

Uintah Watershed Council Meeting

Attendees:

Brett Prevedel	Jordan Dimick – Trout Unlimited
Jeff Crozier – Javelin Energy	Tory Mathis – Division of Wildlife
Adam Clark – DWRe	Todd Stonely – DWRe
Rachel Shilton – DWRe	Christine Osborne – DEQ
Nathan Hall – DEQ	Calah Worthen – Jacobs Engineering
Peggy Killian – Rancher	Hollie Wood – The Langdon Group
Tracy Killian – Duchesne County Commissioner	Heidi King – DWRe
Steve Hanberg – Irrigation Company	Mike Hyde – PLPCO
William Merkley – Uintah Water Conservancy District	Darrell Gillman – UDAF
Dex Winterton – Moon Lake Water Users Association	Randan Vincent – Rancher
Clyde Watkins – Duchesne County Water Conservancy District	Carly Payne – DWRe

Watershed Restoration Initiative – Tory Mathis

- Some of the people in this room have been involved with WRI previously, and some are probably not very familiar with it
- Not a Division of Wildlife sponsored effort, but a Department of Natural Resource sponsored effort
- Intent is to be a broad scaled effort with many interests
 - Water quantity
 - Water quality
 - Wildlife
 - And more
- Meetings are 4x a year and all are welcome to attend
- If this council wants to have a representative to attend our local WRI meetings, that would be appropriate
- There is grant money available to WRI for projects, but that money comes from partners
- Team ranks and scores projects and tries to find funding for them – money can come from partners, state agencies, or federal agencies
- Projects that get funded tend to be the projects that look at the watershed as a whole and are more holistic than a singular focus
- There are opportunities for on the ground projects to be done – in-river projects can be done through this initiative and WRI team members can help write proposals
- WRI funding is used for one of three purposes
 - Watershed health and biological diversity
 - Water quality and yield for all uses
 - Opportunities for sustainable uses
- As an organization, there are a few things that you could do right now
 - Could get representative from this council onto WRI team
 - Could potentially help facilitate bringing projects to WRI
- What WRI has upcoming

- Summer field tour
- Meeting in the fall to discuss projects
- More information available on website: [Utah's Watershed Restoration Initiative](#)
- Look at project score sheet to know how your project shapes up: [WatershedInitiativeProjectScoreSheetFY25_Final-1.pdf \(utah.gov\)](#)
- Questions from council members
 - Q: where do ideas for proposals come from?
 - A: They come from individuals/groups, or state or federal agencies. Ideally the different partners work together to develop proposals so it is a collaborative effort
 - Q: if an individual who wasn't a part of an agency or group wanted to, could they still bring their idea as a proposal?
 - A: Yes, private residences can apply without an affiliation, but typically it works out better if you are collaborating with others. It depends on the project if it will get funding (regardless of collaboration)
 - Q: Do projects have to occur on public land?
 - A: No, can be private or public. Though getting funding for a project that is totally on private land is a bit difficult. Agencies typically help fund projects that are on their turf.
 - Q: is it one pool of money? Is there competition for getting this funding?
 - A: Yes. Not all proposals get funded.
 - A few million comes from state funding
 - Q: the council may be interested in the WRI Summer Field tour (Mill Hollow Aspen Regeneration Field Day). Has a date been selected for that yet?
 - A: no date has been selected at this time, but will let the council know when it has
 - Q: is there guidance for how much a project can request from WRI?
 - A: New this year, a cap of \$1 million was implemented

Group Merger Discussion – Christine Osborne

- Uintah Basin Watershed Council – group of stakeholders including a lot of agency folks
- Created a bunch of good plans (Duchesne River Restoration Plan)
- Did some work with Friends of Strawberry
- After Duchesne River Restoration plan was completed, the position of their area Watershed Coordinator though DEQ was cut, and the group fizzled
- 2021 – Uintah Basin Stakeholder Group was recreated with some of those same individuals
- Initially, got to know one another and their efforts and involvements and potential collaboratives
- When Watershed Council Act was passed, group stepped back to see how they would fit with one another
- DEQ has money for watershed coordinators, but they only have enough money for 5 for the whole state (Uintah lost their watershed coordinator and has not gotten one back) – and not getting any more money for these roles

- How can we find funding for both these groups to acquire a watershed coordinator?
 - Could potentially put together a sub-committee to focus on this effort
- Most of the members of the Stakeholder Group are state and federal agency employees, so what is the best way for the two groups to work together? Is that a merger or intentional coordination?
 - Christine’s watershed group has been around longer than this council, but they are not currently doing projects and the group has primarily been informational
- Because this council is called the “Uintah Watershed Council” it limits people into thinking that it is solely Uintah Basin, when the geographic boundaries are actually much larger
- In the past, the watershed coordinator position was connected to conservation districts – so would be geographic boundaries of conservation district
 - Got money from federal government and transfer to UDAF, who oversees & pays coordinator role/position
 - Role worked to reduce duplication, increase collaboration, and provide info for potential projects & help direct projects to funding – direction on what projects can look like
 - Funding was never very stable/reliable and pay was low, so it was hard to keep somebody in that role
- At last week’s Utah Watersheds Council, the JWCD gave presentation on their council and they talked about how they have focused on education – could find someone to help with the education side and then they wouldn’t need technical experience
 - Opportunity to assist with RCND
 - USU Extension has taken over some of these efforts
- Details on who that watershed coordinator would work for and who they would be taking direction from would definitely need to be worked out
- Council discussion regarding creation of sub-committee and merger of the two committees and how to best bring together the different groups while minimizing redundancy
- Council members had questions and discussion regarding who is on the Stakeholder Group
 - About 50-60 individuals made up of primarily agency individuals and some nonprofit representatives
- General discussion/consensus of council members was that the Stakeholder Group be invited to these meetings and they can choose if/how they want to participate within that group – without an official merger and without all of those members officially becoming liaisons to this watershed council
 - A few individuals agreed to work with Christine and the Stakeholder group to focus on the watershed coordination effort, though this group is not a subcommittee affiliated with the Uintah Watershed Council

Direction & Leadership Discussion – Brett Prevedel

- Brett cannot attend the statewide council meetings in Salt Lake and the appointed representative, Scott Chew, has not had the capacity to attend those meetings regularly. Brett has been attending these meetings, but does not have a vote within those meetings (as he is not the appointed representative). Perhaps a change needs to be made to who our state

representative is to be somebody who is interested and available to actively attend the statewide meetings

- This legislative session passed that the Division of Water Resources will be creating a State Water Plan, and will be looking to the local councils to help with their parts of the plan
- Peggy Killian volunteered to be the state council representative
 - Motion to retain Brett Prevedel as chair and replace Scott Chew as statewide council representative with Peggy Killian
 - Motion made by Steve Hanberg
 - Seconded by Jordan Dimick
 - Motion unanimously passed
- Need someone from the council to lead our aspect of the state water plan (all council members will be involved, but need someone to lead out) – motion to elect Uintah Watershed Council representative to the State Water Plan
 - William Merkley nominated
 - Motion to make William Merkley Uintah Watershed Council representative to State Water Plan made by Steve Hanberg
 - Motion seconded by Dex Winterton
 - Motion unanimously passed

Schedule for 2024

- The council had previously scheduled the next Uintah Watershed Council meeting to be held on July 11th
 - Motion to move previously scheduled meeting from July 11th to July 30th (since July 11th is statewide council meeting)
 - Motion made by William Merkley
 - Motion seconded by Dex Winterton
 - Motion unanimously approved
- Next Uintah watershed council meeting: Tuesday, July 30th at 2pm
 - Virtual link: <https://jubengineers.zoom.us/j/5825820003?omn=89287511926>
- Future meeting: Thursday, October 10th at 2 pm
- Next Utah Watersheds Council meeting: Statewide Watersheds Council meetings are posted to their website here: [Utah Watersheds Council – Utah Division of Water Resources](#)
 - The next meeting will be held July 11th from 1 pm to 3 pm
 - Can attend in person at DNR’s office (1594 W N Temple, SLC)
 - Can attend virtually using Google Meet Link (available from Carly Payne)

Meeting Adjourned