



COMMISSIONERS Corner

News & Updates from Grand County's Board of County Commissioners



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EMERGENCY WATERSHED PROTECTION

Water Quality Specialist **Katherine Morris** gave an update about Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) funding, project status, and natural resource information for both the Williams Fork Fire and East Troublesome Fire (ETF) burn areas.

The EWP partners, which include representatives from Northern Water, Grand County, Middle Park Conservation District, Colorado River District, the Three Lakes Watershed Association and private property owners have been working with USDA-NRCS to identify and prioritize projects on non-federal lands based on potential threats to life and property from mud slides and other hazards. Engineering firm SGM has been performing site visits in advance of developing project designs.

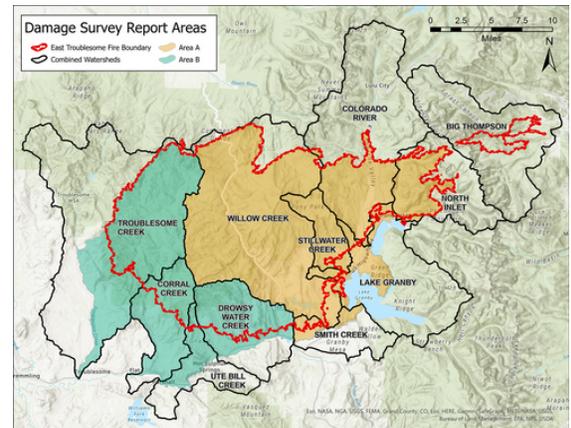
The amount of money needed to fund EWP projects for the ETF is more than \$35 million. Funding for EWP is complex, but has been supported at the State level by Senator Bennet, with a request for congressionally directed funding to support post-wildfire watershed restoration. NRCS funding must have a 25 percent local match, which the partners anticipate will come from State grants. Morris and the Natural Resources Recovery team are continually working to coordinate actions that will move EWP projects forward.

Editor's note: Northern Water announced Tuesday (one day after the weekly BOCC meeting) that SB21-240, Watershed Restoration Grant Program Stimulus bill passed. The bill transfers \$30 million from the general fund to the Colorado Water Conservation Board construction fund to protect watersheds, and to fund watershed restoration grant programs.

More than 90% of the burn scars from the ETF and Williams Fork Fire are on public land - and are higher in the watersheds than the private lands the ETF EWP program is designed to protect.

The EWP Partners have collaborated on a website to detail the projects.

GCWatershedRecovery.com has general information, damage survey reports, current news and information about project planning.



Meeting minutes, support materials and full audio are available at:
co.grand.co.us/AgendaCenter
co.grand.co.us/Archive

TREASURER'S REPORT



Grand County Treasurer **Frank DeLay** reported that about 80 percent of property tax collections have been received, and the department is anticipating the remaining 20 percent in the next week.

DeLay also gave an overview of the County's investment accounts:

- Overall balances are \$8 million higher than year-end 2020
- Year-over-year, investment balances are \$6.2 million higher than May 2020
- The County received its first federal stimulus payment via the American Rescue Plan this morning

ADDITIONAL BUSINESS...

- Finance Director **Curtis Lange** asked for approval and direction on several items:
 - Approval of weekly vouchers and wire payments; approved with no discussion
 - The department was notified via email by the Colorado Department of Local Affairs (DOLA) that up to \$50,000 of additional funding is available for previous applicants of the CARES Act. Because the notification and application deadline were both prior to this BOCC meeting, Lange submitted an application to DOLA, and solicited retroactive approval of the application from the BOCC; approval was given with no discussion
 - Lange proposed holding budget workshops in July with each department to give the BOCC high-level presentations prior to budget season; Commissioners were supportive of hosting the workshops, to be scheduled Tuesdays following the regular Board meeting
 - As a follow-up to WRC's presentation last week, Lange asked Commissioners for guidance to continue reviewing WRC's request as related to the American Rescue Plan funds; Commissioners were supportive of staff performing additional research
- As a follow-up, Clerk & Recorder **Sara Rosene** reported that both the department's revenue and volume have increased year-over-year and for the same periods in 2020 and 2019
- Airport Supervisor **Josh Schroeder** asked for approval of a tenant lease change:
 - Tenant Société Internationale de Télécommunications Aéronautiques ("SITA's Legacy Company") is transferring all its contracts to SITA Information Network Computing USA Inc.
 - The change was approved with no discussion.
- EMS Chief **Robert Good** asked for approval for four staff members to travel out of state to retrieve three ambulances
 - Three staff members and the Chief will fly to the destination; the Chief will fly home and the three staff members will drive the ambulances back to Colorado. Travel costs were significantly lower compared with paying a transport company.
 - The travel request was approved with a total expenditure not to exceed \$5,000
- Community Development presented Resolution No. 2021-2-17 approving the Elk Creek Vista Outright Exemption, located in part of the SW 1/4 NE 1/4 Section 30, Township 1 South, Range 75 West of the 6th P.M.
 - The resolution was approved with no discussion

Ballot Initiative 16 - the P.A.U.S.E. Act - is NOT anti-animal abuse, it's anti-agriculture.

BEFORE YOU SIGN a petition against or fighting animal abuse, we encourage you to PAUSE, and learn more about the far-reaching, negative effects of #16! Read the proposed ballot language at Ballotpedia.org.

MANAGER'S UPDATE

County Manager **Ed Moyer**'s update included:

- Due to unseasonably warm temperatures and reduced river flows, the River District made a request to Denver Water and Northern Water on Saturday for additional bypass flows to address water temperatures on the Colorado River near Kremmling and downstream.
 - River District released an additional 50 cfs from Wolford on Saturday morning. Denver Water bypassed an additional 100 cfs from Moffat system mid-day on Saturday on St. Louis Creek. Northern Water/Municipal Subdistrict bypassed an additional 50 cfs from Windy Gap on Saturday evening. Total of 200 cfs of increased flow went to the Colorado River.
 - As Moffat System reservoirs fill, Denver Water is providing additional bypasses and added flows to the Fraser River (including Ranch Creek and Vasquez Creek). Windy Gap will continue to pump as conditions allow, or until the call comes on. However, the bypasses, pumping, downstream flows and temperatures, and irrigator needs are all being monitored and coordinated with the Learning By Doing - Operations Group with a goal of being proactive and addressing needs in this difficult time period.
 - Thanks to the Colorado River District, Denver Water, and Northern Water (all as members of Learning By Doing) for their quick response and coordination, and for working directly with downstream irrigators. Because of the drought conditions since last summer, along with a below average snowpack and very low soil moisture leading into runoff, the soils are soaking up the a lot of the runoff this year.
 - Dillon Reservoir is predicted to fill if the Robert's Tunnel doesn't turn on (which sends water to Denver Water's South Platte Collection System); if Dillon fills, and because it's a substitution year for Denver Water and Green Mountain and Dillon Operations, the water sent to Green Mountain Reservoir will reduce the substitution bill owed (releases) from Wolford and Williams Fork Reservoirs.
- Senate Bill 240 went to the House Appropriations Monday asking for a total of \$30 million for Emergency Watershed Protection programs matching funds. (*Editor's note: SB240 passed Tuesday, making these EWP funds available.*)
- Tentatively scheduling an agenda item for June 15 regarding County Rd 522 for the archeological team to present its findings on Task One cultural survey to the BOCC.
 - The Manager's Office has received several calls and emails in opposition to 522 (aka Fraser Valley Parkway project). Correspondence is being compiled into a single folder for the Commissioners in next week's meeting.
- Correspondence has also been received regarding Young Life and concerns about limiting bus traffic to GCR 50, 50-S, 721 and 72. The citizen's request is to review the current traffic patterns and recreation use on these County Roads related to the camp's special use permit versus having the bus traffic use GCR 517 and 5 instead.
 - Commissioners gave direction to reply back to the concerned citizen that, while the topic is viable, this summer is not an appropriate time to review the matter due to staffing and workload capacity.
- A letter to CDOT's Region 3 Transportation Director confirming Grand County's \$400,000 commitment to the Red Dirt Hill safety improvement project was approved.
- A Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) request from the Town of Winter Park was approved in the amount of \$4,667 (1/3 of the cost) for plowing open Corona Pass / GCR 80.
 - This is a public-private partnership with Grand County, Town of Winter Park and Grand Adventures.
- A Conservation Trust Fund (CTF) request to purchase three portable audio system units for the Middle Park Fair & Rodeo grounds in Kremmling in the amount of \$1,000 / each was approved.



Tuesday, several staff members along with Commissioner Kristen Manguso, Sheriff Schroetlin and Megan Ledin from the Grand Foundation received a tour of a site where Southern Baptist Disaster Relief (SBDR) is performing debris clean-up work for a homeowner whose home was destroyed by the East Troublesome Fire.

SBDR is a volunteer-based organization whose mission is to offer help, hope and healing following natural disasters. A crew of volunteers (college students spending their summer in hazmat suits digging through ash) were sifting through ashes at a site where homeowners stated they were hoping – perhaps in vain, but hoping nonetheless – to find two wedding rings that had been left on a bedside table when they evacuated. While we were there, one of the rings was found.

If you – or someone you know – is a victim of the East Troublesome Fire and need help with debris clean up, please call 970-531-3776.



Also onsite was a news crew from Channel 7. While they were there to document the work being done, they also brought a check for \$20,000 in donations to present to The Grand Foundation to help with Fire Recovery aid. **Again – if you are a victim of the fire and need financial assistance paying utility bills or renting a roll-off dumpster for debris, please call The Grand Foundation: 970-887-3111.**