

**Grand Valley Selenium Task Force
Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2006**

I. Coordinator Updates

- A. *End of Year Reports*: The Coordinator presented her end of year reports which summarized task force budget and grant status, major accomplishments, and areas in need of action. Minor editing was suggested. The revised report will be forwarded to all task force members.
- B. *Coordinator Fund Raising*: Discussion tabled until February meeting.
- C. *Oil & Gas Stormwater Rulemaking Hearing*: Stormwater from oil and gas construction sites was a concern to many task force members as a source of potential selenium loading. Dan Beley (Watershed Coordinator, WQCD) gave an update to the task force. The Water Quality Control Commission (WQCC) ruled in favor of continuing to regulate stormwater permits for oil and gas construction sites.
- D. *Rulemaking Hearing/Regulation #34 & #35*: Dan Beley updated the task force on issues related to the Rulemaking Hearing for the Gunnison and Dolores Rivers which will be held in Cortez in June. Dan spoke with the Assessment Unit at the WQCD and they are on board with proposing extensions to the temporary modifications for selenium. The task force will determine whether they want "party status" around the 1st of February when official notification is out. The task forces (GV/GB) may want to consider issuing "responsive pre-hearing statements" stating that we support the WQCD proposal to extend. The Coordinator will work with Dan on possibly giving a short 5 minute update to the WQCC on what the task forces are doing.

II. GVSTF Planning

- A. *Action Plan*: The Coordinator presented a draft of the GVSTF Action Plan. Comments, editing, and suggestions were taken. A revised draft will be presented at the February technical meeting for review and comment.
- B. *Project Grant Subcommittee Assignments*: This task will also be addressed at the February meeting where the Coordinator will have a list of grants, grant summaries, and corresponding fits to task force projects.
- C. *USBOR Technical Assistance to States (TATS)*: Mike Baker (USBOR, Planning Team Leader) developed a draft preliminary list of possibilities for areas in which the GVSTF might wish to use TATS funding (35 days). No additional suggestions were made. Mike suggested that the GVSTF address priorities for TATS projects at the February meeting.

III. GVSTF Planning (continued)

- A. *GVSTF Coordinator Planning*: The Coordinator presented budget and task outlines for the Western Slope Wise Water Use Information & Education 319 NPS and the Best Management Practices for Non-Agricultural 319 NPS grants. The I & E grant extends until December 31, 2007 while the BMP

grant extends until June 2006. Some minor changes were made to the task outlines clarifying target audiences. The task commented that the tasks in both grants appear to be targeted, complimentary, and in-line with GVSTF proposed action plan.

- B. *Colorado River Basin Salinity Control Program RFP (Mike Baker, USBOR):* Mike presented the 2006 RFP to the group and outlined and emphasized deadlines and proposal requirements including requirements that the proponent notify USBOR that one intends to submit a proposal. The USBOR will possibly be providing assistance to Uncompahgre Valley Water Users Association with a proposal to continue piping irrigation laterals. The Shavano Conservation District (Fred Fisher) plans to submit a proposal for pond lining on the east side of the Uncompahgre Valley. The GVSTF discussed the potential for the pond lining proposal to be funded: i.e. would the proposal be able to meet salt reduction requirements and still be competitive. Mike indicated that Fred and Del Smith are still working on it, but that if it didn't then the GBSTF/GVSTF might explore trying for CRBSCP Discretionary Funds.

IV. Pond Seepage

- A. The GVSTF discussed the issues associated with ponds in the Grand Valley and Gunnison Basin. Issues/concerns noted were:

1. Se loading contributions from unlined perched ponds: The USBOR conducted a pond study in cooperation with NRCS in Montrose. Selenium loading from unlined perched ponds was estimated to be approximately 7% of the loading from the lower Gunnison Basin (study details added by Coordinator post meeting).
 - a. Se loading impacts aquatic dependent species
 - b. Efforts to reduce Se loading (e.g., irrigation delivery system piping) are negated
2. Salt loading contributions:
 - a. Economically impacts lower Colorado River users by reducing crop yields and causing damages to municipal and industrial users, and the taxpayer by increasing the need for salinity control projects
3. New ponds construction rate: The Pond Study also indicated that in the Uncompahgre Valley, the number and acreage of new ponds was growing at a rate of 15 acres/year or 5% per year (study details added by Coordinator post meeting).
4. Illegally constructed ponds: Some ponds are constructed illegally using federal irrigation water for non-agriculturally related purposes. (Note from Coordinator: This same concern was brought to the attention of the GBSTF by the State of Colorado Division of Water Resources at a meeting in September 2004).
5. Increasing concern over West Nile Virus

The GV and GB Se Task Forces are addressing the need for outreach and education regarding the construction of un-lined ponds.

The US BOR would like to expand upon the 2004 pond lining study by for example; extending the GIS pond inventory, identifying perched ponds from non-perched, conducting soil analysis, etc.

It was suggested that the Task Forces organize a field trip in March for the Joint Task Force Meeting to try to gain a perspective on the pond issue. The Coordinator will work with a subcommittee to try to arrange this.

V. Mesa County Rural Master Plan Meeting

The Coordinator attended the master plan meeting on January 19th, 2006. The planning commission was hearing comments from the public on the draft revised rural master plan. The Coordinator attempted to address the commission about the task force mission and new wise water use platform aimed at preventing selenium loading as land use in the GB and GV changes. The chairman of the commission asked the task force to meet first with their long range planning department and then schedule a meeting with them.

VI. Meeting Schedule:

- Technical Subcommittee: February 16th, 2006, 10am to 3pm, Grand Junction
- Joint Task Force: March 23rd, 2006, Time TBD, Delta