

Grand County Stream Management Plan (GCSMP) Update
Phase 1-Phase 2 Transition Stakeholder Meeting
Monday, October 21, 2024, from 5:30 to 6:30 PM
Virtual Meeting
Meeting Summary – FINAL

ATTENDANCE

Meeting Participants: Rachel Badger, Gil Barth, Maura Bishop, Travis Bray, Mark Coleman, Brian Craig, Mia Dorris, Anna Drexler-Dreis, Jon Ewert, Steve Fitzgerald, Charley Garcia, Ashley Garrison, Tiffany Gatesman, Randy George, Pierre Glynn, Evie Guay, Stephen Hampton, Lucy Harrington, Michael Holmes, Becca Jonswold, Ingrid Karlstrom, Russell Knight, Merrit Linke, Newton Logan, Neal Misbach, Katherine Morris, Liz Newsom, Jen Stephenson, John Tilstra, Jamie Wolter, and Kristina Wynne

Facilitation Team: Chloe Mills and Samuel Wallace

PHASE 1 UPDATE

Samuel Wallace, Peak Facilitation, presented the purpose and goals of the Grand County Stream Management Plan (GCSMP) update and the Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Program. Becca Jonswold, Learning by Doing (LBD), provided meeting participants with an overview of the comprehensive watershed assessment (CWA).

Purpose and Goals

- The GCSMP update is managed by LBD. The purpose of the updated management plan is to improve river and stream health.
- The GCSMP update will occur in the LBD cooperative effort area (CEA) and does not cover all of Grand County.
- The GCSMP update has the following scope:
 - It is a stream management plan or a data-driven assessment of holistic river health to determine where and how the river is impaired. It is not an integrated water Management plan or consumptive use planning effort (i.e., drinking water, irrigation, and industrial uses).
 - It is the development of strategies for effective communication and use of environmental flows within the confines of the existing legal framework and water rights allocations. It is not an attempt to reverse water development projects that are operating or have been approved.
 - It is a way to identify and prioritize management actions that maintain or improve river conditions. It is not a way to address consumptive water needs.
 - It is an update of the existing stream management plan. It is not a watershed plan or other new and broader planning effort.
 - It is a community effort focused on the needs of the river and aquatic habitat with opportunities for stakeholder feedback and input. It is not focused on specific individual stakeholder water needs.
 - It is focused on collaboration and solutions for changes in river conditions. It is not finding a culprit for changes in river conditions.
 - It is focused on rivers and streams. It is not focused on lakes or reservoirs.
 - It is focused on the LBD CEA. It is not focused on Grand County watersheds in their entirety.
 - It is addressing environmental water needs. It does not address agricultural, municipal, industrial, and recreational water needs.

- Phase 1 was focused on stakeholder outreach and engagement and completing the CWA. Phase 2 will focus on using the stakeholder input and CWA from Phase 1 to identify objectives, priority areas, and cooperative restoration projects.

Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Program

- The purpose of the Stakeholder Outreach Program was to gather community and stakeholder input on values, priorities, concerns, and opportunities related to river health in the CEA; learn about ongoing challenges in the CEA; and then summarize stakeholder input into a report at the end of Phase 1.
- Five open house stakeholder meetings were held throughout the Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Process. The five meeting dates and associated meeting topics are:
 - May 3, 2023
 - A kick-off meeting was held to provide an overview of the process, LBD, and the technical assessment. This meeting also provided the opportunity for virtual input on stakeholder vision for river health.
 - July 18, 2023
 - This meeting provided an overview of historical and present water use and management and recent landscape changes. Additionally, stakeholders participated in a headline exercise and reviewed survey results.
 - September 19, 2023
 - This meeting provided an overview of diversion infrastructure and flow operations and allowed for stakeholders to provide feedback on geographic priorities in the CEA and community vision.
 - December 11, 2023
 - At this meeting, the Stakeholder Advisory Committee was announced, and Lotic Hydrologic, the technical consultant for Phase 1, presented the streamflow, water quality, and temperature results from the CWA.
 - February 7, 2024
 - This meeting was the final call for the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, and Lotic Hydrologic presented the geomorphic condition, riparian area, and aquatic habitat results from the CWA.
- Participation in the stakeholder process included 85 unique individuals and 37 unique agencies and organizations. These stakeholders engaged in in-room exercises and developed a Community Vision for Healthy Rivers and Streams to share their vision, priorities, and concerns for healthy streams and rivers in the CEA.
- Another aspect of the stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Program was the community survey. The purpose of the survey was to collect community feedback on visions, priorities, and concerns regarding the GCSMP update. The survey was open from April 3 to May 10, 2023, and was distributed electronically. There were 135 total survey responses.
- The following key themes were identified from all the input gathered from the Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Program:
 - The importance of rivers and streams to the economy, livelihood, and quality of life of the Grand County community
 - The importance of maintaining healthy ecosystems
 - Concerns with high water temperatures and low flows
 - Concerns with post-fire sediment deposition
 - The need for collaboration to create solutions

Comprehensive Watershed Assessment

- The CWA was presented at the two final stakeholder meetings on December 11, 2023, and February 7, 2024.
- One of the first objectives for Phase 2 is to create an assessment framework from the CWA to help identify priority stream reaches in the CEA.
- There are several deliverables from the CWA. The first is the watershed assessment report, which is a 300-page document that is currently linked on the Grand County LBD website.
- There is also an HTML version of an executive summary. This interactive report is organized into navigable tabs that divide the report into digestible sections. This executive summary will be available in the final deliverables of Phase 2, though there is a possibility it could be made available sooner.
- There will be a reference library with information used to develop and research the report.
- There will be an HTML version of the stream reach summaries. The summaries will host key water quality and hydrology data with navigable tabs. The stream reach summaries will serve as the foundation for the work in Phase 2.
- These additional deliverables are not yet on the LBD website, but the plan is to integrate them so stakeholders can utilize them.

Questions about Phase 1 of the GCSMP Update

Meeting participants asked questions about Phase 1 of the GCSMP update. Their questions are indicated in italics, with the corresponding answer in regular text.

Considering the recent Gross Reservoir legal decision, is there any chance the GCSMP update can include water accounting in this county?

The Gross Reservoir decision is outside the scope of the GCSMP update. The GCSMP update will continue to focus on identifying cooperative restoration projects in the CEA.

The CWA includes an assessment of whether current management has achieved streamflow targets for summer baseline flows and peak flushing flows. How were those numbers identified, and would it be possible to access any reports or documents that describe how those flows were identified?

The streamflow targets are from the 2010 SMP, which is a public document. LBD will investigate the creation of the original targets and follow up offline.

What is the total water flow in Grand County, and what percent is being diverted?

Estimating the total water flow and the percent being diverted would require assessing a large amount of data. LBD is willing to discuss the flow and diversion data further offline. There will be no additional analysis performed for Phase 1 of the GCSMP update, but it could be discussed for Phase 2.

Would it be possible to have the monitoring data in one place on the LBD website?

The monitoring data exists on the "Operations Reports" page of the LBD website.

PHASE 2 OVERVIEW

Samuel provided an overview of Phase 2 and the Stakeholder Advisory Committee's composition and role. His presentation is summarized below.

- Phase 2 of the GCSMP update is comprised of the following tasks:
 - Task 1: Select an assessment framework to prioritize stream reaches
 - Task 2: Develop objectives to respond to priority issues
 - Task 3: Identify, evaluate, and prioritize potential habitat improvement projects

- Task 4: Create an implementation process for initial projects
- The Stakeholder Advisory Committee is comprised of a smaller group of stakeholders that will provide feedback on the draft assessment and ranking of priority reaches, objectives and measurable results, and potential habitat improvement projects.
- The Stakeholder Advisory Committee will be a smaller group of committed stakeholders who can attend meetings and stay up to date through Phase 2. The purpose of the Stakeholder Advisory Committee is to bring together parties to work on common goals and increase support for project implementation.
- The Stakeholder Advisory Committee is made up of a mix of agency/organizations, interest-based seats, and LBD ex-officio seats. The interest-based seats include environmental and conservation, tourism, municipal, outdoor recreation, mining/industry, agriculture/irrigators, water and sanitation, and community-at-large perspectives. The agency/organization representatives include seats for the US Forest Service, National Park Service, and Bureau of Land Management.
- The Stakeholder Advisory Committee was announced at the December 11 stakeholder meeting. Between December 2023 and February 2024, a survey was distributed to stakeholders to gather information about who was interested in partaking in the committee. The final call for interested stakeholders was made on February 7, 2024. All interested stakeholders found a seat on the Stakeholder Advisory Committee.
- The full stakeholder group will still convene at key milestones during Phase 2 to provide additional input.

PHASE 2 CONTRACTING UPDATES

Phase 2 of the GCSMP update includes three distinct requests for proposals (RFPs) issued by LBD. The Phase 2 contracting updates are summarized below.

- Phase 2 is a two-year process. Breaking it into smaller segments allows for more flexibility in addressing project needs. This will ensure that the best candidate is selected to meet the requirements of each RFP. Phase 2 is broken into the following parts:
 - Part 1 (December 2024-September 2025)
 - Part 1 tasks include identifying a stream assessment framework, finalizing stream grades, and prioritizing stream reaches.
 - LBD is currently selecting a contractor for Part 1, and they are expected to begin work in December 2024.
 - Part 2 (January 2025-February 2026)
 - Part 2 includes branding and logo development for the GCSMP update, creation of the website, and connection of the website to the Grand County Water Information Network Database Platform.
 - There is an RFP out for Part 2, and a contractor will be selected in December 2024.
 - Part 3 (Estimated January 2026)
 - Part 3 includes identifying planning objectives and metrics, prioritizing potential habitat improvement projects, and developing an implementation process.
 - It is uncertain when Part 3 will begin, but the goal is to start Part 3 shortly after Part 1 concludes.

NEXT STEPS

Over the coming months, LBD will select a technical contractor to identify a stream assessment framework, finalize stream grades, and prioritize stream reaches. Peak Facilitation will continue to provide facilitation and engagement services for Phase 2 of the GCSMP update process. Once the new technical contractor is brought in, the Stakeholder Advisory Committee will convene to begin working on Phase 2, likely at the beginning of 2025.