

“Dolores River Dialogue”

Purpose, Function, Projects/Activities, DRD-Steering Committee Roles
& Tool Kit for Framework Proposals
2013

Dolores River Dialogue: Purpose Statement

The DRD is a coalition of diverse interests, whose purpose is to explore management opportunities, build support for and take action to improve the ecological conditions downstream of McPhee Reservoir while honoring water rights, protecting agricultural and municipal water supplies, and the continued enjoyment of rafting and fishing. (11/09)

Dolores River Dialogue: Functions of the DRD

- ✓ To serve as an ongoing forum to bring together various community members, conservation groups, water managers, recreationists, other interest groups, and federal, state and local governments and agencies to explore issues, develop common understandings and complete projects – towards the goal of defining and acting upon “do-able” actions which address the purpose statement.
- ✓ To link with other groups working in the Lower Dolores area to communicate, coordinate, and share resources and information.
- ✓ To produce and disseminate relevant documents and other educational publications for use by DRD members, the DRD - Steering Committee and other DRD Committees, partners, and the community-at-large.

Projects/Activities that the DRD is supporting in 2013 in order to work towards the Purpose Statement:

1. Host two full DRD meetings a year to keep the public and all key stakeholders informed of activities in the watershed and on the river.
2. Complete the “319 watershed study” by March 31 of 2013. Please go to the “319” button on the DRD Web site on the left for more information.
3. Continue to convene and facilitate, as necessary, the Lower Dolores Plan Working Group and the Legislative Subcommittee as it finalizes plans for a National Conservation Area (NCA) which is the identified alternative to the river being suitable for the Wild and Scenic River status. Please find more at the Lower Dolores Plan Working Group button on the DRD Web site.

4. Link with the Implementation Team ~~ giving input; sharing information; and vetting of ideas. The Implementation Team (IT) was formed in July 2011 to study and potentially pursue nine opportunities to improve the status of native fish identified in the report issued by the *A Way Forward* science contractors in July and finalized in August of 2011. The Implementation Team released a report in the fall of 2012 and is currently making plans for releasing an update taking into consideration questions and feedback heard from community members, entities and groups. For more information, go to “Implementation Team” at the bottom of the DRD Web page (left side).

5. If and when any proposals come forth for addressing the DRD’s purpose statement, the DRD-SC will continue to oversee the implementation of the Framework Proposal Project that offers interested persons, organizations and coalitions the opportunity to develop “do-able” alternatives which are first vetted by the DRD - Steering Committee, and the Hydrology and Science Committees with recommendations then being made to the larger DRD. *Please refer to everything in italics below for information on the DRD Framework Proposal Project.*

6. Convene a **Science Committee, as needed**, that comments on scientific aspects of Framework Proposals; conducts science efforts in the corridor; compiles and summarizes scientific information pertinent to Dolores River ecology and management; promotes communication and coordination among partners; and conducts technical and/or peer reviews of DRD science efforts.

Convene a **Hydrology Committee, as needed**, that provides and interprets hydrological assists in preparing, reviewing and commenting on the hydrological aspects of new Framework Proposals; and educates DRD members and Framework Project proponents specific to hydrologic constraints, costs and opportunities.

7. The DRD will carry out administrative functions:

- The Steering Committee (*) will meet up to 11 times and the full DRD will meet twice.
- The DRD Web site will continue to be a resource for disseminating information.
- The budget of \$34,525 will be raised working with a variety of partners. This budget is for the core operations of the DRD and identified projects (in 2013, this includes the 319 watershed plan as well as the Lower Dolores Plan Working Group’s work).
- The DRD Science Committee and Hydrology Committee will hold meetings as necessary.

* Roles of the DRD-SC: The DRD Steering Committee of the DRD is made up of: American Whitewater; Bureau of Reclamation; Colorado Parks and Wildlife; Dolores Water Conservancy District; Montezuma Valley Irrigation Company; San

Juan Basin Farm Bureau; San Juan Citizens Alliance; Southwestern Colorado Livestock Association; The Nature Conservancy; and Trout Unlimited. Each entity appoints a representative and an alternate. The Steering Committee's roles and tasks are:

- Reports to the DRD and serves as a clearing house for all DRD activities
- Guides the *Framework* process; vets ideas and moves efforts forward; develops recommendations to take to the DRD; is a place where consensus is "hammered out" in great detail; frames opportunities for the larger DRD; takes recommendations to the DRD using detail work coming in from the Hydrology and Science Committees
- Keeps the DRD from getting out ahead of the member groups
- Is not a final decision maker
- Ensures funding oversight
- Oversees the Science and Hydrology Committees
- Selects contractors and/or other staff
- Organizes work – develops annual goals, work plans, objectives and measurements for progress and monitoring of each and reviews requests for projects
- Ensures credibility and outside review of science efforts
- Provides continual communication with the DRD and committees; listens at all levels; works together to keep the diverse coalition of interests working in a positive direction; uses a "can do" attitude; stays flexible
- Can include other players as may be necessary

Tool Kit for DRD Framework Proposals

Principles for Success

The DRD-Steering Committee has developed a set of principles for successful Framework Proposals and do-able alternatives that include (note: this list should be considered a helpful guideline in thinking about and completing proposals):

- All proposals will be fairly discussed by the DRD-SC
- Broad stakeholder involvement
- Sound scientific and hydrological information
- They are “do-able” – meaning they are crafted within the known hydrological sideboards, Colorado water law, and Project contracts and input from the Hydrology Committee
- They are based on the most current scientific literature available
- The proposal recognizes that there are various diverse interests involved in the DRD and that buy-in is important. Successful proposals prompt and promote collaboration.
- The benefits of the proposal are well articulated
- The proposal may take an adaptive management approach recognizing that some ideas need to be tested and monitored for results and outcomes – therefore, the proposal may have a multi-year implementation component
- Educating participants of the DRD and the community is evident

Framework Proposal Outline (approved by the DRD, March 2010)

Dolores River Dialogue Framework Proposal Outline for Considering Actions to Improve the Downstream Environment

Names of Person(s) Developing this Proposal: _____

Main Contact Person’s Phone Number, Cell and Email: _____

Date: _____

Please complete a proposal that addresses the questions below. Please be concise and attach any maps, hydrographs or supporting documentation. The process by which the proposal will be evaluated by the DRD-Steering Committee and the full DRD is on the Web site or available by request, and should be reviewed before starting.

Overview of the Proposal

- What is the specific proposal and how would it be implemented? Details and/or brief examples are helpful.
- What is the geographic area of focus including which DRD reach or reaches that would be involved?
- Who are the partners involved? Please describe their roles and responsibilities. Do you propose a role(s) for the DRD? If so, please be specific.

- *What is a proposed timeline for implementing this proposal?*
- *If implemented, how would “success” be defined and monitored?*
- *Why do you believe this proposal is “do-able”?*
- *Are there communication plans or agreements that need to be in place among key entities to make this proposal work? If so, please describe.*

Costs

- *How much would this proposal cost (please provide a basis for the estimate)?*
- *What source(s) of funding are proposed?*
- *Would you be requesting any money or resources from the DRD?*

Ecology and Science

- *Please describe the anticipated ecological benefits (note: these might be from comparable situations elsewhere). Please be specific about any anticipated outcomes for: native fish, trout, riparian health, river mechanics and/or other.*
- *Please describe any key technical or scientific assumptions you are making including an overview of scientific information relating to the proposal.*
- *Are there any anticipated unintended or negative ecological consequences or costs?*

Economic and Social

- *What are the anticipated economic and/or social benefits and outcomes?*

Hydrology

- *Would the proposal affect water supplies in the reservoir and water rights in the Dolores drainage? If so, describe.*
- *Would the proposal affect operations of McPhee Dam? If so, describe.*
- *Would the proposal affect the hydrology downstream of the reservoir? If so, describe.*

Sideboard/Constraints

- *What are the current sideboards (i.e., constraints) and/or challenges that would need to be addressed (e.g., operational, contractual, legal, political, or other)?*

Other Questions

- *Are there additional questions that need to be answered to “flesh out” this proposal?*
- *What is not known at the current time? Can it be known?*
- *Is there anything else you would like to share?*

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There is no deadline for submitting proposals through the DRD. When completed, please submit eight copies of this proposal and any attachments to the Dolores River Dialogue - Steering Committee through the facilitator, Marsha Porter-Norton: porternorton@bresnan.net, 970-247-8306. The process by which the proposal will be evaluated by the DRD-Steering Committee is below.

DRD Framework Process

The following steps describe how proposals for meeting the DRD's purpose statement are discussed and evaluated for action by the DRD-Steering Committee and eventually, the full DRD itself. This process is designed to be flexible, iterative, interactive and collaborative. The DRD-Steering Committee will serve as the central point for accepting and evaluating proposals, and will make recommendations to the full DRD related to each proposal submitted.

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Phase 1: Initial Discussion with DRD-Steering Committee

Proposals are discussed in concept at a meeting with the proposal developer(s) and the DRD-Steering Committee. Two ground rules will be used: no proposal is rejected outright and no decision is made in this phase. The purpose of this initial meeting is for the entity/person developing the proposal to have a conversation and exchange with the DRD-Steering Committee stakeholders; to receive and give initial information/feedback; and to learn where resources might be available for proposal development and information gathering.

Phase 2: Proposal Development

The proposal developer uses the "Framework" questions (available on the Web site or by emailing the facilitator) and completes a proposal, and then submits it electronically to the DRD-Steering Committee. Proposals can be generated from many sources including:

- *The community*
- *DRD members*
- *DRD - Steering, Science or Hydrology Committee Members*
- *Other*

There is no deadline for submitting proposals.

Phase 3: Education and Common Understanding

The DRD-Steering Committee works with the proposal developer(s) to hold an educational process or event. The goal is to have all parties involved learn about the proposal together in a detailed fashion. The outcome is a common understanding of what exactly is being proposed. This education step will include adequate meeting time for understanding complex information and may include a facilitated dialogue or debate about the proposal. There will be a write up of this education meeting(s) using a consistent outline so the process is transparent.

The educational step could take the shape of a "forum" or "symposia" or could be an expanded meeting between the DRD-Steering Committee with the proposal developer(s) and/or members of the Science and Hydrology Committees, and any other relevant stakeholders.

The exact format of this educational step will be designed based on what is necessary and helpful and of course, in partnership with the proposal developer. Again in this phase, the ground rules are: no proposal is rejected and no decisions are made.

Phase 4: DRD- Steering Committee Review and Recommendation-Setting Phase

The DRD - Steering Committee then further discusses the proposal and makes a recommendation using consensus-based decision making. The DRD-Steering Committee takes their recommendation(s) to the larger DRD. Their recommendations could include any of following:

- a) The DRD should support the proposal and actively work to implement it.*
- b) The DRD supports the proposal but it will be implemented by a combination of partners. (In other words, it's not a DRD-led project but is supported by the DRD.)*
- c) Some other action should be taken to be defined.*
- d) There should be no action on the proposal at the present time by the DRD.*

Phase 5: Full DRD Review and Recommendation Phase

Then, at the next scheduled full DRD meeting, the DRD-Steering Committee presents their recommendations and requests the DRD evaluate and act on those recommendations. The full DRD aims to operate with a full consensus but will establish a super majority threshold for voting. The DRD contract staff will produce transparent meeting summaries and information related to each proposal. If the DRD-Steering Committee does not recommend a proposal be supported, the full DRD will be fully briefed as to the reasons.

If the DRD support a proposal, plans will then be made for implementation.

Additional Information:

- 1) Each of the above steps will be fully documented through meetings summaries and/or production of other documents so that the process is transparent.*
- 2) Contract staff with a background in relevant issues will be hired to help with the Framework Project.*
- 3) These process steps can be reviewed for "do-ability" and the DRD-Steering Committee is open to feedback.*
- 4) It is intended that the DRD Science and Hydrology Committees be intimately involved as the proposals are developed and evaluated.*

Available Tools

The DRD-SC has developed a list of tools that interested persons or organizations can refer to and/or use in putting together a DRD Framework Proposal.

- 1) The DRD Science and DRD Hydrology Committees as well as the Steering Committee are made up of experts and interested persons who can give feedback, data, information, bibliographies, etc.*
- 2) The DRD Web site contains all DRD-published materials and reports including things such as: DRD Hydrology Report (draft); Core Science Report; Correlations Report; reports published by the DRD Science Committee; etc., etc., etc.*

- 3) *The DRD – Steering Committee has established the following desired outcomes for improvement in the downstream environment related to the four scientific areas the DRD focuses on. For each, the DRD Steering, Science and Hydrology Committees can offer information about flow hypotheses (please refer to the Worksheet entitled, DRD Proposal Worksheet: Potential Outcomes, Potential Tools/Management Hypothesis, Hydrologic and Recreational Parameters, Contractual Obligations DRAFT 2)*
- 4) *Hydrological considerations, costs and constraints as well as Dolores Project obligations plus the best scientific information and literature available. It is not assumed or desired that there is consensus among all players on each of these desired outcomes. Further, it is recognized that each of these potential desired outcomes may not be able to be achieved and/or some areas perhaps are in conflict with each other. And finally, successful proposals that are considered “do-able” need to consider and respect Dolores Project contracts, available hydrology and Colorado Water Law.*

RIPARIAN ECOLOGY

- Floodplain scour/deposition*
- Flood plain saturation (nutrient cycling)*
- Cottonwood seedling establishment*

NATIVE FISH

- Spawning*
- Year Class Recruitment*
- Adult fish survival*
- Reduce non native fish population*

TROUT FISHERY

- Combined biomass>30 lbs/ac (3 yr avg)*
- Stocking recruitment-*
- Maintain 10 trout/ac over 14” (3 yr avg)*

RIVER MECHANISMS

- Scour fine sediment (flushing flows)*
- Frequently mobilize channel-bed surface*
- Periodic channel-bed scour/course sediment flux*
- Infrequent channel resetting flow*