

## **Minutes**

### **Show Low Creek Watershed Enhancement Partnership and Rainbow Lake Coalition**

**Thursday, April 12, 1:00 PM, Pinetop-Lakeside Town Hall**

Welcome and Introductions: David Newlin welcomed attendees and began the meeting at 1:05 p.m.

Mr. Scienski made a motion to approve the 12 October 2010 meeting minutes and Mr. Snitzer seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### **Review of Weed Application on Rainbow Lake**

Visually, the lake looks much better. The water is clearer. Arizona Game and Fish has done some work on the lake, and has seen more live coontail than expected, but not nearly as many as last year. It does appear that the remaining coontail plants have been stressed. A technical review will be conducted soon.

David will e-mail a link (with a user name and password) to a national Web site ([grantstation.com](http://grantstation.com)). Help from group membership is needed to look for other grant opportunities for lake treatments.

Neither the Irrigation District nor Arizona Game and Fish have heard complaints or concerns from the public about the pesticide application project.

#### **Review of SRP Participation on Rainbow Lake Issues**

Al Crawford has been in touch with Mr. Dave Roberts (Salt River Project), who indicated SRP may be able to assist (in follow up to the Winter Watershed Conference). SRP routinely fights aquatic weed problems and solves the problems with grass-eating carp. SRP has extensive experience with grass-eating carp permits and barriers.

The basic concern with grass carp is that they may get into ecosystems where they aren't wanted and they could do ecological damage. They are a non-native fish and, as such, are subject to a large number of regulations by the Arizona Game and Fish. A permit is required by Arizona Game and Fish to stock grass carp. The applicant must demonstrate the fish are sterile, and the waterway must be a closed system to ensure the fish won't escape. The closed system demonstration is extremely difficult and quite expensive (~\$100,000+ for the Rainbow Lake structure).

Regarding Woodland Lake, the town and county did dredge the lake about fifteen years ago, in response to weed problems. Fish were salvaged and the lake was drained and heavy equipment was utilized. The dredged materials were used for gardening. Woodland Lake is much smaller than Rainbow Lake (~5 acres versus ~106 acres) and it was easier to store the material dredged near Woodland Lake. In addition, the lake was dried enough that local gardeners and others were able to drive into the lake and load the material in their own vehicles with donated equipment. The weed problem now isn't nearly as bad as the early 1990s.

Ken Wilcock suggested sediment infiltrating into Rainbow Lake is not nearly as bad as it has been in the past; therefore, a one-time dredge should make a long-term improvement (~50 years). Mike Lopez indicated the lake will still be relatively shallow following dredging and there will still be a fair amount of naturally-occurring soil nutrients in the system. Thus, weeds won't be entirely eliminated.

### **Review of Fund Status**

A modest amount of money (from donations) remains for additional weed spot treatment in Rainbow Lake.

### **Legislative Efforts – Weed Management Agency**

No progress has been made on this. The focus in the Legislature right now is the financial well-being of the state. David Newlin suggested the Partnership continue lobbying efforts in this regard. He said every state agency surrounding Arizona has assigned aquatic weed management to state agencies.

David Newlin will contact Denis Humphrey (local State Land Department Range Management Specialist) to attend a Partnership meeting to talk about invasive plant species.

Mike Lopez mentioned that Arizona Game and Fish does have an aquatic invasive species list, to specifically address the highest profile problems. Eurasian Milfoil isn't yet on the list. Tom McMahon (sp?) is the Agency's contact. This information can be found on the Arizona Game and Fish Web site (search for "Aquatic Invasive Species").

Mr. Scienski thanked David Newlin for his forward thinking and patience in this process.

The Southwest Vegetative Weed Management Association is another resource.

Legislators will also be invited to future Partnership meetings.

### **Continue Efforts on Incorporation**

David Newlin suggested the Partnership needs to make some decisions about the "type of organization we'd like to become". A non-profit 501 (c) 3 has limitations (no separate source of funding and no lobbying). A 501(c) 6 corporation may lobby. A Special District with taxing authority has advantages to provide a separate funding source. A vote of property owners is required to establish a special district. There was some discussion that a 501(c) 6 with the understanding of later moving into a Special District is the best route. Becoming a certified Non-profit is another step (through the Internal Revenue Service) which takes time. The tentative plan is to move forward on the 501(c) 6 approach.

The question of the downside to being a 501(c) 6 needs further investigation.

David will bring an Incorporation- Ready 501(c) 6 Draft to the next meeting.

David indicated that RC&D may need to be compensated for some time in the future, due to reduced funding.

**Review of Navajo-Hopi Tribal Settlement** – David Newlin reported the settlement went forward. The groups recently met in Washington with Senator Kyl, who made it clear there isn't funding for the pipeline project from Glen Canyon to Flagstaff. Thus, the settlement agreement terms have weakened somewhat. New Mexico has water owned by the state to allocate to for the Gallup pipeline project.

### **Update and Info Items**

Mike Lopez indicated that Arizona Game and Fish uses Federal funding to stock fish. Certain environmental organizations have insisted upon a state-wide NEPA, which has been on going for some time.

A statewide sport fishing Environmental Assessment process is in draft form (for public review and comment). Comments are due May 11.

Three alternatives are evaluated (no action, i.e. no stocking; proposed action – status quo generally with a few additions; reduced stocking program). The proposed action evaluates possible impacts to threatened and endangered species and associated mitigation efforts. The reduced stocking alternative would reduce the number of stocked waters and could produce an indirect economic impact to the Pinetop-Lakeside area.

Mike Lopez addressed the pike removal program at Rainbow. Arizona Game and Fish has been working to mechanically control pike (use of nets), but the approach has not had a significant impact. Chemical use is a possible future alternative, which would involve studies, public meetings, etc. A bill in the State Legislature could, if passed and signed, ban the use of the particular chemical (House Bill 2114).

Byron James mentioned the World Water Monitoring Day event on Silver Creek (with Snowflake Intermediate School) – on April 15.

David Newlin needs to get information from AI on storage capacity info of Rainbow Lake.

See the Trail of Many Tracks CD for loop tours of Navajo and Apache counties.

### **Next Meetings Schedule**

May 10, June 7, July 12, August 9, September 13, October 11

A future meeting may include a "field trip" to Rainbow Lake. Doris Morin and Mike will help make arrangements. The targeted meeting is June 7.

Byron James

ADEQ Northern Arizona Liaison