

December 9, 2013

The Poudre Runs Through It Study/Action Work Group

SESSION SUMMARY

Welcome to Scott Hummer

Scott Hummer from North Poudre Irrigation Company has joined our group. He will also be serving on the FLOWS initiative group. Scott reported that NPIC is trying to get their Fossil Creek Reservoir Inlet, damaged by the flood, reconstructed before spring irrigation season.

Cache la Poudre River National Heritage Area/Poudre Heritage Alliance Highlighted

Robert Ward shared with us the background and current efforts of the Poudre Heritage Alliance. The national heritage area was created in 1996, but various delays related to federal funding were not sorted out until 2009. As part of its goal to define and convey the history of the river and its corridor, the Alliance has developed signs along highways and at trail heads. They hope to provide water history guides and speakers in the future, and to provide better signage continuity. One of our members suggested that the subject of the Poudre's historic evolution in regard to conflict and its resolution would make a good sign topic. The group receives up to \$150,000 from the federal government, conditional on its matching those funds, including "in kind" but no other federal funds. (For example, our Gage the River group will be applying for \$3400 from the Alliance for their project, and the matching will hopefully come from the Pharos Fund grant we have requested from Bohemian Foundation.) Projects to be funded will cover a vast array of efforts that help convey the history of the river. Already funded have been Natural Areas of Fort Collins signage, a Poudre Learning Center field trip, and a Discovery Center Museum display. The Alliance has recently hired some part time staff, which will help them keep moving forward on their mission.

Helpful Advice for the Poudre River Forum

Members took a look at the proposed forum program and made helpful suggestions that are being incorporated, including having two audience dialogue opportunities instead of just one, and having a wrap-up at the end that stresses that there are some upcoming "big" issues that will require public support, such as that of how we might fund some major working river/healthy river projects up ahead. Each member was asked to commit to enlisting at least five people, preferably from their sector, to register for the Forum. Jennifer Shanahan from City of Fort Collins Natural Areas gave us a preview of the presentation she expects to make at the Forum about the eco response model that depicts the health of the river. Members gave her feedback that will be used as she continues planning for her presentation.

The River Diversions Group (which started out as the Canoe Trail group) is moving right along

Jeffrey Boring reported that members of this group met with representatives of the Whitney Ditch Company, including the ditch secretary and ditch rider. They are discussing potential for working together, including opportunities to repair Whitney's structure harmed by the flood in a manner that can work well for passage. Our group discovered that the ditch's immediate need is to get debris removed; Jeffrey is checking into whether Larimer County may be able to provide some volunteer help for that. Our group entered into a conversation with ditch

representatives revolving around the questions “what are your problems” and “what would you like to see? We were somewhat surprised to learn that public relations and vandalism are key issues for the ditch. The ditch rider provided some good ideas related to perhaps merging their structure with that of the Eaton Ditch since they are only 300 feet apart, and other ideas about improvements for fish. Depending on whether Eaton Ditch can be brought into the plans, there is potential for as much as nine river miles of canoe trail from the New Cache Diversion to Kodak, we heard. Good work, group!

Future of the Work Group Discussion Tabled to the February Work Session

What happens to the group after our last scheduled session in June? We decided we should tackle this subject after the Poudre River Forum, so it will be on the agenda for the February 14 session. Somewhat related (but discussed earlier in the meeting) the group acted on the recommendation of the steering committee to invite Butch Sommermeyer who represents Larimer and Weld Ditch Company to join the work group. We will be inviting him. Reminder: April Getchius from Timnath has accepted our invitation to join the group and will be introduced at our February session.

NEXT SESSION: February 14

In addition to an evaluation of the Poudre River Forum, which will have just occurred, and the future of the work group discussion, detailed in the paragraph above, we will hear from Troy Seaworth about the efforts on his farm that merited him a recent Larimer County environmental award. We will also hear from George Wallace about the Poudre Water Sharing Working Group—an alliance of Poudre domestic water providers and ditch companies who are tackling the issue of ag/urban water sharing.

HOMEWORK

Publicize the **POUDRE RIVER FORUM** and bring five people with you!