

Weber River Watershed Council

Attendees

Voting Members

Jeff Young – Ensign Ranches
R Jefrie Hicks – Friends of Great Salt Lake
Brad Perry – NW Band of the Shoshone Nation
Doug Evans – Oakley City
Mike Luers – Snyderville Basin Water Reclamation District
Rick Smith – Davis & Weber
Wes Siddoway - Rancher
McKinley Smoot – Summit County Ag
Darren Hess – Weber Basin Water Conservancy District

Non-Voting Members

Paul Burnett – DWQ
Dwight Slaugh – BOR
Nickolas King – Hill AFB
Grant Doty - DWRe
Clint Brunson - UDWR
Carly Payne - DWRe
Todd Stonely - DWRe
Cody Edwards - USDA
Andy Rasmussen – Langdon Group
Hollie Wood – Langdon Group

Welcome

Approval of Organizing Documents/Statewide Watershed Council Meeting Report – Jeff Young

- Jeff Young, Rick Smith, and Wes Siddoway attended the State Watersheds Council meeting held on July 13th
- Organizing Documents were approved. The State council didn't have any edits to our organizing documents.
- There are a few items within the documents that Jeff would like to address
 - Current language states the councils should be made up of 9 to 21 members. This language will no longer be a part of the organizing documents when the updated template comes out.
 - Council discussion:
 - It would be good to have a minimum number, so we always have representation. 9 or 10 minimum.
 - Should keep language that is in there
 - Having no maximum may make it difficult to have a quorum present at each meeting
 - Current language states that council members may not designate proxies. This language will also be changed when the updated template comes out.
 - Council discussion:
 - Will hold off on making motion to approve changes to this language until the new template is available
 - It is standard to have proxies that can attend in your place when you are unable to make it for councils such as this. We can allow proxies, but the council member should let Jeff, Darren, and Wes know when a proxy will be coming in your place and who they are

- It defeats the purpose to have you on the board if your proxy is the one that is always coming, and you never come. Perhaps we should issue some sort of limitation on how often you can send a proxy
 - Majority of people need to be present for vote
 - We should come up the language for proxies in this meeting right now. We can allow proxies, but if you only ever send your proxy maybe you aren't the right person to be on this council. Let's include some limitation to how often a proxy can attend in your place.
- Potential language edits:
 - Strike out "no" and include something along the lines of: "Proxy representation shall not exceed greater than 25% of council meetings per 12-month period. Notice of proxy attendance must be no less than 24 hours prior to meeting."
- If we use language that limits proxy attendance, we will need to be tracking how often proxies attend.
- All edits that are made to the organizing document should be officially voted on by the council at some point
- We need to add an anchor location to our organizing document
 - Weber Basin Water Conservancy District
 - Darren made motion to add anchor location
 - Wes Siddoway seconded
 - Motion was unanimously accepted
- Minutes are required and can be approved or acknowledged at the beginning of each meeting
 - Recordings of these meetings are not required, so official meeting minutes may be a bit difficult to create
 - There is minutes template that DWRe is working on that we will get out to you

Great Salt Lake Basin Integrated Plan – Todd Stonely

- Laura is happy to come next time and do a more formal presentation for the GSL Basin Integrated Plan
- This plan is looking at all the needs that the Great Salt Lake has: wetlands, water quality, water quantity, dust, etc.... and bringing information together. The goal of the plan is to make good sound decisions that will preserve the lake.
- It is the intention of DWRe to have the watershed councils involved with this basin integrated plan.
- The workplan needs to be completed by this November to pass over to the legislature. The GSLBIP needs to be completed November 2026. The plan is currently in the early stages, and will continue to have stakeholder engagement throughout the process.
- Part of the integrated effort is the Salt Lake Recovery Program. Army Corps of Engineers is heading that program. This and others like it are part of the efforts involved with creation of this plan. We are working on "the plan for the plan."

- Currently working on a gap analysis for what we already know and what we need to know going forward.
- Questions from Council Members
 - How does the GSL Commissioner tie into this plan?
 - We have met with Brian Steed many times, he is on our steering committee, and attends many of our meetings. We are bringing these efforts together to minimize duplicative efforts.
 - We already have the GSL Comprehensive Management Plan. How does that plan relate to/work with this plan?
 - They are currently updating that plan and are part of our advisory group. We are working to coordinate all of these efforts together. Their deliverable will be different than ours, but we will work together. The GSLBIP will focus on water budget and how much water is making it to the lake.
 - Can you define what “basin” is meant here and what all is included in that?
 - This includes all of the Bear, Jordan, West Desert, Weber, and Utah Lake areas. The area also goes into Idaho and Wyoming, but the focus of our plan will be within Utah.
 - Will there be enforcement of this plan and who oversees that enforcement to execute this plan?
 - The GSL Commissioner, Brian Steed, will be the main force for enforcement. Reclamation will not be the enforcement power.

Echo Creek

Weber River Partnership – Clint Brunson and Paul Burnett

- Background for the Weber River Partnership: We realized that there were a lot of projects going on and we wanted as many people to come together as possible. We wanted the partnership to be a source of information, a way to raise money, a way to finance projects, raise awareness of what’s happening within the basin (NF, private property, etc...), and ways to improve how the resource is being managed. Gave us an opportunity to look at projects coming through and really see if as a partnership we can make improvements to those projects.
- Restoration Plan incorporated and engaged as many stakeholders as possible to identify key issues within the watershed. Main takeaway was that there was no overarching leadership for the watershed, and that’s what we wanted the partnership to do. Also developed an annual symposium to get stakeholders together and talking.
- Last year, soil conservation districts had their meetings during the lunch break hour so more producers could attend. Last year attendance was roughly 100-120 people. Water issues within the basin (water quality, run-off, snowpack, among many others) was the main topic of discussion.
- Doors are always open if anyone would like more information or would like to attend these meetings. Please reach out to Clint Brunson, Tanner Cox, or Christine Osborne (all within this council).
- Partnership has gotten nonprofit status, which has helped with grants.

- The Weber River Watershed Council should be involved with, and supportive of, these other groups.
 - East Canyon Creek is another group like that

Echo Creek - Paul Burnett

- Developing a 9-element watershed plan to address sediment issues within Echo Creek Watershed
- Why echo creek? Major contributor of the sediment to Weber River, native aquatic species, major transportation corridor (significant channel modifications), most waters are mid-elevation which puts it at risk during drought
- TMDL study completed in 2006, limited projects were implemented, but without sustained momentum
- 69,100 tons/year
- Load reduction needed to meet TMDL: 29,100 tons/year
- Bank erosion and historic land use (heavily grazed) contribute to why there is so much sediment
- 2006 TMDL
 - Installation of sediment detention basins and grade stabilization structures
 - Riparian restoration projects including stabilization of gully erosion and head cutting, re-establishment of woody riparian vegetation and riparian corridor fencing to decrease livestock impact
 - Elimination of broadcast weed spraying
- Current weed sprays are killing woody vegetation as well as weeds
 - Wes is on the Summit County Weed Board – he can relay that information back to them
- 2023 319 Grant – reengaging in Echo Creek
 - EPA required a crosswalk between TMDL and a 9-element plan
 - Most information exists, but needs to be incorporated into a more comprehensive document
 - renewed landowner engagement
 - modernized outreach component
- Watershed plan?
 - Collaborative approach to improving water quality
 - Partners including landowners Weber River Partnership, NGO's, water districts, and agencies
 - Nonregulatory
 - Sets up the watershed for long-term investment
- Priority Areas: echo creek below Heiners, Browns Creek, Rees Creek, and others
- August 2023 Landowner Meeting Input: follow-through has been lacking, stream restoration, wet meadow restoration, weed concerns
- Next Steps
 - Landowner meetings
 - Incorporate project needs
 - Establish monitoring strategy
 - Estimate load reductions

- Ideally it would be better to work in tributaries and work down, however reality doesn't usually allow it to happen that way. The reality is that landowner needs and high-issue areas rise to the top of the priority list. We also don't have cooperation with all landowners along this stretch.
 - Addressing needs such as this is also part of why this plan is being created and enforced
- How does this work with water rights?
 - Not a lot of water is being held back (we don't want to hold a lot of water back), but we will handle water right issues as they surface

River Commission – Jeff Young

- This agenda item was recommended during a previous meeting, and we should plan it for a future meeting. Who do we reach out to for this?
 - Kent Wilkerson is the river commissioner – has been through some of the driest and some of the wettest years on record – Weber Basin takes over during flood season and then it gets given back to Kent Wilkerson to manage water rights
 - Has 4 or 5 deputies and he could present on actual water flow of the river
 - Water Rights Committee works with/under him

Discussion

- Grant Doty is the Area Planning Specialist for Weber River Basin – would like to include him as a liaison to the council
- DWRe has some resources that they can provide to the council
 - Website: Carly manages the watershed council and posts updates regarding meeting details, agendas, minutes, etc...
 - Reimbursement: Todd has handout that he shared with everyone that details how to apply for reimbursement for travel and per diem
 - Area Planning Specialist: can provide information from the state to the council, can help arrange presentations from state agencies, can direct DWRe to help support in other ways that may arise

How to get items on to the agenda – Jeff Young

- Send ideas to Jeff, Wes, and Darren
- Please send items that require preparation (like inviting somebody to come and present) with enough time in advance to get those details arranged
- Agenda needs to be submitted to DWRe 24 hours before meeting occurs
- Reserve 5-10 minutes at end of each meeting to discuss ideas for next meeting agenda
- Statewide council mentioned that we may need to relook at our industry representative and invite some other more industrial representatives
 - Fresenius Medical Group
 - Union Pacific

Conclusion

- Next Meeting: October 19th, 10-11:30 am at Weber Basin Water Conservancy District
- Meeting Adjourned