available
- May get approval on consultants
- July is the latest money would be available

It is important that the sponsor and as many supporters as possible attend the WWDC meeting November in Casper when they will form recommendations for the budget. If awarded, we

have five years to complete the study. Once a construction project is actually started, it must be completed within 18 months.

Level 1 is a feasibility study. Level 2 is design and engineering. Level 3 is construction. The work group needs to be thinking about what to do next after the Level 1 is complete. We can go to Level 2 or jump to Level 3. Levels 1 and 2 can be paid for by State funding. Level 3 is cost share 67/33 split with 4% interest. Small water projects can be sponsored by the conservation district. Basin wide projects would need a different type of entity to sponsor the application.

### WATER SYMPOSIUM

A water symposium is being planned for 2018 and HRI is looking for input from the work group for topics. The following was suggested:

1. Watershed Improvement Districts
  - a. What are they?
  - b. Why would we want to form one?
  - c. How do we form one?
  - d. The difference between a ditch group and a WID – you can have both.
2. Water Rights
  - a. What are water rights?
  - b. Different kinds.
  - c. Water Budget - How do I know how much water I can use and what I'm actually using?
  - d. Updating water rights needs to happen according to the State Engineer's Office, so we'd better figure out how to achieve it.
3. Wyoming Water Law
  - a. Educate folks on what the law states.
4. Water Quality
  - a. What are the current issues?
5. Underground Water Storage
  - a. Explain what this means (contact USGS for speaker)
6. HRI
  - a. Explain what this initiative is all about.
  - b. What it is and what it isn't. Not stealing water rights.
  - c. Coordination and cooperation gives us leverage for funding. We all have a common goal.

### RCPP

We've applied for RCPP (Regional Conservation Partnership Program) funds (federal). This is the last year for this grant opportunity. Application is due September 7th.

### U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

The City and the USACE have been working together on flood mitigation for quite a long time. They met for 2 days of brainstorming on alternatives and approximately 50 ideas were provided. They would like input from the HRI work group so we would like to let everyone know the next time USACE is in town. The attendees were agreeable to being notified.

## WIDs

The group discussed having one large WID (Water Improvement District) rather than many little ones and ditch companies. We need to educate ditch companies on pros and cons of forming WIDs. Another option is to form a Joint Powers Board. Joint Powers Boards are able to assess taxes, collect money, and bond a loan. Ditch users need to understand that formation of a WID does not result in giving up water rights.

## DEFINE HEALTHY RIVERS

Continuing education is planned for the coming year. The plan is to re-visit all of the groups we talked to last year plus any other group that is interested. Bob, RaJean, Jen, and Kelsey would love to be invited to talk to ditch groups.

The group was asked for input for defining “healthy rivers”. The following was mentioned:

1. In stream flow target? Minimum cfs in August? Minimum flows for fisheries? If we want to use a number, then we need to determine that number.
2. Free of 319 impairments.
3. Irrigation goals i.e. be able to have enough water to receive my whole water right.
4. Minimize stream flow variation; consistent year round flow.
5. Prevent the river from going into regulation with the State Engineers Office.
6. Biologically stable stream.
7. Stable system – degradation/aggregation

Bob asked the group if they were ok with “The Mission” and “The Vision” or were there any suggestions for changes. The following was mentioned:

“The Mission”:

Define “beneficial” or take it out.

Consider changing “beneficial uses” to “designated uses”.

“The Vision”:

Take The Vision off of the poster. Perhaps replace it with “Goals” or text defining the meaning of The Mission.

Bob asked if the group was ok to take the “draft” off of the poster. The consensus was, with the changes mentioned; it would be ok to go to the “final” version.

## NEXT MEETING

The next work group meeting will be January or February. Hopefully by then we will know more about funding and can start planning the symposium.

Minutes by Diana Olson, PACD