ATTACHMENT E

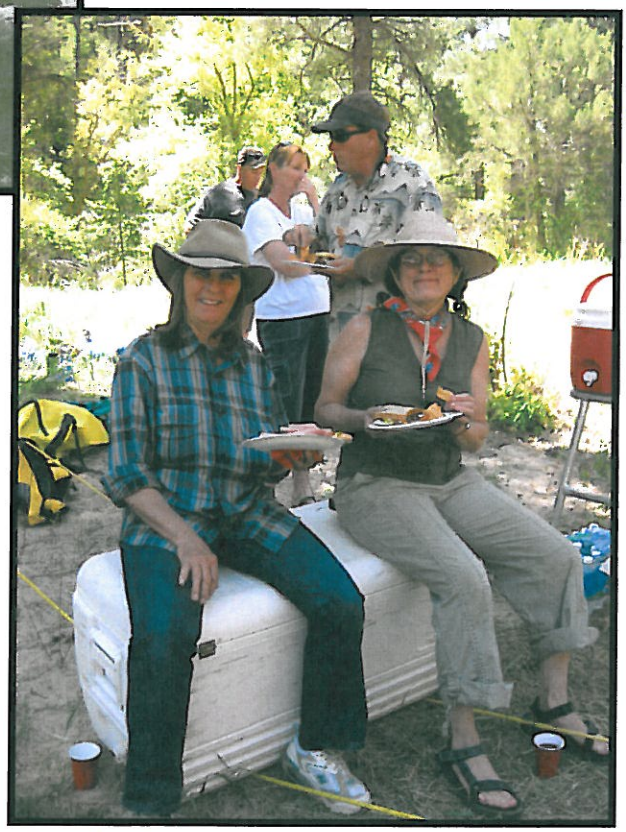
Lower Dolores Plan Working Group Rafting Field Trip

May 17, 2009

Bradfield Bridge to the Dove Creek Pumps

Getting started with 9 rafts.

It was a fun day!



Lunch stop

Rafting Field Trip: Reach 2
May 17, 2009
Field Trip Summary

There were 15 Lower Dolores Working Group members who participated in a field trip organized by the Dolores River Dialogue – Technical Committee on May 17th, 2009. Additionally, nine community members and Dolores Public Lands Office staff participated as boat captain/river guides. Carolyn Dunmire, a working group member who is also an avid recreational rafter organized the trip. The group floated through Reach 2 from Bradfield Bridge to the Dove Creek pumps.

The trip was a chance for attendees to learn about the rafting the Lower Dolores as well as other issues and values occurring in that reach. While on the trip many discussions were held about rafting (what makes a "good" trip and a "not so good trip; flow requirements; how the dam and spill works; types of boats that are idea at various flows; etc., etc., etc.). Interestingly, many in the working group who attended, including the facilitator, commented they had never actually rafted the river. The Dolores Public Lands Office BLM River Ranger, Rick Ryan, went on the trip along with the technical staff person at the DPLO who covers oil and gas (Tom Rice). Informal discussions led to a great deal of information sharing among diverse view points.

Near the take out, the group stopped at an archeological site. Along the way, attendees experienced the incredible beauty of the Lower Dolores including the scenery, riparian areas, wildlife, Ponderosa Pine and oak forests and the untrammeled nature of the area. Rick and Tom from the DPLO were able to give rafting etiquette and discuss resource management issues and impacts in that stretch of the river.

A media person from KSJD public radio was on the trip and later did a radio program with three attendees and the group facilitator. The show can be accessed here:
http://www.ksjd.org/AudioFeatures.cfm?mode=detail&id=1243553663342
This program was a chance to "process" the trip on-air and to show cases the working group process for the KSJD listening community.

Probably the most important aspect of the trip was the relationship building as the attached pictures illustrate.

Lower Dolores Working Group — July 20th, 2009
Field Trip — Bradfield Bridge Campground

Jim White, CDOW discusses the Lower Dolores fisheries

Chester Anderson reviews water quality monitoring techniques

Everyone convenes for dinner. Ann Oliver reviews DRD science and documents related to river flows, ecology and riparian health.

Adam Coble, a graduate student at NAU is doing research on cottonwoods. He shared his work with the group.

LOWER DOLORES WORKING GROUP FACT SHEET
Meeting #7
July 21, 2009

Field trip to Reach 1 at Bradfield Bridge

Dolores River Dialogue science perspective

Presenter: **Ann Oliver**
Dolores River Dialogue (DRD) Science Committee

Ann provided an overview of the goals and efforts of the DRD science team. The DRD's Core Science Report is a compilation of information from a considerable number of studies and other sources regarding the Dolores River. Now the DRD science team is working to coordinate the gathering of new information. DRD has four disciplines on which it focuses:

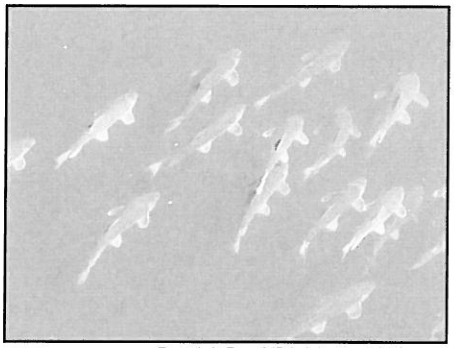
- The trout fishery;
- Native fishes;
- Riparian health;
- Channel health/geomorphology.

Reach 1 extends from McPhee Dam to the Bradfield Bridge. There are some issues in Reach 1 for each of the four disciplines. The dam has had an impact on all four disciplines. Since the dam was built, the base flows in Reach 1 have been lower than in years before the dam, and the spill flows are not as high or as frequent as high flows that took place before McPhee was built.

Reach 1 fishery

Presenter: **Jim White**
Colorado Division of Wildlife

A coldwater fishery is one that is under 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Jim said about 200 years ago, Reach 1 would have been a warmwater reach and the native bluehead sucker, roundtail chub and flannelmouth sucker would likely have been present. The reason Reach 1 is now a coldwater fishery is the dam, as releases from the reservoir come from its deepest and coldest levels. Downstream, the Dolores River returns to warmwater.



David Graf/Division of Wildlife
Flannelmouth suckers

Today there are three trout species present in Reach 1: browns, rainbows and cutthroats. Before the dam, trout probably would not have been present in the river below the town of Dolores. The fishery is catch-and-release only. The river supports a population of wild brown trout, as they are the most tolerant of warmwater and of whirling disease. Rainbows and cutthroats are stocked. The DOW is now stocking a whirling-disease-resistant strain of rainbows in an effort to restore the population of that species. Whirling disease is much more prevalent closer to the dam; the spore load is lower near Bradfield Bridge.

Surveys last year found that the average trout biomass in the river is 27 pounds/acre. The DOW's goal for Reach 1 is 32 pounds of trout biomass.

The Lower Dolores Management Plan Working Group is working to provide recommendations for updating the Dolores Public Lands Office (Forest Service/BLM) 1990 Dolores River Corridor Management Plan. The Working Group includes diverse stakeholders with many perspectives and interests in the Lower Dolores River Valley. Its goals are to gather information, identify values worthy of protection in the planning area, formulate ideas for protection of the values, and make recommendations to the Dolores Public Lands Office. The Working Group will meet until Fall 2009. Presentations, documents, meeting summaries, agendas and other information related to the Working Group process are posted at http://ocs.fortlewis.edu/drd/.

Lower Dolores Working Group Members & Alternates

Chester Anderson
Linda Bassi
Steve Beverlin
Ann Brown
Chris Burkett
Jon Callender
Randy Carver
Steve Chappell
Scott Clow
Clint Cressler
Cole Crocker-Bedford
James Dietrich
Carolyn Dunmire
Nathan Fey
Jim Fisher
Lynn Gardner
Rick Gersch
Art Goodtimes
David Graf
Dave Harper
Vern Harrell
Al Heaton
Shauna Jensen
Rick Keck
Amber Kelley
Julie Kibel
Gerald Koppenhafer
Ted Kowalski
Tony & Peggy Littlejohn
Andy Logan
Joe Mahaffey
Meghan Maloney
Karel Miller
Ann Oliver
John Porter
Mike Preston
Larrie Rule
Rick Ryan
David Schneck
Lisa Schwantes
Don Schwindt
Leslie Sesler
Jim Siscoe
Bruce Smart
Dale Smith
Doug Stowe
Rowdy Suckla
Steve Trudeau
David Vackar
Chuck Wanner
Mely Whiting
John Whitney
Ernie Williams

Staff
Marsha Porter-Norton
Kathy Sherer
Gail Binkly
Gina Espeland

Macroinvertebrates in Reach 1

Presenter: **Chester Anderson**
BUGS Consulting

During the field trip, Chester took samples of macroinvertebrates from the river. He said, in rivers with few human-caused impacts such as the Piedra or Animas, there are about 1,000 individual macroinvertebrates of 30 different species in such samples. Here he found about 10 individuals and not much diversity. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has called for federal public-lands agencies and tribes to monitor macroinvertebrates, as they are an indicator of river health.

A major factor in the low macroinvertebrate count in Reach 1 is the dam. It was built with multiple outlet works at different heights, but only the bottom ones are currently used because of the danger of releasing invasive white suckers, predatory walleye, and other non-desirable fish into the river if higher outlet works are used. These fish would have a harmful effect on the native warmwater species.

However, the water from the bottom of the reservoir is anaerobic. Phosphorus that is bound to organics is released as the organics are killed by the lack of oxygen. Thus, the water on the reservoir bottom contains a high amount of phosphates. These, released into the river, trigger the prolific growth of algae, which as it decays removes oxygen from the water, making it less healthy for animals and plants. The algae, called "river snot", is easy to see throughout Reach 1. Around Paradox there is a recovery in the Dolores River and the macroinvertebrate count is quite good.

Reach 1 vegetation

Presenter: **Adam Coble**
M.S. candidate, Northern Arizona University

Adam is working for the DRD for a year to study the riparian vegetation, particularly cottonwoods and box elders, and how their growth is related to hydrology. He has probed the question of whether cottonwood regeneration has taken place since the dam was built, and has found that such regeneration has indeed occurred. He said Reach 1 sees a considerable amount of regeneration; farther downstream there is less. He is continuing to try to determine during which years there was the most establishment of cottonwoods and box elders, and why.

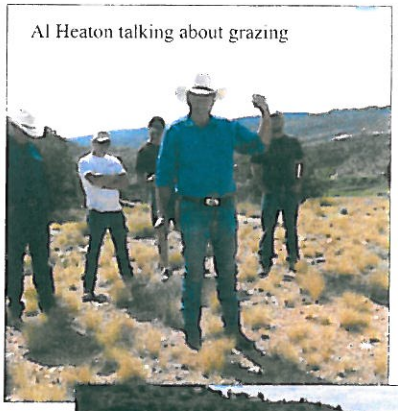
Marsha Porter-Norton

Members of the Lower Dolores Working Group listen to Jim White of the Colorado Division of Wildlife discuss the Reach 1 fishery.

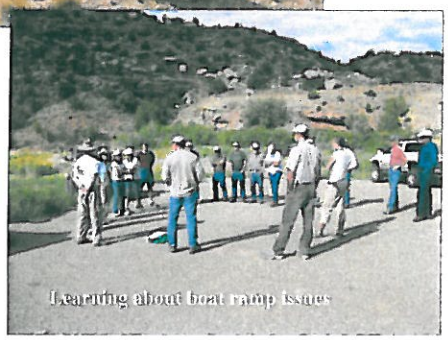
NO decisions or recommendations were made at this meeting.

Presentations, documents, meeting summaries, agendas and other information related to the Lower Dolores Working Group process are posted at http://ocs.fortlewis.edu/drd/.

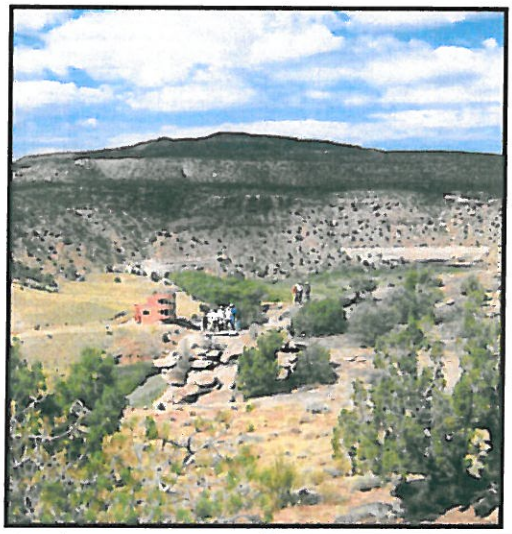
Lower Dolores Plan WG Field Trip — 9/12/09 — Slickrock Area



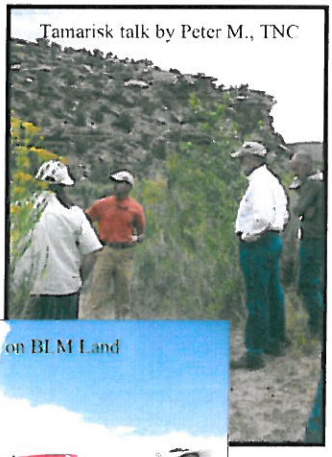
Al Heaton talking about grazing



Learning about boat ramp issues



View of Cole and Kara-Lynn Crocker-Bedford's property



Tamarisk talk by Peter M., TNC

Looking north and west towards Big Gyp

Lunch stop on BLM Land

Lower Dolores Plan Working Group
Summarized points from the 9/12/09 Field Trip to Slickrock

26 people were present on the trip.

Slick Rock Boat Launch:

- We met with the Randolphs and they explained many issues. These landowners own a piece of land on the river and right off the highway. It functions as a rafting/boating put in/take out. Also, many motorists use it as a roadside park. They struggle with problems here with trash, human waste, vandalism, etc. They have put in their own money to rectify some problems. It was noted that all of the concerns are not necessarily from rafters. It is family land and they are reluctant to sell it.
- Ideas were generated such as: close it off, move the Boat Ramp somewhere else on BLM land (some problems with topography exist), charge people, and/or make it a roadside park with State and/or other dollars. The DPLO District Ranger Steve Beverlin agreed to work with the Randolphs around problem solving.
- This is an important recreational amenity on the Lower Dolores. Solutions need to be found, it was generally agreed.

Grazing Issues, Al Heaton

- Al explained how his cattle operation worked and gave locations of his grazing allotments and areas -- on both private and public lands. He stated that he would like the Lower Dolores Plan to respect property and grazers' rights.
- His grazing practices, he told the group, are based on best practices. These techniques result in the land being taken care of *while* allowing his family to make a living. The two things do not have to be mutually exclusive. Grazers in this reach have to work with many different types of land owners and the Public Land Managers to make it all work. He commended all the private landowners who allow him to graze on their bottomlands including the Crocker-Bedfords.
- Al noted that grazing best practices include rotation of pasture lands, keeping cattle out of riparian areas, use of fencing, etc. There was Q&A around what grazing best practices really entail from a scientific perspective.
- He believes that the oil and gas should be developed. However, it should be gathered using best practices. Our country needs the minerals/gas and people who own them have a right to earn money from them, he said. Plus, the industry provides jobs.
- Al ended by again saying he would like property rights to be very highly considered in recommendation-setting done by the Working Group.

Tamarisk

- Peter Mueller gave a talk on the Tamarisk Coalition which is very active in the Lower Dolores River Valley implementing a funded project. This project mapped the priority sites and is working to mitigate them. He said there is no more use of the tamarisk beetle. There was lots of discussion here around the pros and cons of using this insect which was imported from the Middle East. The beetle intervention works because it only eats tamarisk but concern exists for unintended consequences.
- The Coalition is using hand thinning crews to remove tamarisk at prioritized sites working with the Southwest Conservation Corps.
- The Nature Conservancy is leading the effort which is very collaborative with other entities and private landowners, and the BLM.

The Crocker-Bedford's Property and Issues

- Kara-Lynn and Cole were hosts for the day and planned the agenda. They said they do not claim to represent every landowner. They stated that every private landowner in the corridor covered by the Lower Dolores Plan does care about the health of their land. They also rightly have concerns for their personal financial health as related to their private land, they relayed.

- They went into detail about the location and design of their house which was based on iver crossings, topography and aesthetics, and many other factors.

- While on the Little Glen Canyon Point, they relayed the history of their property and intentions to protect the land, both what they bought at first and the lands in near proximity. They gave their version of a very detailed history including challenges in getting protections for their land and dealing with the BLM around various issues and regulations. Their goal, they said, is to achieve considerable economic return – a nest egg in case of need - while also protecting this special place. They are concerned about the potential of a WSR designation and how it could affect easement values or BLM land trade values. They also relayed perceived problems with County zoning, BLM road access restrictions and other factors that they said negatively affect values of easement or land trades. Cole ended by going through a detailed list of suggested standards and guides that he and his wife feel should be recommended in the report to the DPLO from the Working Group. (Note: Cole's typed notes were sent out to the Working Group and give much more detail.)

- Steve Beverlin with the DPLO countered some of what the Crocker-Bedfords told the group and explained that the BLM does not get involved in managing or directing the financial decisions or purchases made by private land owners. He said in some instances, the BLMs version of the history was different than the Crocker-Bedfords.

- Rafters sometimes trespass on their land with varying degrees of problems.

- The field trip ended near the Crocker-Bedford's home where they showed examples of restoration efforts. Because of management of their land from a previously very degraded state the following outcomes have occurred: soil is no longer compacted; native grass is very abundant; knapweed is minimal; the sagebrush that existed near the river has been replaced by native plants that should be near the river; sapling cottonwoods are abundant and intermediate sized cottonwoods are numerous; and no new shooting of desert varnish of cliffs. Unrestricted OHV use, "bad" cattle grazing and partying/human presence as well as just lack of stewardship created a piece of property in need of care. They have spent a lot of time, money and energy bringing their property back. The benefits are many -- to them but also to myriad wildlife.