



## **YAMPA RIVER LEAFY SPURGE PROJECT**

“... working together to establish an effective program of integrated management for leafy spurge...”

### **YAMPA RIVER LEAFY SPURGE PROJECT**

**Wednesday 10:00am, April 12, 2023**

**Carpenter Ranch and by Zoom**

#### **Draft Proposed Agenda**

1. Welcome: Ben
2. Introductions: (5 minutes)
3. Review Agenda: (5 minutes)
4. Reports on Meetings and Presentations: (Ben, Tamara, Emily, John) (10 minutes)
  - a. Routt County Board of County Commissioners
  - b. Moffat County Board of County Commissioners
  - c. State of the River, Craig
  - d. State of the River, Steamboat Springs
5. Update on Inundative Biological Control Grant Application: (Emily, Tamara, Lindsey) (20 minutes)
6. Next Steps Succession Planning 8<sup>th</sup> Edition: (John, Ben) (10 minutes)
7. Update on Draft Text of Integrated Management of Leafy Spurge with Herbicides: (Tamara, Jesse) (5 minutes)
8. Planning for Summer Events: (25 minutes)
  - a. Biocontrol collection and release: Front Range, Idaho (Tamara, John Kaltenbach)
  - b. Monitor release sites on SWA for beetle nursery. (Tamara, Shane)
  - c. Monitor beetle release sites and set protocols for number of monitoring sites. (Tamara, Group)
  - d. Show Me Float (John, Ben)
  - e. Biocontrol public event (Group)

f. Outreach (Group)

9. Website Update: (Pete) (5 minutes)

10. Update on 2023 Budget (Tamara) and Friends of the Yampa/YRLSP Donations Account. (Lindsey) (10 minutes)

11. Partner Plans and Updates: (Group) (15 minutes)

- a. Friends of the Yampa
- b. Routt County Weed Program
- c. Moffat County Weed and Pest Management
- d. Colorado Parks and Wildlife
- e. Yampa River State Park
- f. BLM
- g. CO State Land Board
- h. NRCS: Steamboat
- i. NRCS: Craig
- j. Dinosaur Nat Monument
- k. MC CSU Extension
- l. RC CSU Extension
- m. Colorado Department of Agriculture

12: Discussion of YRLSP 2023 Meeting Schedule: (Group) (5 minutes)

13. Other (5 minutes)

- a. Photos of leafy spurge infestations showing suppressed plants and dense patches (Laurel)

**Next Proposed YRLSP Regular Meeting:** Wednesday, June 14, 2023 at the Carpenter Ranch and/or By Zoom

Proposed Adjournment (12:00pm)

**YAMPA RIVER LEAFY SPURGE PROJECT**  
**Wednesday, April 12, 2023**  
**Carpenter Ranch, Hayden Colorado**  
**And by Zoom**  
**Final Meeting Notes**

**ATTENDEES:**

**Working Group Members Present**

Ben Beall, Routt County Citizen  
John Husband, Moffat County Citizen  
Tamara Naumann, Moffat County Citizen  
Pete Williams, Moffat County Citizen  
Shane Talvacchio, CPW

**Working Group Members by ZOOM**

Laurel Deitch, NRCS Craig  
John Kaltenbach, CDA

Ben Beall opened the meeting at 10:07am

Ben asked everyone to introduce themselves starting with the Working Group Members present and then those on Zoom.

Ben reviewed the proposed agenda with the Group and Ben informed the Group that the agenda was revised for the meeting. There were no additions or changes to the agenda.

**First Discussion: Update on 2023 Budget and Friends of the Yampa/YRLSP  
Donations Account.**

Ben showed the 2023 Budget Sheet to the Group that Tamara had presented at the April 8<sup>th</sup> YRLSP meeting. He said that he thought that we needed to review the Budget at each meeting.

Tamara said that there were no changes to the 2023 Budget. There has been some activity. Moffat County was invoiced for their \$1,500 but it has not been received. Routt County has been invoiced through Tiffany Carlson's RC Weed Program and it has been deposited in the YRLSP Donation Account with Friends of the Yampa (FOTY).

Also, the two WIX invoices (for the website) have been paid—the annual hosting fee for \$264, and the biennial domain fee for \$47.70.

Ben recommended that we add an expense column to the 2023 Budget Sheet. Tamara said that she would.

Ben advised the Group that he had talked to Lindsey Marlow, FOTY, and he had received an accounting sheet for the FOTY/YRLSP Donations Account, which he uploaded.

Tamara commented that because of FOTY's new accounting system, it is not obvious how much money is available to YRLSP. Lindsey has confirmed the carryover amount from 2022, so the YRLSP budget, as presented, is accurate. The expenditure column is correct but the current year column will not show funds carried over from previous years.

Ben thought it strange that FOTY doesn't have a system that works.

Tamara recommended that the YRLSP will just have to pay attention to our Annual Budget and make sure the expenditures match the budget.

John Husband asked if the MapItFast (AgTerra) expenses in the budget were annual expenses. Pete Williams responded, yes, except for the additional tablet fees. Pete explained that the base annual cost for the MapItFast software includes the use of one tablet. There is an additional monthly fee per tablet for the use of additional tablets. Since we have finished the leafy spurge mapping, we may only need the use of two tablets, rather than the three we've used in previous years. If it turns out that we need the third, it can be activated on a monthly basis.

Pete and Shane Talvacchio had a discussion about visiting infestations on the Yampa River State Wildlife Area. Shane said that he would be interested in joining any visits to the YRSWA to learn as much as possible about where the leafy spurge infestations are. Pete said that there was one infestation in particular that he was interested in revisiting to take photographs for the upcoming Integrated Management web page (of the patchy appearance of leafy spurge impacted by biological control). This particular patch will probably be easier to visit via raft than on foot. Shane suggested that he did have a raft to use

**Task 1: Tamara to add an Expense Column to the 2023 YRLSP Budget.**

**Task 2: Ben to have a Budget Update as an agenda item for all future meetings.**

## **Second Discussion: Reports on Meetings and Presentations**

### **Routt County Board of County Commissioners March 20, 2023**

Ben informed the Group that he and Tiffany met with the RC BCC. Also present were Jenny Frithsen, FOTY, and Shane, both of whom helped with the presentation. Tamara

was on Zoom for the meeting, and updated the RCBCC on the Inundative BioControl Grant. We presented a short PowerPoint. He thought it went well and the Commissioners asked questions. Both Commissioner Redmond and Macys said that they would like to go on the Show Me Float.

### **Moffat County Board of County Commissioners March 28, 2023**

John reported that he had given a PowerPoint general update to the MC BCC about what the YRLSP has been doing, including biocontrol. He said that the Commissioners were engaged like in previous years.

### **State of the River, Craig March 22, 2023**

Tamara said that she attended and set up a table. She reported that Bruce Johnson, J Quarter Circle Ranch, stopped by to say that he would still like the YRLSP to release beetles on his property. She said that a representative of the Colorado River District, sponsor of the event, came by and asked a few questions.

### **State of the River, Steamboat March 23, 2023**

Ben reported that there were about 75 attendees. He set up a table with the YRLSP poster and talked to 5 or 6 attendees. He thought that it was valuable due to the exposure for the YRLSP. He got one interested sign-up for the Show Me, the environmental reporter from the Steamboat Pilot.

### **Task 3: The Group should continue with these presentations.**

#### **Third Discussion: Update on Inundative Biological Control Grant Application**

Tamara reported that Emily Spencer had put together a massive grant that was for biocontrol for 9 years in Dinosaur National Monument and the Yampa River and things had been looking good. Emily had worked for a full week communicating with the Regional Office. However, the Washington Office then overrode the Regional Office regarding their preferred infrastructure projects. Tamara said that right now it is not looking good after all.

Ben said that this was unfortunate. One of the items that we discussed with the RCBCC was the YRLSP Succession Planning (which is our next agenda item). We told the RCBCC that FOTY would be hiring a staff person who would be partially supported by this grant. The job description would include leafy spurge project participation.

Tamara thought that it is too early to know the final outcome. Interior Department Regional Directors will be in discussion with Washington and the game is not over.

Tamara recommended that we continue as is with our biocontrol. The counties are still involved and FOTY is hiring a new staff person regardless, whose job description includes leafy spurge.

John said that maybe we were ahead of ourselves in counting on this grant. However, we should still keep Succession Planning as an agenda item.

**Task 4: Keep Succession Planning as a future agenda item.**

#### **Fourth Discussion: Update on Draft Text of Integrated Management of Leafy Spurge with Herbicides**

Tamara reported that Jesse Schroeder has sent a number of articles regarding management of leafy spurge with herbicides and they have been posted on the YRLSP website.

She reported that she has not yet put together her write-up for the new Integrated Management web page, which will include information about herbicides and their integration with biocontrol.

**Task 5: Tamara to complete work on the text for the new Integrated Management web page.**

#### **Fifth Discussion: Planning for Summer Events**

##### **Biocontrol collection and releases**

John Kaltenbach said that June 26<sup>th</sup> is about 11 weeks out. He will reach out to Joey Milan, BLM Idaho, to get a status on the leafy spurge beetles. Tamara asked John to keep her updated as to Joey's recommendations regarding our visit.

John reported that at the Lowry collection site there is not a lot of green. Tamara also reported that in Dinosaur the snow has just come off.

Ben reported that he had talked to an owner of an aircraft who would be willing to fly us to Idaho for the cost of gas. Tamara was not interested in flying and John said that it was only an 8-hour drive to Pocatello.

John and Tamara reiterated that the reason we want to go to Idaho is that they collect a lot of beetles and we want to understand how they do it, which includes how they clean and package the beetles.

**Task 6: John Kaltenbach to coordinated with Joey Milan, Idaho BLM, to see what Joey recommends for the beetle collection trip.**

## **Monitor release sites on SWA for beetle nursery**

Tamara said that we need to see how the beetles are doing on Spurge Island, which is the site that she and Tyler Jacox thought would be a good site for a nursery. Tamara didn't know how we can plan on visiting until we know what the Yampa River does.

## **Monitor beetle release sites and set protocols for number of monitoring sites**

Ben stated that at our February meeting that there had been talk of not continuing to monitor all release sites.

Tamara thought that the intention was never to monitor every release site. We may need to streamline the protocol. She thought that until we see how many beetles we can release on various sites after the Idaho collection trip, we should continue with our present monitoring protocol, perhaps without the soil collection.

Tamara agreed that we need to keep this as an agenda item.

## **Task 7: Ben to keep release site protocols on the agenda.**

## **Show Me Float**

John Husband told the Group that the main question was planning for the date. He presented a graph with various river levels from 1997, 2011, and 2022. The water level was good for last year's Float on June 10<sup>th</sup>, but by comparison the river flows in 1997 and 2011 would have been too high for a June 10<sup>th</sup> trip this year. This year's flows have the potential to be closer to the 1997 and 2011 levels.

John proposed Friday June 30<sup>th</sup> due to the potential flows, and also because Loudy Simpson has other scheduled events during the two preceding weeks of June.

Tamara brought up a possible conflict with the scheduling if the Idaho collection trip is on June 26<sup>th</sup>.

Ben thought that we could do both. The volunteers for the Idaho trip may be different than the boatmen for the Show Me Float.

Tamara said that if the Idaho trip is scheduled for Monday the 26<sup>th</sup>, we could possibly get back into the area in time for the Show Me Float. She thought we could plan on both.

Tamara asked John Kaltenbach about his schedule. John said that he would be in Buffalo, Wyoming, on June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. He said that it is only a six hour drive to Idaho Falls from Buffalo. He could travel on Sunday. He thought that it is only a seven or eight hour drive from the Yampa Valley.

Tamara asked John if he could communicate with Joey Milan, and if Monday, June 26<sup>th</sup> would work (that is, the bugs were cooperating), that might give us enough time to get back for the Show Me Float.

John Husband asked the Group if they would send him a list of potential participants.

Ben said that he would email out invitations to the Working Group and the Interested Parties lists to see how much interest there is.

**Task 8: John and Ben to continue organizing for the Show Me Float.**

**Task 9: Ben to send out email invitations to the YRLSP email lists.**

### **Biocontrol Public Event**

Ben stated that we have been talking about scheduling a biocontrol public event for three years.

Tamara said that she is committed to this event but just doesn't see it this year with water levels possibly at 2011 levels.

### **Education and Youth Event**

Laurel Deitch reminded the Group that last year's event was the last week in June. This timing won't work for her this year, due to scheduled NRCS training. She recommended that the week of July 3<sup>rd</sup> would work, and that she needs to call a planning meeting.

Tamara said that in the past that this event has been held as late as July 11<sup>th</sup>.

Pete said that the problem with a later date might be mosquitos. However, he observed that, though it seems counterintuitive, in Dinosaur National Monument the mosquito infestations were noticeably less for even 4 years after the 2011 high water. This might not be the case in the Yampa River State Wildlife Area, of course.

Tamara informed Laurel that Emily Spencer was interested in participating.

Laurel said that she is planning to invite youths from the Craig Boys and Girls Club and Yampatika.

Ben added that she might invite the youth group from Hayden that the Yampa River State Park has worked with in the past. It was recommended that she get in touch with Jacob Dewhirst, YRSP's Director.

Laurel asked Shane if CPW could do the mowing and provide canopy tents for shade. Shane agreed to do this.

Laurel brought up the issue of port-a-potties for the Fish Pond parking lot. She thought that the cost was really excessive and wondered if there were funds in the YRLSP budget.

Tamara agreed that this was an unresolved issue but thought the 2023 YRLSP budget was tight.

The Group discussed the possibility of port-a-potty donations or a discount. Ben and John volunteered to approach the companies in Steamboat and Craig.

John Husband suggested to Laurel that she see if her contacts at the Craig Boys and Girls Club would be able to request a donation of a port-a-potty from someone they know in Craig.

Laurel asked John Kaltenbach if he was willing to bring beetles and help with the event this year. John said that could make it either June 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Task 10: Laurel to schedule a planning meeting for the Youth Event.**

**Task 11: John and Ben to see if one of the port-a-potty businesses in Craig or Steamboat would be willing to donate a port-a-potty for the event.**

**Task 12: Laurel to see if her contacts at the Boys and Girls Club could get a donation of a port-a-potty**

### **Sixth Discussion: Website Update**

Pete reported that not much has changed on the website since the previous meeting. He did receive 4 articles from Jesse Schroeder regarding herbicide treatment of leafy spurge. Two were new articles, which he posted.

Pete said that he is waiting on the material for the Integrated Management page, which he will then post.

Pete informed the Group that Wix had sent him an email that said that there had been 54 visits to the website in March, which they indicated was a 10% increase over the previous month.

**Task 13: Pete to post the material for Integrated Management when he receives them.**

## **Seventh Discussion: Partner Plans and Updates**

### **Colorado Parks and Wildlife**

Shane reported that he was on the Yampa River SWA yesterday and that there was still snow and the hayfields were inundated.

Tamara suggested to Shane that if he wanted to purchase beetles from Montana, as Tyler has done in the past, he needs to get his application in soon to get on the list for bugs. Tyler had spent about \$1,300 per year.

### **NRCS**

Laurel indicated that it is past the deadline for their most popular funding program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQUIP). Presently NRCS is already selecting the projects to fund for this year.

The NRCS EQUIP could be an option for funding leafy spurge management. As with most NRCS programs, a specific “conservation practice” would be followed for administering an EQUIP grant. The NRCS conservation practice most likely to be utilized for leafy spurge management would be Practice 315 (Herbacious Weed Control). Practice 315 has previously permitted contracting for one year only, but for the 2023 fiscal year this restriction was removed, permitting three successive treatments of certain high priority species, including leafy spurge.

### **Dinosaur National Monument**

Tamara reported that Emily is still planning for biocontrol releases this year, not only for leafy spurge but also for Russian knapweed.

Also, Tamara reported that Kate Greenberg, Commissioner of the Colorado Department of Agriculture, will be on the FOTY Yampa River Awareness Project trip this year along with Emily. This will be a great opportunity for Emily to discuss biocontrol and leafy spurge management with Commissioner Greenberg. Dinosaur NM has had a long history with the CDA’s Palisade Insectary, with biocontrol for tamarisk and now leafy spurge and Russian knapweed.

**Task 14: Emily to brief Commissioner Greenberg during FOTY’s Yampa Awareness Trip regarding the YRLSP and its management of leafy spurge on the Yampa River and adjacent lands.**

## **Eight Discussion: YRLSP 2023 Meeting Schedule**

Ben reminded the Group that last year the June meeting was canceled due to all of the YRLSP Summer Events. He asked the Group if the June meeting should be canceled this year.

The Group discussed the normal meeting schedule, the summer event schedule and personal schedules. The Group decided that the next YRLSP should be on the second Wednesday in September, September 13<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00am. The location will once again be the Carpenter Ranch and by Zoom.

Tamara recommended that at the September meeting we revisit the 2023 Meeting Schedule.

**Task 15: Ben to place an agenda item on the September meeting to discuss the remaining 2023 meeting schedule.**

## **Ninth Discussion: Photos of Leafy Spurge Infestation showing the Effect of Biocontrol**

Ben asked Laurel if she had been able to ask her NRCS colleague who was on last year's Show Me Float if she had taken any photos of leafy spurge infestations that might show the effects of biocontrol.

Laurel said that she had talked to her colleague, who is an avid photo taker, but she had not taken that many photos on the Show Me Float. Laurel suggested that the YRLSP contact last year's participants to see if they had taken any photos.

Pete thought that there were opportunities on the SWA to take some photos this year to begin to create a library showing the effects of leafy spurge beetles.

**Task 16: Ben to send out an email to the 2022 Show Me Float participants to see if they have any photos of large leafy spurge infestations for a YRLSP photo library.**

**Task 17: Pete and the Group to consider collecting photos of leafy spurge infestations where there have been beetle releases, to start a photo library documenting the effects of biocontrol.**

**Next Scheduled YRLSP Regular Meeting:** Wednesday, September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at the Carpenter Ranch and/or By Zoom