

Yampa River Leafy Spurge Project meeting agenda
5/7/25 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm
Carpenter Ranch or via Zoom

1. Funding
 - a. Efforts to unfreeze federal funds (Emily S/Emily B)
 - i. Presentations to County Commissioners
 - ii. Meeting with Joe Neguse
 - iii. Article in *Colorado Sun*
 - b. Current funding status (Emily B/Emily S)
 - i. Intermountain Natural History Association grant
 - ii. Zenobia funding?
 - iii. County contributions
 - iv. Bug account at CDA
 - v. Planned expenses for this year
 - vi. In-kind time tracking?
 - c. 2025 priorities
2. Plan Idaho trip (Emily B/Emily S)
 - a. List of participants: # of rooms for 7/7-7/10
 - b. Who is being reimbursed for what and review reimbursement process
 - c. Coordination with Kim Ragotzkie
3. Release locations for 2025 (Tamara/Emily S)
 - a. Idaho bugs
 - b. Dinosaur locations (source of bugs?)
 - c. Other locations?
4. Monitoring plan for 2025 (Tamara)
5. Show Me Float: 6/12 (John H/Ben)
 - a. Guest list (Noxious Weed Advisory Committee)
 - b. Beetle release sites
 - c. Boats
 - d. Planning status
6. Website updates (Pete)
7. Management on Stetson Ranch (Tiffany/Emily B)
 - a. Conversations with Andy Heppelman
 - b. Beetle release? Aerial spraying?
8. BLM targeted sheep grazing (Chris)
9. Set next meeting

Yampa River Leafy Spurge Project: meeting notes

5/7/25 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm at Carpenter Ranch and via Zoom

People present: Ben Beall, Roddy Beall, Tiffany Carlson, Darrell from RCWP, John Husband, Tamara Naumann, Pete Williams, Emily Spencer, Reece Wells, Patty York, John Kaltenbach, Avery Cannon, Jim Haskins, Emily Burke

1. Funding

a. Efforts to unfreeze federal funds

- i. Emily B and others gave a presentation to both Routt and Moffat County Boards of County Commissioners about the funding freeze. They wrote a joint letter to our congressional delegates. Lindsey and Emily B also met with Joe Neguse when he came to town and shared the funding freeze with him. Emily B was also interviewed for an article in the Colorado Sun.
- ii. These efforts may have helped, but mostly due to a court order regarding all federal funds that already had agreements in place, our funds have been unfrozen! However, we also heard that grants may be terminated shortly.

b. Current funding status (Emily B/Emily S)

- i. In addition to our IRA grant, we also have the following funding sources in case our grant gets terminated:
 1. Intermountain Natural History Association grant: \$3,000 for volunteer travel
 2. Zenobia funding: Zenobia has \$20,000 earmarked in their grant for work at East Cross Mountain for biocontrol. We can likely use these as back-up funds if our federal grant gets terminated; we just have to make sure there's a nexus with East Cross restoration efforts by releasing some bugs there, but bugs released upstream should also contribute to minimizing the invasives infestation at this site, so could also likely be funded by this source if needed
 3. County contributions: \$3,000 collectively from Routt and Moffat Counties, per usual

4. Bug account at CDA: We still have about \$47,000 in a “bug account” at CDA for purchases
5. In-kind time tracking
 - a. Emily B has not sent out the in-kind time tracking form yet this year due to the frozen funds, but she will send it out when she sends out these meeting notes. Please fill it out if you contributed time to this project so far in 2025
6. Our Plan A is to use our IRA funds. If those get terminated, we’ll move to Plan B, which is to use the INHA funds and use Zenobia funds to fill in gaps for travel costs.

c. 2025 priorities

- i. Our 2025 fiscal priorities are paying for the Idaho collection trip, releasing those bugs, doing the Show Me Float, and paying for Emily B’s project management time

2. Plan Idaho trip

- a. List of participants: # of rooms for 7/7-7/10
 - i. Currently, we have the following folks in rooms:
 1. Pete
 2. Jamie and Skid Skidmore
 3. Jim and Dana Haskins
 4. John and Melissa Kaltenbach
 5. Roddy and Ben Beall Sr
 6. Emily S
 7. Ryan Daly
 8. Avery Cannon
 9. Emily B
 - ii. Emily B will book 9 rooms and pay for them all today and get FOTY’s accountant to do a draw-down from ASAP immediately

b. Who is being reimbursed for what and review reimbursement process

i. The following rooms will be paid for with YRLSP funds

1. Pete
2. Jamie and Skid Skidmore
3. Jim and Dana Haskins
4. Roddy and Ben Beall Sr
5. Avery Cannon
6. Emily B

ii. We will make every attempt to reimburse folks for per diem and mileage, but if the IRA funds get terminated, we may need some folks to volunteer to cover their own mileage and/or per diem (if we run out of INHA or Zenobia funds). Emily S suggested that as many people as possible pile into the Dino truck if that happens.

c. Coordination with Kim Ragotzkie

- i. Emily S is on it. Kim knows what dates we're coming.
- ii. Kim's contract got frozen by DOGE, though Joey is still trying. Even if her contract is not reinstated, she will help us out as a volunteer.
- iii. Tamara suggests that we should bring her presents. Emily S will come up with some ideas. And if she is a volunteer and if we have the money, we should pay for her meals.

3. Release locations for 2025

a. Idaho bugs

- i. Need to release on 7/11 and 7/12. We're coming home on 7/10

b. Priority release area this year is between the county line and Hwy 13 (15 mile reach)

- i. Tamara went through all the mapping and met with Jesse Schroeder and went through past landowner permissions. She contacted landowners and came up with about 15 sites. This is too many to do in one day, but it could be done by 2 teams in 1 day. Launching at Dorsey and taking out at

South Beach. Another option is putting some of the bugs from CDA in the reach earlier when the water is higher.

- ii. Tamara suggests that for the Show Me Float, we release at the two Ross parcels
- iii. If John K brings a lot of bugs with him, we can do some additional releases in the area to knock off some of the 15 sites. Tamara and John K will stay in touch re: flows and bug season.
- iv. In addition to the Ross parcels, Tamara presented a map for the State Land Board property just upstream of South Beach. We were granted permission to put bugs there. Hoping to put a lot of bugs there because it's a really bad patch.
 - 1. John H mentioned that we might be able to put in at the Moretz's just upstream, though the bank might be pretty steep. John H will talk with Matt.
- v. Roddy and Ben will also help with releases. They'll put Tamara on one boat and Pete on another boat so they have folks that are really familiar with releases/monitoring
 - 1. One team to go Dorsey to South Beach and the other team to go Pebble Beach to South Beach?
 - 2. Emily S also volunteered and can bring up to 2 small boats. Emily S will have the boat(s) ready and they'll all go as a convoy the next morning. John H also volunteered. Tamara and Pete can bring their 12' boat to be the second boat.
- c. Dinosaur locations (these are CDA bugs, and hopefully Dino gets them on 6/12 this year so they can release them before the river gets too low for floating). Emily S has release sites in Dino, depending on how many bugs we get.
- d. Roddy asked why Haskins isn't on the release site list. Tamara says it's because they have lots of bugs already. Tamara, Pete, Tiffany, and potentially another RCWP employee are going to map his spurge patches on June 16th
- e. Roddy and Pete will figure out a date to map the spurge on East Cross
- f. Shane Talvacchio from CPW is putting in to buy extra bugs from Montana or CDA for the Yampa River State Wildlife Area

4. Monitoring plan for 2025

- a. Tamara is not going to Idaho this year so she can go out once a week from end of May to beginning of September to do monitoring plots to get a better handle on when bugs are out. Terry Audesirk has volunteered to be Tamara's field partner for that. Emily B can also help, as long as we still have the IRA funds. Tamara will just be picking from the list of monitoring sites we're trying to get done this year. Tiffany also volunteered to help if Tamara needs more hands.

5. Show Me Float: June 12th

- a. Guest list (Noxious Weed Advisory Committee)
 - i. Patty and John H have been working on a list of attendees and are in contact re: details. Patty asked if one of the attendees can bring their two sons – ages 11 and 15 – and the group agreed. Patty will have a number by 5/15. We can take up to 20 non-rowers.
 - ii. John H also has invites out to Tony Bohrer, Mike Camblin, and Joey Milan (national BLM biocontrol technical person). If we have room, Ben suggested Angelica Salinas and Tim Redmond from Routt County Board of Commissioners.
 - iii. Emily B would like to come if there's room (and if we still have funding)
 - iv. Tamara can help with shuttles but doesn't need to be on the trip
- b. Boats
 - i. We'll need about 6-7 boats. Pete, John H, Ben, Dino, and one guy from Noxious Weed Committee all have volunteered boats.
- c. Planning status
 - i. CDA is willing to pay for lunch. John will get something lined up and will have Patty call and pay with her credit card.
- d. Craig Whitewater Project
 - i. The major contractor for the in-stream structures defaulted on the contract. Most of the work is completed. They'll be working on finishing it up with some local contractors. John H thinks we'll be able to float through there this year and that the whole project will be done this fall.
- e. We'll probably not get to Loudy until mid-afternoon

- f. Release sites: just 2 Ross parcels
6. Website updates
- a. Colorado Sun article has been put on “YRLSP in the News” page
 - b. We’ve had 135 visits to webpage in last 30 days
 - c. There have been many more hits for “Who We Are” page, but mostly the “Biological Control” page gets the most hits if they go beyond the “Home” page
 - d. Pete has also added a paragraph that’s an update for 2025 that’s the current status for the funding. Pete will finetune this and update it and get this posted. There’s a link to the copy of the letter from the Commissioners.
7. Management on Stetson Ranch
- a. Both Tiffany and Emily B was contacted by Andy Heppelmann, who is in charge of invasives plan for Stetson. Going to put biocontrol, spraying, integrated methods of grazing, etc. Andy said he was going to put everything in the plan and send it to Tiffany for feedback, though she hasn’t seen it yet. Tiffany will follow up with him.
 - b. Tiffany and CCALT were unable to get management specifications from Chris Wittemyer over the past year, but Andy seems like he’ll be much better at communicating.
 - c. Beetle release? Aerial spraying?
 - i. Montana bugs become available right at the same time as the Idaho bugs, so we may be limited in manpower for getting the bugs out during those days.
 - ii. Tiffany gave him CDA contact info. Emily will check in with him to see if he was able to secure some bugs – will give him John K’s number so Andy can call John K directly. We could offer him some bugs from Idaho, CDA, or Montana if he hasn’t gotten on the list yet. John K says he’s not on the list yet but it only gets updated each month.
 - 1. Tamara offered to help collect on the Front Range. John K will keep her in the loop.
 - iii. Tiffany planning on doing 3 releases and can put 1-3 of them there. Strawberry Creek hasn’t been treated in past 3 years.

- d. Tiffany and Jonathan went out early last year with property management to show them how to identify leafy spurge emergence. She was promised that it would be managed, but they used improper methods, and then the communication ceased. Tiffany has not been able to get records of exact management, but we hope that we'll have better communication with them going forward.

Next meeting: Sept 17th from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm at Carpenter Ranch and via Zoom