
Stream Gage Oversight Work Group

Subcommittee of the Governor's Drought and Water Supply Advisory Committee

MEETING #3 SUMMARY NOTES

DATE: February 21, 2020

TIME: 9:00 – 12:00

LOCATION: Montana Room. 1st floor DNRC 1539 Eleventh Ave, Helena, Helena

Summary

This was the third meeting of the Stream Gage Oversight Workgroup. The Group adopted their Terms of Reference and reviewed a proposed Work Plan

Action Items

- Post Terms of Reference to web site
- Revise Work Plan

Member Present:

- Stephen Begley – Fish Wildlife & Parks – Co-Chair
- Paul Azevedo – Dept of Natural Resources – Co-Chair
- John Peterson – Dept of Ag
- Darrin Kron – Dept of Environmental Quality
- Mike Honeycutt – Dept of Livestock
- Wayne Johnston – Dept of Commerce
- Andrew Long – Military Affairs/DES

Guests: Stephanie Adams-SWCDM, John Kilpatrick-USGS, Tracy Wendt – Sun River Watershed Group, Nikki Sandve-DNRC, Matt Norberg-DNRC,

Phone: Bill Milton- Musselshell Watershed Coalition, Madeline Gotkowitz-MBMG; Clayton Elliot-MT Trout Unlimited, Kirk Miller-USGS.

Review of the December 18th meeting

- Paul provide a recap of December 18th meeting.
- Action Items
 - Continue to develop spreadsheet of funders. -- On going
 - Develop story map for stakeholder outreach. – In development. Limited resources.
 - Create a website to share information. – website is live. Content will be added as it becomes available.
 - Revise Terms of Reference – Done.
 - Keep Developing stakeholder list. – On going
 - USGS meeting is February 5th
- Work Group approved draft of December meeting summary.

Summary and update of USGS Meeting on February 5th

- Follow-up to meeting held on Sept 18th
- Convening of funders and those who depend on stream flow data.
- Reviewed progress made by 3 work groups
 - Survey of users
 - Survey of funders
 - Interactive Map

Update on outreach

- Work Group web site went live. See <http://dnrc.mt.gov/stream-gage-oversight>
- Paul met with Stephanie Adams at Soil & Water Conservation Districts of MT and Ethan Kinard with MT Watershed Coordination Council.
- Soil & Water Conservation Districts of MT newsletter “The MT Conservationist”. Spoke with Kate Arpin.
- Paul gave a presentation at MT Water Users Association annual meeting in Fairmont – Feb 6th.
- March 3-4 Montana Water Summit Bill Milton and Paul will be hosting a Great Water Conversations lunch table. Table topic is “Stream Gages – Can You Management Without Them?”

Review Terms of Reference.

- Reviewed reviews to work draft based on feedback from December 18th meeting.
 - Refined Scope and Out of Scope
 - Removed goals and objectives and several other items better suited for the Work Plan.
- Terms of Reference adopted by the Working Group.

Review Draft Work Plan

- Stephen led review and discussion of Work Plan.
- Discussion included
 - Better alignment between work plan objectives and statutory language. Revise as needed.
 - Introduction section should reference stream gaging related recommendations from 2015 State Water Plan.
 - Flag tasks that need to be completed on annual basis.
- Work plan will be revised based on feedback.

Other Items

- John Kilpatrick (USGS) informed the group that USGS may have to discontinue up to 6 stream gages soon. The gages are in Montana and Wyoming and are 100% federally funded through the Federal Priorities Program (FPP). Program funding has been flat for the last 10 years. John will have a better idea in a few weeks. If he must discontinue several Montana gages, he asked the group to help him determine priorities.

Next meeting

- Week of April 13th. A doodle poll will be sent.
- Potential agenda items
 - USGS funding framework
 - Approve Work Plan