



A PUBLIC - PRIVATE COLLABORATION

## CONNECTIONS

THE DRRP NEWSLETTER: WINTER 2016 ISSUE

### Seeding Native Grasses, Culmination of Many Partners

On Monday, December 7th, Daniel Oppenheimer from the Tamarisk Coalition accompanied Stan Young, of I&E Young, Inc., to complete a seeding project along the Dolores River. The site, an old agricultural field located just downstream of Beaver Creek in Utah, is 14 acres in size.

Those 14 acres have connected many partners over the years and exemplify the beauty of the DRRP all too well:

- ◆ Restoration work was planned annually by the Moab BLM Field Office and Tamarisk Coalition through the DRRP Implementation Subcommittee



*Drill seeding a 14 acre field with native grasses, just downstream of where Beaver Creek meets the Dolores River in Grand County, Utah.*

- ◆ Over several years, the Grand County, UT Weed Department has treated the field to manage Russian knapweed
- ◆ Canyon Country Youth Corps completed fencing around the field in Fall 2015
- ◆ The mix of native grasses used in this seeding project was selected based on a successful project led by the USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and University of Utah Rio Mesa Center downriver
- ◆ Seed mix was purchased from one regional business in Utah and drill seeding completed by a second regional business based in Western Colorado
- ◆ Range drill was borrowed from the Grand Junction BLM Field Office to be used in the Moab BLM Field Office
- ◆ Contracting and funding support was provided by The Nature Conservancy, DRRP Funding Subcommittee, and BLM Assistance Agreement
- ◆ Site monitored by Southwest Conservation Corps Interns as part of annual rapid monitoring through the DRRP Science and Monitoring Subcommittee

This pooling of resources and collaborative problem solving will continue to provide the foundation for DRRP's successes.

## Jim Boyd, NRCS Partner, Passes Away

On Sunday, January 10, 2016, the DRRP lost a great partner and friend. Jim Boyd, Recourse Conservationist for the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), was a thoughtful, dedicated, and knowledgeable land manager. As one of his colleagues noted, “He knew his area, he knew the producers, he was a part of that community.” During site visits, Jim was always eager to learn and equally willing to share his restoration lessons with others.

Based out of the Norwood, CO NRCS Field Office, Jim supported private landowners along the Dolores River for nearly 13 years, into his final weeks. In a recent article published in the *Telluride Watch*, Art Goodtimes wrote, “May we remember his positive, creative, and generous spirit.”

**Top right:** On December 4th, Jim (far right) met with private landowners and partners from TC and SCC in Bedrock, CO to identify future project work. Before heading home, he and Jim Johnston (far left) spotted two elk charging through the tamarisk at Johnston’s place.

**Bottom right:** Jim (yellow hat) at a restoration workshop along the Dolores River in Gateway, CO.



## Enhancing Fish Habitat in Dolores River

Looking to bridge riparian restoration efforts with in-stream habitat improvements, partners from Colorado Parks & Wildlife, BLM, TNC, and TC visited the Dolores River on January 7th. Between Rock Creek and the town of Gateway, they assessed several sites where side channels have become disconnected from the river.

Such side channels can provide important nursery, backwater habitat for sensitive warm-water fish species such as the roundtail chub, flannelmouth sucker, and bluehead sucker in the Dolores River. Partners will conduct survey work in the summer of 2016, with a hope of initiating project work in 2017 to re-connect backwater fish habitat.



State, federal, and non-profit partners assess sites to re-connect side channels to provide important backwater, nursery habitat for warm-water fish species in the Dolores River.

# Upcoming DRRP Events

**January 26th**—The DRRP Implementation Subcommittee will hold its annual meeting at the Mesa County Central Library on January 26th. During this meeting, partners will share lessons learned from the field and review 2016 project plans.

**February 2nd**—The DRRP Core Team will meet to discuss how to advance developing a community stewardship program, evaluate implementation of the 2015 DRRP Communications Plan, and coordinate between subcommittees.

**February (date tbd)**—The Science and Monitoring Subcommittee is scheduling its annual meeting for February (details forthcoming) to review monitoring reports. To learn more, contact Julie at [jknudson@tamariskcoalition.org](mailto:jknudson@tamariskcoalition.org).

**February 10**—At the annual TC Conference at Colorado Mesa University in Grand Junction, Meg White, TNC Ecologist, will present her findings on habitat complexity at tributary junctions along the Dolores and Colorado Rivers.

**March 28th**—Western Colorado Conservation Corps interns return to the Dolores River to begin 2016 restoration project work.



**April**—DRRP hears back from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation-Developing the Next Generation of Conservationists program regarding its 2016-2017 grant proposal.

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## Marketing Firm Hired

After completing the DRRP Communications Plan in 2015, the partnership has taken multiple steps towards the four goals outlined in the plan. Most recently, the Communications Working Group hired Third Principle to help develop branding and targeted messaging for the partnership.

Third Principle, a marketing and branding firm based in Denver, has started the process with lots of great energy and creativity. We look forward to working with them in the coming months.



*Photo from [thirdprinciple.com](http://thirdprinciple.com)*



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## BLM Ecologist Wins National Education Award

When she is not working diligently with the DRRP Science and Monitoring Subcommittee to coordinate and evaluate monitoring protocols for evaluating the Dolores River riparian plant community, Nikki Grant-Hoffman wears another hat, as the McInnis Canyons National Conservation Area Science and Education Coordinator.

At a recent National Association for Interpretations National Workshop, Nikki received the “Excellence in Interpretation or Education” Award, for developing several high-quality education programs that offer youth the opportunity to learn about public lands and natural resources in an outdoor classroom environment. Congratulations and thanks for all your great work, Nikki!



*A whole river that is really a river is much to comprehend, unless you spend a lifetime in its navigation; and even then, what you comprehend, probably, are channels and topography and perhaps the honky-tonks in the river's towns. A whole river is mountain country and hill country and flat country and swamp and delta country, is rock bottom and sand bottom and weed bottom and mud bottom, is blue, green, red, clear, brown, wide, narrow, fast, slow, clean, and filthy water, is all kinds of trees and grasses and all the breeds of animals and birds and men and women that pertain and have ever pertained to its changing shores, is a thousand differing and not compatible things in-between that point where enough of the highland drainlets trickled together to form it, and that wide, flat, probably desolate place where it discharges itself into the salt of the sea. — John Graves, Goodbye to a River*



To learn more about the Dolores River Restoration Partnership, visit <http://ocs.fortlewis.edu/drrp/>.