DOLORES RIVER DIALOGUE
STEERING COMMITTEE
April 30, 2013
draft – 4 pages

Present: Don Schwindt, Dolores Water Conservancy District; Matt Clark, Trout Unlimited; Peter Mueller, The Nature Conservancy; Drew Gordanier, Southwestern Colorado Livestock Association. Guests: Mike Preston, DWCD; Vern Harrell, Bureau of Reclamation; Jeff Kane, attorney and co-author of the 319 Watershed Plan. Contract staff: Marsha Porter-Norton, facilitator; Gail Binkly, recorder.

Agenda: The agenda was approved with no changes.

319 plan: Jeff said he, Ann and Marsha completed Draft 5 of the 319 plan on April 25.

Marsha said comments received from Bonie Pate with the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment have been helpful. Bonie suggested some minor edits and changes to the draft plan. She also provided some broader, overarching suggestions:

- Focus the plan more on protection of water quality rather than restoration of poor water quality; thus, pollution-reduction targets may not be needed. Instead, she suggested identifying management actions that can be supported.
- Call it a nonpoint source management plan rather than a 319 plan because the term "319" won't resonate with many people.
- Provide a better explanation of why the focus is the reach between the dam and the San Miguel River confluence.
- Flesh out the milestones and potential management actions, prioritization of actions, and estimates of time and cost.

Mike said Bonie's suggestions are to fine-tune the plan; she did not indicate that it is not on the right track or that she would not approve it without those changes. Her other broad comment was that she appreciated that the plan addresses the essential water-quality criteria. Jeff and Marsha said she was encouraging and complimentary about the plan and there were no red flags in her comments.

Marsha said she sent Bonie's comments to Matt and Don as the 319 subcommittee, but she will send them to anyone who wants to see them.

Jeff said the comments they received from the DRD-SC members were primarily from Peter and Amber. They feel comfortable they have addressed all of those. If anyone is interested, Jeff has a version of the 319 plan that compiles all the comments and shows how they were addressed.

The committee reviewed significant comments to the plan and made some suggestions.

It was agreed that Jeff will try to state more plainly the geomorphic changes to the river and changes in habitat that resulted from McPhee Dam. He will include more summary sentences in some of the paragraphs and insert some charts and graphs to help show the hydrology.

Matt asked whether the 319 plan might enable the DRD-SC to obtain money for water-quality-protection projects rather than restoration projects, even though most 319 plans talk about restoration. Jeff said he believes so. Mike said some projects, even if not funded with EPA money, might get funding from other sources, such as the Colorado Water Conservation Board.

Drew commented that there are references in the 319 plan to the Implementation Plan and said he does not like referring to something that is being rewritten. Jeff said the only remaining places where the IP is referenced are in relation to specific hypotheses or goals that aren't mentioned anywhere else, such as temperature suppression and monitoring. Drew said that was acceptable.

Marsha said if anyone has more comments on the plan they should send them to her and she will send them to Ann and Jeff.

Appendices: Jeff said the first draft of Ken Curtis's appendix focused on the history of the Dolores Project and recreation. That version was edited significantly and re-focused to show the relation to water quality. Jeff provided places where a history of the environmental movement can be incorporated. Jeff said this appendix shouldn't require much more work.

Matt agreed it is coming along well and suggested several minor changes. He also said where the appendix discusses economic benefits of the Dolores Project, he would like to see a mention of its impacts on the angling/guiding industry. There was an expectation that there was going to be a functional tailwater industry after the dam was built, but once the Project came fully online, the trout fishery wasn't really viable. Matt said that impact and the loss to boating guides were major and should be discussed in the document.

The timeline for finishing this piece was discussed. Matt said he has begun working on the section about the environmental movement and will complete a first draft. Don said he will be able to work on it as well after about a week. Matt said David Graf will help write the material regarding the three native fish species.

Next steps:
→ The group agreed the goal should be to have all the appendices completed by the June 30 deadline. **It was agreed to move the DRD-SC's next meeting from June 4 to May 28 to help meet this goal.**
→ Matt will work on the appendix about the history of the Dolores Project and environmental movement, and next week he and Don will talk about it.
→ Matt may be able to send the new draft to the DRD-SC for comments the week of May 13-17. Those comments can be sent to him and to Jeff and he can send a revised appendix to the SC before May 28.

Regarding Gail Binkly's appendix with quotes from irrigators and boaters, Marsha said there had been an idea to weave it into Ken's appendix, but she and the 319 authors are concerned the combined piece might not flow well. Jeff said his concern about integrating the quotes into a broader piece is choosing which ones to include. Peter noted the importance of explaining what the appendix is focused on and not implying it represents all viewpoints. Marsha suggested

adding an explanation of what it is, and this was agreed to. Matt said Nathan has said he is comfortable with Gail's appendix so long as the boater perspective is adequately represented.

Regarding Marsha's appendix on the history of the DRD, it was agreed that it should be reviewed by the DRD-SC, but it should not require major changes.

DRD review: Marsha noted that the DRD did not meet last fall. She said this is a busy year for the ag community and time is running out to have the 319 plan reviewed by the full DRD before the state's June 30 deadline. She said the full DRD could suggest minor changes later, but if the DRD-SC is comfortable with the document, that might be sufficient DRD review before June 30, considering the SC is a very diverse group.

Peter said there needs to be a full DRD meeting soon. It would be good to show them this work and invite their feedback even though the plan is not quite finished. He said showing them a portion of the Implementation Plan would also be good. He thinks it would be helpful to bring people together and talk about current issues and work. People would benefit from updates.

Next steps:
→ A meeting of the full DRD was set for Tuesday, July 2, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the DWCD offices.

Budget: Marsha reviewed the DRD budget and said there is an overall deficit of $19,721 for two years, through 2014. This does not include any activities to implement 319 projects after the 319 plan is completed, but is primarily for monthly meetings of the DRD-SC. She said the Colorado Water Conservation Board has said it's likely they will fund the facilitation for the Lower Dolores Working Group and Leg Comm, an amount of $16,000, but that still leaves the deficit of $19,719.

So far this year, Trout Unlimited has made a commitment for funding and the DWCD, Dolores County and The Nature Conservancy have provided funding.

Matt suggested holding bi-monthly meetings after the 319 effort is finished, and it was agreed this made sense. Marsha said that would subtract about $6,000 from the total, leaving a deficit of approximately $14,000.

Don said he has authorization from the DWCD to make a commitment to provide $5,000. Matt said TU likely will give some funds, but he can't commit yet.

Next steps:
→ Don suggested seeking funds from the Southwestern Water Conservation District. He will check with Bruce Whitehead.
→ Marsha will revise the numbers for the 2013 cash flow to reflect bi-monthly meetings of the DRD-SC. This could mean there will be more funds to give to the 319 effort.

Meeting summaries: The summaries for March 21 and April 2 were approved with no changes.

Request from Cortez Journal: Marsha said Jim Mimiaga of the Journal is interested in doing a story on the 319 plan. She said since the document is going to be disseminated to the DRD in

July, the Journal can receive it at the same time and a reporter can attend the July 2 meeting and interview sources if necessary. The group agreed that was acceptable.

Next steps:
→ Every effort will be made to complete the appendices and send them with the 319 plan to the state by June 30.
→ Comments on Draft 5 of the 319 plan are due by the end of this week (May 10).
→ The DRD-SC will review the 319 plan and appendices again on May 28.
→ Comments on the appendices should be sent to Marsha or the 319 authors as soon as possible. In June the SC will make final revisions to the appendices.
→ Mike said if the plan can be submitted to the state slightly before June 30 it would provide a chance for Bonie to suggest small changes that could still be corrected.

Next meeting: The next meeting of the DRD-SC will be Tuesday, May 28, at 9 a.m.