

Utah Non-point Source Task Force Meeting Minutes

December 14th, 2011 9:30am-11:30am
Utah Department of Agriculture and Food
350 North Redwood Road
Salt Lake City, Utah

Attendance

Name	Representing
Jim Bowcutt	DEQ/DWQ
Brian Greene	USU Extension
Ron Davidson	UDAF
Greg Bevenger	USFS
Kathleene Clarke	UDAF
Jan Andersen	Utah Farm Bureau
Norm Evenstad	NRCS
Jason Roper	NRCS
W.D. Robinson	UDAF
Jack Wilbur	UDAF
Carl Adams	DWQ
Gordon Younker	UACD
Ray Loveless	UACD
Marian Hubbard	Salt Lake County
Paul Dremann	Trout Unlimited
John Isanhart	Fish and Wildlife Service

Carl Adams- Welcome and Introductions

Brian Green- Volunteer Monitoring Program

- Brian Greene, Citizen Science Coordinator for USU Extension's Water Quality Program provided an overview of the volunteer monitoring program he has been tasked to coordinate for the State. The primary goals of the program are to educate the public on water quality and watersheds and to train citizens to collect useful data. This effort is an outgrowth of the existing Utah Water Watch program organized by USU Extension for many years. Brian provided examples of citizen monitoring programs established in other areas of the country that have been very successful in generating public support and action for water quality improvements.
- The proposed framework for citizen monitoring entails three tiers of volunteers:
 - o Tier 1: Educational / Planning focus
 - o Tier 2: Engagement / Reporting
 - o Tier 3: Advanced data needs

- Social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter along with more traditional methods (web pages, newsletters, etc.) will be used to promote the program and coordinate volunteers.
- Brian has met with numerous groups including the Master Naturalist's program, dedicated Hunters, and local watershed coordinators, among others to discuss the formation of the program and has asked the Task Force for their input as well. Training workshops for volunteers is being planned to begin this spring (March-April). Concerns were expressed regarding trespass issues and safety. Brian committed that these issues will be first and foremost in the volunteer training.
- Monitors would be expected to be at least high school age, and will have to prove that they are proficient at monitoring to move up in the monitoring program tiers.
- A form will be sent out to all the task force members so that they will be able to give their input to the program.

Ray Loveless- Environmental Stewardship Certification Program

- The new Environmental Stewardship Coordinator for the Utah Dept. of Agriculture and Food discussed his role in the creation of the Environmental Stewardship Program established by the Legislature and assigned to the Conservation Commission. He began working on November 7th.
- Producers face many new requirements and expectations. The challenge is to protect natural resources while sustaining agriculture. The Environmental Stewardship Certification program will provide producers assurance that they are meeting environmental requirements. Certification would not be in lieu of individual permits but perhaps satisfy or replace the less intensive permits by rule.
- Certificates will address various natural resource issues not just water quality. Most land owners have a vested interest complying with the requirements used to obtain the certificate. They save money by using nutrients for growing crops. They don't want to lose them either.
- If landowners choose not to obtain a stewardship certification they will be on their own when it comes to dealing with the state in the event of a discharge from their property.
- Cooperators that are currently working with the NRCS and the districts will be well ahead of the curve when it comes to obtaining these permits. In many cases they will already qualify. They will just need to submit the application and receive an official visit to receive the certificate.

- If the land owner chooses he could still go with the rule permit option offered by the state.
- There is interest from the USFS to expand certification to grazing allotments and Ray confirmed that was envisioned in the creation of the program.
- Applications for certification will be submitted to the Utah Dept. of Agriculture and Food.
- A monitoring program will be required to determine program effectiveness.

Jim Bowcutt-NPS Management Plan

- Jim discussed the upcoming revision of the State's Nonpoint Source Management Plan. Required elements for the revised plan are expected from EPA in mid-January. One of the key requirements of the plan is that all relevant agencies are involved.
- It was pointed out that the plan should investigate background and natural loading in the state.
- Section 319 of the Clean water act states that a state management plan must consist of the following:
 - o What BMPs will be used to reduce NPS Pollution
 - o What programs exist to implement these BMPs
 - o A schedule with milestones and dates
 - o Plan must be certified by the attorney general
 - o What funding is available to fund projects besides 319 and how will it be used.
 - o 401 permitting
- Jim anticipates the first kickoff meeting to take place on the 29th of March at DWQ's office at 9:00 to capture the majority of agency representatives.
- Jim would like to have all invitations to relevant agencies by mid-January.
- Jim will submit a draft agenda for this meeting by mid-February.

Utah Water Conference Discussion

- There is \$14,525 in UDAF's account for future conferences.
- The consensus of the Task Force was to focus on addressing other water related conferences this year to spread the message of nonpoint source control and avoid "preaching to the choir".

- Salt Lake County's symposium in September was identified as a particularly appropriate venue and eventually addressing the Association of Counties and League of Cities and Towns.
- Maybe the conference should cater to a little different audience than it has in the past (ie. County Officials, Mayors, and Legislators).

NRCS Nutrient Management Standards

- Niels Hansen should be the contact if there are any questions or comments regarding the nutrient management standards
- It looks like the new standard will allow the each state NRCS office to work with the agency that has been tasked by the state to regulate water quality to determine what regulations should be when applying manure during winter months.
- The next meeting will be the march 29th NPS management plan meeting. This will be held at the Division of Water Quality Building at 9:00.
- The meeting after this will be held on June 28th at 9:30