

November 14, 2012

Dear Work Group Participants:

Your steering committee met on Friday, out of which came the following plan for how we will build on the foundation we established in our first two sessions.

We are very pleased with your tremendous diversity, enthusiasm and commitment. The plan outlined here is intended to take advantage of that, and to safeguard your time as well. Read through to the end—that's where your homework is!

How we have set the foundation (October/November/December)

- Vision: Our various visions of the Poudre's future, shared in November, appear to lead toward a consensus that the initial vision we posed for the group holds: "*We want to make the Poudre River the world's best example of a working river that's also healthy.*" We will keep refining this vision as we look for practical ideas on how to enhance the river.
- Healthy River: We had a good overview about the ecological needs of the river from the ecologists in our group. How do we define "healthy river?" We have asked our ecologist members to provide a working definition for us at our December session.
- Working River: We are all set to have a good overview in December about the mechanics of the "working river"—how it is administered and managed to provide water for agricultural and municipal needs. The group will have an opportunity to dig deeper in our collective understanding of how the Poudre works at our December meeting.

What's the plan going forward?

Hearing ideas about what would improve the river's health and economic return (January/February). Examples we are already aware of include:

- "*2012 Watershed News: Proceedings from the City of Fort Collins Internal Watershed Forum February 17, 2012*" is chock-full of ready-made opportunities, some of them just waiting for community buy-in and financial resources
- A September 27, 2011 City Council Work Session Item details a proposal to GOCO to fund a Poudre Corridor—River Trail and River Park. The project wasn't funded by GOCO, but what's to keep a group from us from getting the community behind finding funding?
- The River District, as reported in the October 25, 2012 Coloradoan article "*River District re-do revs up*" is set to act on ways to tie the river more closely to the current hub of activity downtown, in order to increase tourism, economic vitality and community pride.
- Conserve to Enhance in Fort Collins has ideas for raising funds to improve the river.
- Colorado's Department of Parks and Wildlife recently presented a "wish" list of recommended non-consumptive projects to the South Platte Basin Roundtable. Several of the wished for improvements are for stretches of the Poudre in need

of instream flow protection, winter flow augmentation, and/or thermal limit protection.

- Sean Cronin suggested in an email that we see what we could learn from City of Boulder's IGA with Denver Water related to additional Moffat storage tied to instream flows through Boulder –to see if it might stir up some ideas for us
- Do river rafters have ideas they want to promote?
- Does Rocky Mountain Flycasters have ideas they want to promote?
- Does TNC have ideas they want to promote?
- Do ag irrigators have ideas they want to promote, such as ways the City and irrigators might better work together in regard to the ag water rental market and other ways to better cooperate on use of Poudre River water?
- Do ditch companies have wish list projects to better measure and control diversions and conveyance that might lead to water freed up for lease to benefit the environment and increase ag profitability at the same time?
- Do the City of Greeley and the Town of Windsor have ideas they would like to get Poudre River users upstream involved in?

Prioritizing what we want to focus on (March)

- Choosing from among the alternatives presented which of them we want to focus on as a group
- Most likely will be a long list that we will then prioritize as a group

Filling in the details, at least to the S.A.G.E. (simple and good enough) level (April)

- Filling in the broad outline of what's required, including what it would take to do it and how we might leverage resources. This is likely to take some sub-committee work.

Formatting a way to present it to the community (May)

- Formatting a presentation to the community about what the possibilities are

Rolling it out to the community (June)

- Rolling out to the community the possibilities we see and igniting their passion to get behind an initiative to leverage resources for action

Homework for December session

1) Focus on the website

- Cruise it—explore what's there
- Identify any additional resources about the Poudre you think should be included on the Resources page
- Identify any additional websites you think we should link to on the Organizations page
- Bring your resource and website suggestions to the December meeting or email them ahead of time to MaryLou

2) Pose a question for the "Working River" presenters to answer about how the river is administered and managed. Send the question to MaryLou no later than

December 1 so she can relay it to the presenters for their early December planning meeting.

- 3) Read the attached article by David Freeman about the interactions that several years ago led to cooperation between North Poudre Irrigation Company, Water Supply and Storage, and The Nature Conservancy to manage waters from Halligan Reservoir on the Poudre's North Fork to bolster winter flows for fish in Phantom Canyon.

UPCOMING HOMEWORK—START THINKING NOW!

Between December 18 and January 1 (or NOW, if you wish,) submit suggestions for presentations to our work group from various entities (including yourself) who have ideas for improving the river's health and economic return. These should be ideas you want our work group to consider in light of the vision and plan outlined above.

Looking forward to seeing you December 14!

MaryLou Smith