

Western Greater Yellowstone Consortium Group Memory  
(866) 740-1260, access code 1587264#  
October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013, 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Present: Ashley Koehler (Driggs), Brittany Skelton (Victor), Wendy Green Lowe (P2 Solutions), Heather Higinbotham (YBP), Alex Norton (Teton WY), Greg Newkirk (Fremont County), Brent McFadden (Madison County), Wanda Adams (Fremont County), Tom Cluff (Fremont County), Jan Brown (Linx), Patty Parkinson (St. Anthony)

## Objectives

The objectives for the October meeting include:

- HUD update, budget and work plan (if any, due to gov't shutdown) – Tom Cluff
- Model Code update – Doug Self, Ashley Koehler, Brittany Skelton
  - Code Studio
- Regional Recycling System study update – Heather Higinbotham
- Sustainability Indicators update – Heather Higinbotham/Tom Cluff
- Multi-modal update – Jan Brown
- GY-Framework Technical Assistance for Mountainside Village Certification – YBP
- Island Park Caldera National Monument Study – Jan Brown and Tom Cluff
  - Henry's Fork Watershed Council events
- Website update – Wendy Green Lowe/Heather Higinbotham
- Other grant element updates as relevant
  - Teton WY/Jackson GY-Framework
  - Housing
  - Broadband
- Next meeting: Face-to-face November 12 in conjunction with Code Studio visit

### **HUD update, budget and work plan** (if any, due to gov't shutdown) – Tom Cluff

Tom reported that there is no new info. Due to the government shutdown, HUD is still in the process of getting the budget approval taken care of. He anticipates that HUD will have a final decision in December; Tom is hoping for early December but it could be the end of the year before we have the go ahead to move forward with the new work plan.

### **Model Code update** – Ashley Koehler, Brittany Skelton

Code Studio will be in Teton Valley on Nov. 12. Their two primary activities are 1) to present a summary report of their findings from the design workshops this summer to the City of Victor combined P&Z and City Council at 7:00 p.m.; and 2) to attend Stephen Loosli's presentation of the draft of code he's been working on to Teton County ID at 5:00 p.m. at the County Courthouse. Ashley, Brittany, Heather and Code Studio will attend this meeting. It will be a brief trip for Code Studio: they fly in Monday night and fly out Wednesday morning. There is the possibility of a meeting with the Teton County Commissioners on Wednesday morning. Code Studio sent out a draft report on what they are going to present and Ashley, Brittany and their respective P&Z commissions are reviewing it to provide input. Ashley and Brittany put together a list of questions for Code Studio that they want their advice on such as recommendations for appropriate street design in downtown areas, and advice on how to plan for the area around the incorporated areas outside the cities (Drictor corridor). The Driggs P&Z commission and staff will also attend the Nov. 12 meeting in Victor. It will be a joint Driggs/Victor meeting open to the public.

### **Regional Recycling System study update** – Heather Higinbotham

LBA Associates has submitted a list of top study alternatives that they have selected for further analysis. The analysis will begin this week. LBA Associates will maintain close communication with the advisory team and key stakeholders throughout the analyses. They anticipate completing the analyses in early 2014 and will provide

their findings, recommendations and regional implementation strategies once complete. The list of project alternatives has been posted on the WGYC website.

### **Sustainability Indicators update** – Heather Higinbotham/Tom Cluff

Tom will be taking the lead on the advisory team for the Indicators project. Tom has been talking with The Brendle Group about also attending our face-to-face consortium meeting Nov. 12. With regard to the Indicators project, they are talking about doing a preliminary assessment using a selection of potential indicators they've already identified, and using that to enhance interest in the indicators project with city councils and other interested groups. They want to present these indicators as examples of the types of things we can measure and get feedback: "What do you think of \_\_\_ indicator? Is it helpful? What would you like to have data on?" It's been difficult to get people to pay attention to an indicators project because it's somewhat intangible, but if we show them what we can measure, maybe it will help spur some further thoughts on it. Jan emphasized that the Brendle Group needs to understand what's happening in the region and with the consortium as well. It is important to get Brendle in the room with everyone else so they can be more cognizant on the progress with other grant elements. Ashley shared that she hired the Brendle Group when she was working with Summit County UT to do a carbon footprint plan/analysis. She is interested to see what they have for sustainability indicators. Tom will forward the info they have to date.

Heather asked what the consortium needs from Code Studio or the Brendle Group in advance of the face-to-face in order to make time together more productive? Tom suggested we send them the minutes from consortium meetings prior to our face-to-face so they can have a general understanding of what's been going on with the rest of the HUD grant.

### **Multi-modal update** – Jan Brown

Jan shared that there has been a lot going on since our last call. Both Heather and Jan attended the Yellowstone Park Climate Symposium, and what was going to be a wonderful opportunity to spend time with Yellowstone Park officials discussing last summer's pilot demo got cut short; they were in the park when it shut down and everything was cut off. They've made progress on multiple fronts with the multi-modal scenarios. 8 people attended the recreational trails workshop. Katie Wilson (masters GIS student) conducted the workshop at Fremont Co. She has done significant work with the interactive map, using different layers of winter and summer trails, and reaching out to all the folks who had signed up when Kyle Babbitt was working, to make sure people have the opportunity to sketch in existing trails, proposed trails, or verify that what's there is accurate. There was a misunderstanding that we were doing public maps, but this is really a planning tool. It's not designed to be something for the public eye but more an internal planning tool for everyone working on trails and multi modal projects in our four counties. Brittany attended the workshop, and said it was good to see how the data is being gathered in a format that they can all access. She asked for clarification on the difference between the purpose of the tool and the purpose of a data clearinghouse. Jan spent time with Brian Schilling, the Pathways person from the Town of Jackson. He had a lot to do with getting the grant that is funding the START Bus facility. He emphasized the ability to have a tool that brought all four counties together. He highlighted some projects he thought were important to recommend in the final plan for funding, such as small loops as part of the planning network (such as Teton Pass down to the state line, connecting with Teton County's new funded project to the state line) to set priorities and create good economic development strategy. Jan is trying to make sure all the county priorities land in one place and we map them so that we have a place to build upon. This is a visualization of transit needs. The biggest concern that has come up is the need for a real shuttle (or a change of heart with the public agencies that are prohibiting them from even considering a shuttle) to the top of Teton pass. Jan is visiting personally with folks of influence who aren't necessarily coming to consortium meetings. The day after the workshop, Jan led a contingent of 16 people from Rexburg and TRPTA up to visit the Streamline Bus system in Bozeman. It was an information visit with WTI, where they visited their facilities and bus barns in Bozeman. She is trying to work with Rexburg to look at all their needs. They haven't had a viable proposal by TRPTA to have a fixed route system. They will be taking trip to START Bus on Nov. 14 for more exposure to how transit systems can work. Lastly, the final report on the

YNP pilot will be integrated into the final multi modal plan, as well as specific recommendations on long-term funding through the federal access program. WY and ID are split between the central and western districts, which may cause issues. Jan is working to find out what funding is available.

### **GY-Framework Technical Assistance for Mountainside Village Certification – YBP**

Heather reported that they are still waiting on the final two reviews from certifiers. The other 6 reviews submitted to date indicate that it's likely that Mountainside Village will successfully certify under the GY-Framework. Heather will keep the consortium updated.

### **Island Park Caldera National Monument Study – Jan Brown and Tom Cluff**

Jan reported that they had a very interesting meeting with representatives of the different organizations that are part of the Henry's Fork Legacy Project. This is a group of state and federal agencies, some of which are in the consortium but not active. There are various conservation organizations working on private land conservation. There is strong interest in land use planning that overlaps with this project. The Henry's Fork Legacy Project specifically invited Tom and Jan to discuss the monument study concept, and give a history of where the concept came from, the development of the project, the alternatives analysis, and the funding scenario that is still pending with HUD. There were questions about objectives—some were concerned that there is a hidden agenda. They were interested in the scientific studies as well as the concept of the alternatives analysis. Jan believes they answered all of the questions adequately but there could still be concern about hidden motives. Someone from California created a Facebook page to encourage dialogue and that is the only communication out there right now.

It's an issue of when the approval will come down from HUD because we can't do anything yet, we can't put a public description of the project or any RFPs out, until the budget is approved. Tom said HUD's approval would likely come sometime in December. He's optimistic that it could be the beginning of month, but it could be the end of the year before they finish whatever process they're going through to approve it.

Rob Van Kirk with the Henry's Fork Foundation is enthusiastic and encouraging; he drew the study in parallel with the Henry's Fork basin study that is just now wrapping up with the BLM. This affirmed Tom's view that this should be considered an opportunities analysis. It is a study with no firm recommendations, which allows everyone to participate and look at it in the most objective way possible. Jan will use the word opportunities analysis rather than alternatives analysis to show how open this is. Several folks asked what the boundaries of the study area are. Is it only Island Park? Will it be larger to include wildlife wintering areas and summer corridors? Even that discussion is wide open. There are lots of ideas being generated as the study concept is gaining in awareness.

Tom said he would keep fingers crossed that HUD agrees with us that this is a good way to spend the money. Fremont County has already received one unsolicited proposal to do work. Premature, expect a lot of folks getting interested. It is going to be incumbent on the consortium to be very clear about what our needs are. The Watershed Council stands ready to facilitate the public dialogue component. Wendy and other folks at the meeting pointed out that we have to reach undeserved populations as well as folks that aren't present at meetings. They will be looking at online input as well. The whole discussion about how to structure public involvement is yet to come. Wendy said she is still struggling with how to frame it. Public participation is typically conducted by someone wanting input to make a decision; it's very difficult to frame this as a decision making process. It's not clear yet who is soliciting input and what they're going to do with the input. Congress and/or the President are the decision makers. They are not in the discussion. We have to make a more coherent explanation as to who is soliciting input and what we'll do with it before we can design the public involvement piece. What Tom and Wendy talked about was building a kiosk-type interface that could be made available at locations where people might be passing through. They also want to capture input from people that own property in Fremont County but don't live there. There is a question of how to authenticate whether the folks participating in process are the right people and if it's inclusive. Jan said she has been asked

repeatedly about objectives. She feels that the primary (but not sole) objective is the protection of the unique hydrogeological resources. Wildlife and recreation aren't off the table but they aren't primary. People are looking to see if someone has hidden agenda. These are reasons for the consortium to take a closer look: we don't want there to be a hidden agenda. Tom asked Wendy to document her thoughts/struggles as she works on how to put the public participation process together, and to email Tom. Maybe he can offer some thoughts on the areas she's struggling with. Jan said in her view, the study is part of the overall RPSD, so to the extent we are doing public participation in developing the RPSD, she doesn't understand what is different about the monument study vs. all the other studies we're doing that are planning related. Wendy said that it isn't clear what decision is being made? The RPSD is just the production of a document that will guide sustainable development for the region. When you ask the public to participate, it's fundamental to be able to explain what you're asking them input for. Wendy's confusion point is on who has the decision authority—it does not reside in the region. Jan said it's very specific to Island Park and its resources, historic, cultural, and is part of the overarching plan. Whatever is a correct fit for the RPSD should fit for the monument study. There is not a recommendation being made. It's the same scope of study that we're doing on other plan elements. Wendy, Jan and Tom will talk more offline. Wendy said she is being strict because her obligation is to design a process based on what we're trying to provide input for, that's the part she's still not getting.

### **Website update** – Wendy Green Lowe/Heather Higinbotham

Heather is working with Wendy and Nelson Soucek to keep the website up-to-date. Heather worked with Nelson for an introductory session to uploading documents, and will be receiving additional in-person training in November to make sure she can serve as backup for posting items. Nelson is updating the website software as updates become available. The last 35 messages we've received through the website have been spam, and they have all been removed. We haven't gotten any real messages.

### **Other grant element updates as relevant**

#### **Teton WY/Jackson GY-Framework:**

Alex doesn't believe there has been any new work. They are plugging away at trying to update the land development regulations, which is moving along at various speeds. They are working on drafts that won't be available until the New Year. Alex asked about the process for utilizing the hours put into the LDR drafting as match hours. Tom will send out a form for documenting match to the consortium. Reporting monthly would be adequate. Tom asked consortium members to document any time or materials they spend on grant-related work. Tom emphasized that the match will help tremendously.

#### **Housing:**

Heather is taking the lead on the housing study, as Tom is taking the lead on the indicators. Heather checked in with Alex to get all of the information to date, including advisory team meeting notes, the original RFP that was drafted, and asked Tom for a copy of the E-Center study that was completed last year. Jan added to make sure we document what Habitat for Humanity is doing in our region in Jackson and the Upper Snake. This work is important and HUD will want to know about it.

#### **Broadband:**

Greg made a presentation to the Rexburg City Council. The broadband study was brought to the City of Rexburg as an item under economic development. They are getting close to preparing a final document. The presentation was primarily to alert the council that this study is happening and at some point will be coming to them. The reason it was being presented to that governing body is that at some point someone will have to come up with a few million dollars to undertake construction of the physical infrastructure. They did find some new infrastructure going in that extends the loop between Teton, Fremont and Madison counties. They have added additional data for the region beyond Rexburg. Rexburg is the only area where they're looking at putting together a mechanism to fund the public development of infrastructure. Outside of Rexburg they are looking at private funding for a regional network. One of the elements of the long-term plan is looking at how the region comes together as well. As far as something being final, at this point everything is just in presentation

format. No documents have been released yet. The final document is forthcoming and Greg will make it available to the entire consortium. Jan and Greg have been attending the broadband meetings and providing input. Heather asked if there are notes from those meetings that could be made available to consortium? Scott Johnson is the main contact and is driving this effort. He is working directly with Design 9. Heather will email Scott about minutes to be made available on the WGYC website.

**Next meeting:**

Face-to-face November 12 in conjunction with Code Studio and Brendle Group. Does that date work for folks? Tom has a commission meeting all day but his participation is flexible, he can say when he's available for the commission. In part it will depend on what Code Studio's availability is. Heather said that Code Studio is available all day Tuesday; they don't have any meetings until 5pm for Stephen Loosli's presentation to Teton County and the Victor/Driggs joint meeting at 7pm. If there are any consortium members available for either the 5 pm Teton County meeting or the 7pm joint Victor/Driggs meeting, please attend. It is a good idea to show additional support from the consortium. Wendy asked what else on agenda besides meeting with the Brendle Group and Code Studio? Tom thought that would probably be plenty for a meeting. Jan said she is hoping to have at least an annotated outline of the final multi-modal plan to present to everyone. As this is the first component of the grant to be near completion, she thought a presentation would be good. She owes the consortium steering committee a presentation. There are results that she'd like to share to help people get a sense of what they're getting from this project. She's hoping to take the more defined final plan out to all consortium cities and counties. Ashley suggested an afternoon meeting might be better in Driggs because of the county meeting at the courthouse at 5pm. Ashley will check to see if the Driggs City Council chambers has space available.

**Next meeting: Face-to-face November 12<sup>th</sup>, 1:00-4:30 p.m.**