

# LOWER DOLORES WORKING GROUP FACT SHEET

## Meeting #5

April 20, 2009

### Potential tools and 319 Watershed Study

#### Tools for protection of land and water

**Presenter:** Marsha Porter-Norton  
**Facilitator for the Working Group**

**State tools:**

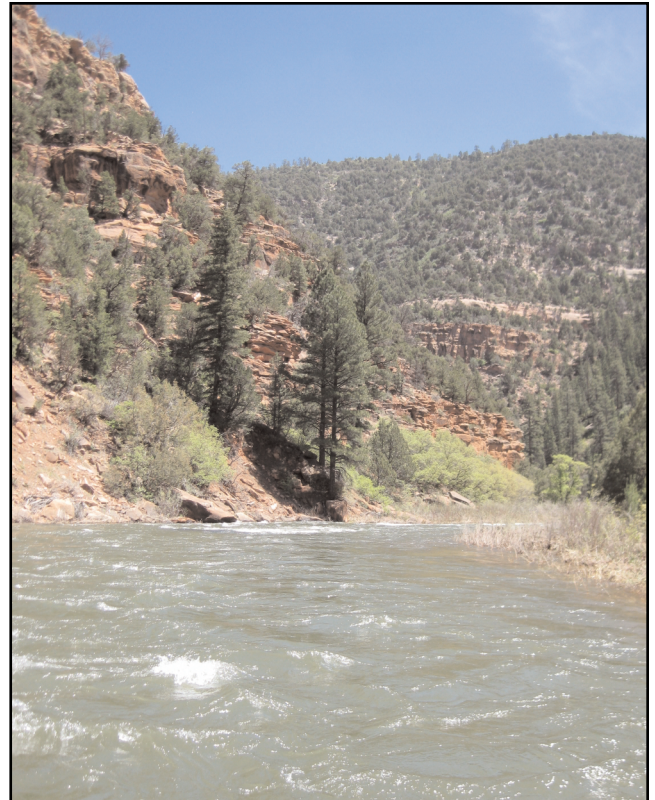
- **The Colorado instream flow program**, a voluntary program by which water rights can be purchased or leased to protect values in a stream. The water is then administered by the Colorado Water Conservation Board. This method primarily protects stream flows.
- **State laws and intergovernmental agreements**, developed on a case-by-case basis.
- **Gold-medal waters designation**, for the highest-quality coldwater fisheries.
- **Outstanding waters designation**, a Colorado Water Quality Control Act classification that is the most protective designation for water.
- **Recreational In-Channel Diversions**, which provide a minimum water right for recreational uses between two points.

**Federal tools:**

- **U.S. Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management resource management plans.** These establish broad guidance for project and activity decision-making.
- **Wild and Scenic River (WSR) designation.**
- **Wilderness-area designation.**
- **Special designations** (e.g., National Conservation Area, Research Natural Area, Area of Critical Environmental Concern). These require legislation.
- **Other special legislation** targeted to a specific area.

**County and local tools:**

- **Conservation easements on private land.**
- **Local work projects** (tamarisk removal, riverbank stabilization, cultural-site stewardship programs).
- **Land stewardship programs.**
- **County land-use policies.**
- **Local contractual agreements.**
- **Buying land (land acquisition)** from willing sellers.



Marsha Porter-Norton

The Dolores River gorge

The Lower Dolores Management Plan Working Group is working to provide recommendations for updating the Dolores Public Lands Office (Forest Service/BLM) 1990 Dolores River Corridor Management Plan. The Working Group includes diverse stakeholders with many perspectives and interests in the Lower Dolores River Valley. Its goals are to gather information, identify values worthy of protection in the planning area, formulate ideas for protection of the values, and make recommendations to the Dolores Public Lands Office. The Working Group will meet until Fall 2009. Presentations, documents, meeting summaries, agendas and other information related to the Working Group process are posted at <http://ocs.fortlewis.edu/drd/>.

Lower Dolores  
Working Group  
Members & Alternates

Chester Anderson  
Linda Bassi  
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Chris Burkett  
Jon Callender  
Randy Carver  
Steve Chappell  
Amber Clark  
Scott Clow  
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Jim Fisher  
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Rick Gersch  
Art Goodtimes  
David Graf  
Dave Harper  
Vern Harrell  
Al Heaton  
Shauna Jensen  
Rick Keck  
Julie Kibel  
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Ted Kowalski  
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Andy Logan  
Joe Mahaffey  
Meghan Maloney  
Karel Miller  
Ann Oliver  
John Porter  
Mike Preston  
Larrie Rule  
Rick Ryan  
David Schneck  
Lisa Schwantes  
Don Schwindt  
Leslie Sesler  
Jim Siscoe  
Bruce Smart  
Dale Smith  
Doug Stowe  
Rowdy Suckla  
Steve Trudeau  
David Vackar  
Chuck Wanner  
Mely Whiting  
John Whitney  
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Staff

Marsha Porter-Norton  
Kathy Sherer  
Gail Binkly  
Gina Espeland

## 319 Watershed Study

**Presenter: Chester Anderson**

**Owner/president, BUGS Consulting**

BUGS Consulting is engaged in the 319 Watershed Study, a voluntary, non-regulatory watershed planning process for the Dolores River. The goal is to protect or improve water quality on the Dolores River from McPhee to the Utah state line by identifying sources of non-point pollution, identifying best management practices (BMPs) to mitigate those sources, and implementing the BMPs after obtaining funds to do so.

Some sources of nonpoint source pollution are:

- Excess fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides.
- Oil, grease and toxic chemicals from urban runoff and energy production.
- Salts from irrigation runoff.
- Bacteria and nutrients from livestock wastes and malfunctioning septic systems.

Chester would like to receive feedback from throughout the watershed to identify areas of concern.

**To help with the  
319 Watershed Study:  
Contact Chester Anderson  
970-764-7581  
[chester@bugsconsulting.org](mailto:chester@bugsconsulting.org)**

### ***Working Group discussions and thoughts***

- The Working Group emphasized its **concerns about the possible effects of a WSR designation on private property rights** and private landowners. Could such a designation devalue private property?
- It was stated that **water is also a private property right**, as are mineral interests.
- The group said counties' and citizens' interests must be considered, and noted that acquisition of land means a loss of property-tax revenues for counties and schools.
- The group asked for more information in order to evaluate alternatives to WSR designation, and said **all potential management tools should be evaluated in detail** as to their pros and cons.
- It was asked **whether a change in river management is really needed**. One person stated the group should not have a mindset that it has to change current management if things are working well; the river corridor that we recognize as being "wild and scenic" has been in place many years. Marsha agreed that one option is the "null alternative", meaning keeping the status quo.
- However, another person pointed out that the 2007 Draft Revised San Juan Public Lands Resource Management Plan found portions of the Lower Dolores River "suitable" for WSR designation. **If the Working Group does not come up with its own recommendations**, then **the suitability recommendation** contained in the plan **will move forward**. The Working Group can come up with something of its own that it will be happier with.
- It was suggested that the group **examine the Dolores River according to its different reaches**, all of which have different characteristics and values. There may be an opportunity within those unique reaches to develop different alternatives to WSR designation.

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