

STATE OF COLORADO

Colorado Water Conservation Board

Department of Natural Resources

1313 Sherman Street, Room 721
Denver, Colorado 80203
Phone: (303) 866-3441
Fax: (303) 866-4474
www.cwcb.state.co.us



TO: Colorado Water Conservation Board Members

FROM: Ted Kowalski, Chief, Interstate, Federal & Water
Information Section
Linda Bassi, Chief, Stream & Lake Protection Section
Suzanne Sellers, Interstate, Federal & Water Information
Section

DATE: March 6, 2014

SUBJECT: **Agenda Item 23, March 18-19, 2014 Board Meeting**
Interstate, Federal & Water Information/Stream & Lake Protection Sections –
Wild and Scenic Rivers Alternatives Update

John W. Hickenlooper
Governor

Mike King
DNR Executive Director

James Eklund
CWCB Director

Background

The CWCB Staff continues to work with stakeholder groups to develop resource protection methods that could serve as alternatives to federal determinations by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management ("BLM") or U.S. Forest Service ("USFS") that certain river segments are "suitable" for designation under the Wild and Scenic River Act. There are currently three stakeholder groups that are continuing to work on Wild and Scenic protections: 1) the San Juan River basin group (separated into five different basins) ("River Protection Workgroup" or "RPW"); 2) the Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic Stakeholder Group ("UCRW&S"); and 3) the Lower Dolores Plan Working Group ("LDPWG"). Updates on these processes are set forth below.

Staff Recommendation

This item is informational only, with no Board action requested.

Upper Colorado Stakeholder Group Update

The Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic Stakeholder Group held its regular meeting on January 15, 2014 in Summit County and its next regular meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2014 at the same location. The Stakeholder meeting included a presentation on Colorado Parks and Wildlife's (CPW) 2013 biosurveys, a presentation on RRC's 2013 floatboating survey, working group progress reports, and approval of operating guidelines for the Stakeholder Group Coordinator. A portion of the meeting was set aside to discuss budget and funding of upcoming work.

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Kremmling Field Office Final Resource Management Plan (RMP)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is now anticipated to be released on March 17, 2014 with the Record of Decision (ROD) expected out in September 2014. The Colorado River Valley Field Office Final RMP/EIS is anticipated to be released on March 24, 2014 with the ROD out in September 2014. The final Wild and Scenic Rivers Suitability Report (which will cover both field offices) is scheduled to be released on March 17, 2014 also. Roy Smith of the BLM will be at the Board Meeting on the 18th to brief the Board on these three documents and the BLM's incorporation of Upper Colorado River Wild and Scenic Stakeholder Plan.

For more information, see the following link: <http://www.upcowildandscenic.com>

River Protection Workgroup Update (various sub-basins of the San Juan River)

The River Protection Workgroup (RPW) Steering Committee held regular meetings on January 10 and February 13, 2014. The RPW Steering Committee's next meeting is scheduled for March 13, 2014 in Durango, CO. The Steering Committee is currently engaged in negotiations and development of consensus approaches for the protection of the five rivers and specific outstanding remarkable values (ORVs) in the San Juan River basin. It is anticipated that the any recommendations that may be a result of these negotiations will likely consist of tradeoffs by the various stakeholders, including the potential for a recommendation of suitability on one or more streams in the basin.

For more information, see the following link: <http://ocs.fortlewis.edu/riverprotection>.

Lower Dolores Plan Working Group Update

The A Way Forward ("AWF") Implementation Team completed its re-draft of the Native Fish Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan on February 28, 2014. The completion of the Implementation Plan is an important step forward as it will help guide the native fish protections that will be addressed in the proposed National Conservation Area ("NCA") legislation, along with water rights protections. There is ongoing outreach by the Legislative Subcommittee boundary committee to private landowners and other entities and individuals with valid existing rights within the proposed NCA. Both the re-drafted Implementation Plan and the status of NCA legislation will be presented to the Lower Dolores Plan Working Group and the Dolores River Dialogue later this spring. Additional information on the Lower Dolores Plan Working Group can be found at <http://ocs.fortlewis.edu/drd/meetings.asp>.