

Yampa River Basin Partnership Annual Meeting 2004 Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 29, 2004 Dinner served at 5:30 p.m.
Annual Meeting - 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.
Yampa River State Park Headquarters – Hayden, CO

Welcome – Introductions

- Call to Order at 6:45 p.m. by Vice Chair, Dan Ellison.
- Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence
- Attendance sheet – sign in encouraged to promote communications on issues relevant to membership.

Organization information:

- Approval of annual meeting minutes August 2003
- Approval Financial report August 2004 - \$275.46 cash on hand 9/24/04.

Chairman Report:

- o Year 2004 Review of Executive Committee Work Plan – Dan Ellison
- o Thank you to Les Hampton for his role as chair of Yampa River Basin Partnership (letter from Les below)

2004 projects Yampa River Basin Partnership participated in:

- o Yampa River Management Plan,
- o Monitored Elkhead Reservoir Expansion project,
- o Greater Sage-Grouse Recovery Plan,
- o Northwest Colorado Stewardship,
- o Migratory Grey Wolf Working Group, (Les Hampton and Jean Stetson serve on this committee and are attending a work group today)
- o Environmental Indicators with Yampa Valley Partners
- o Statewide Water Supply Initiative – meetings in Yampa and White River Basins
- o Water Quality Report – State Health Department
- o Fire Plan in Moffat County
- o Water Forum held June 2004 with Community Ag Alliance, The Nature Conservancy and Colo.River Water Conservation District.

Keynote Speaker:

- ❖ Ron Velarde, Northwest Regional Manager of Colorado Division of Wildlife
 - o Overview of DOW activities, 2003 Annual Report, various committees/ working groups
 - o Sage Grouse update across Colorado
 - o Chronic Wasting Disease update
 - o Migratory Grey Wolf Working Group update

2004 Work Plan Updates / Discussion:

- Yampa Recovery Implementation Plan – Gerry Roehm / Fish Wildlife Service
- Non Native Fish Management in Yampa River preliminary data presented by species and ‘river reach’.
- Elkhead Reservoir Expansion Plan – Dan Birch, Colorado River Water Conservation District
- Sage Grouse Working Group update

2004 Additional Information Updates / Discussion:

- Dinosaur National Monument – Chas Cartwright, Superintendent
- Routt County Invasive Plant Posse – Matt Custer / Routt Co.
- Moffat County Fire Plan – Jeff Comstock / Moffat Co.
- Northwest Colorado Stewardship – Jeff Comstock
- Water Quality Report – Bill McKee, State Health Dept.
- Statewide Water Supply Initiative

Adjourn at 8:30 p.m.

Yampa River Basin Partnership Annual Meeting Review September 29, 2004
Letter from Chair, Les Hampton, to membership

I thank you all for your participation and your concern regarding the real quality of life issues within the Yampa Valley. Most take for granted the efforts of the few who work to preserve our right to benefit from our natural resources.

While some are oblivious to the need, some are content to ask the courts to protect our natural resources. We recognize that the real work is done by those who meet with regularity to discuss “how do **WE** protect what is important to us all.”

Projects, plans, and proposals such as:

- The completed Yampa River Management Plan,
- The soon to begin construction of the Elkhead Expansion project,
- The nearly completed Greater Sage-Grouse Recovery Plan,
- The Northwest Colorado Stewardship,
- The Migratory Grey Wolf Working Group,

are examples of participating residents who recognize the importance of getting and staying involved. As we know, your time commitment is generally measured in years.

The Yampa River Management Plan completed 2002 is a product heavily influenced by area residents. This plan protects the sport fishing opportunities for anglers and protects native fish without the threat of federal intervention.

The current Elkhead Expansion Project is a design approved by local participation. The construction is scheduled to begin in early 2005. While this water storage is a component of the Yampa River Management Plan, it looks much farther into the future by providing water for increased human consumption for the next 50 years. Upon completion it will provide improved recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike.

The locally drafted Greater Sage-Grouse Recovery Plan will be completed and submitted in December of this year. This proactive approach to Sage-Grouse habitat preservation will help to insure that we all continue to enjoy the economic benefit, the right to use, and the right to recreate on our federally and state owned land.

Moffat County’s Northwest Colorado Stewardship is one of two federally approved and sponsored pilot projects in the nation. This program allows citizens the right to participate, in an advisory role, in the planning and utilization of BLM managed lands.

The Migratory Wolf Management Working Group was formed in July of this year. This group is made up of 14 members representing diverse interests and is tasked with advising the Colorado Division of Wildlife regarding the management of gray wolves that may migrate from the northern reintroduction states into Colorado. We are fortunate to have two Yampa Valley residents participating on this board. As you are meeting tonight, we are meeting in Glenwood Springs to continue these discussions.

Today, as you meet to review our process, the Colorado Division of Wildlife is asked to inventory the populations of Prairie Dogs. This inventory is necessary to avert a challenge by those who desire to have Prairie Dogs listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act. Those of use who live in western Colorado are confident that the division will find sufficient populations to defer the listing.

Regardless if the issue is real or perceived, your continued dedication is appreciated and needed. Thank you all for your participation. Thank you, for allowing me the opportunity to participate with you.

Sincerely, Les Hampton, 2004 Chairman, Yampa River Basin Partnership