



RWEACT CORE Team: Tom Spezze, Executive Director; Travis Smith, San Luis Valley Irrigation District / CWCB Board of Directors; Dan Dallas, Forest Supervisor Rio Grande National Forest; Stan Whinnery, Hinsdale County Commissioner; Ramona Weber, Mineral County Commissioner; Karla Shriver, Rio Grande County Commissioner and Economic Recovery Team Leader; Heather Dutton, Rio Grande Watershed Restoration Foundation Executive Director and Natural Resources Team Leader; Steve Belz, Black Creek Hydrology and Hydrology Team Leader; Jerry Dennis, Rio Grande Emergency Manager and Emergency Management Team Leader.

September 2013 Update—RWEACT Accomplishments To-Date & What's Ahead

What RWEACT Has Done Since July 2013:

Organization:

- Formation of organizational structure and function of RWEACT
- Develop/foster multi-jurisdictional partnership/cooperation with agencies and organizations and cities and counties along the Rio Grande.
- RWEACT meetings held twice a week for first month, twice a month since August
- Development of Strategy Plan and Executive Summary and Organizational Structure
- Development and implementation of a Core Committees (Hydrology, Emergency Management, Natural Resources, Communication and Economic Development) and Team Leaders for each.
- Leadership (CORE) Team developed to establish forum for business
- Establish Hinsdale County as the Fiscal Agent of RWEACT
- Field trips / presentations with Governor Hickenlooper, Senator Udall, and Natural Resources Chief of Staff for Congressman Tipton
- Presentation to RWEACT by CUSP (Coalition for the Upper South Platte on what worked)
- Presentation to RWEACT by the Army Corps of Engineers
- Development of budget protocol and procedures
- Participation in long-term recovery meetings with Forest Service
- Establishment of Procurement Policy with Hinsdale County as Fiscal Agent and CWCB
- Develop/establish/execute an approved, Umbrella Contract between Hinsdale County and CWCB for RWEACT funding from Governor's Executive Order



Communications

- Partner with BAER in presentation of findings at public meetings
- Development of a Communications Plan, Target Audiences, Key Messages, and Distribution Plan
- Consistent branding with logo and all materials
- Rack Card – development / distribution
- Mailing to all residents in Hinsdale / Mineral / Rio Grande Counties
- Website development and launch
- Flood Awareness Poster / development / distribution
- Facebook development / postings
- Flyer development / distribution
- Assist media as requested and for story generation
- Periodic newsletters, press releases, and media cultivation
- Regional advertisement campaign (seasonally – fall / spring)
- Distribution of communication messages within each respective organization / networks

Hydrological

- Initial modeling of hydrological impacts and projections related to the burn scar
- In coordination with DWR, FS and Office of Emergency Management, installation of 6 rain gauges and coordination with 4 additional stream gauges and 2 RAWS (remote, automated weather stations) for a landscape-wide instrumentation process for storm forecasting, early warning system related to public safety
- Coordination of all data and identification and implementation with emergency management
- Deployment/ installation of temporary Doppler radar system on Bristol Head (Center for Severe Weather Research) at 11,000 feet.
- Direct coordination between Doppler, National Weather Service, Emergency management Team
- Review and comment on findings of BAER team for modeling of hydrological conditions
- Meetings with private landowners and Forest Service recreation special use permit holders to assess conditions and model outcomes

Natural Resources

- Initial field verification of July 3rd Burn Severity mapping to identify levels and locations for burn severity areas
- Coordination with the BAER team to identify Values at Risk
- Review of High-Value, No BAER Treatment areas to identify opportunities (Little Squaw Resort, Box Canyon Summer Home Group, Road 520 Corridor, Goose Creek and Lake Humphreys, Crooked Creek) for RWEACT Values at Risk projects.
- Initial field studies, hosted field trips, and design research for high-value areas identified
- Debris Flow Potential Mapping with USGS contracted and underway
- Coordination of research with other organization and agencies including Division of Water Resources, CSU Research, Willow Creek Restoration Foundation, San Juan Silver, etc
- Support of Natural Resource Conservation Service / private landowners visits



Emergency Management

- Identify locations for installation of instrumentation for best-possible early warning system
- Development of approved Three County Flood Plan & Emergency Management Protocol
- Mapping zones for Emergency Notification and Response
- Creation of Weather Spotter Program Checklist and recruitment of volunteers
- Fence installation for safety around Doppler system at Bristol Head
- Distribution of materials and encouragement of Code Red sign-ups
- Creation / implementation of a County deployment plan for contacting high-risk residencies
- Coordination with CDOT for highway Reader Board in South Fork to Move Up Not Out
- Site / homeowner visits to high-risk areas / distribution of literature

Economic Recovery

- Identification of a National Disaster Area
- Small Business Agency meetings with individual business owners and offerings of low-interest loans (South Fork, Del Norte, Creede, Lake City)
- El Pomar Foundation emergency assistance grant application for a NTE amount of \$25,000 (for mortgage, utilities, emergency assistance for Rio Grande / Mineral residents)
- Letter of support to Colorado Tourism Office requesting regional assistance
- Timber Sale Replacement discussions / public meeting with timber contractors
- Flood Insurance Workshop for public residents
- Release of information of Colorado Wildlife & Parks for big-game hunting impacts and fishing
- Letter of support for grant request to EDS requesting additional marketing assistance for region
- Specific Municipality Assistance—Hey Red Marketing Program for South Fork; Creede Community Relief Foundation (nonprofit extension of existing organization): Reader board in Del Norte asking to Shop Locally

What RWEACT Will Do In the Upcoming Six Months:

Communications

- Interactive Burn Scar/ RWEACT action Map (available online right now) with multiple layers
- Commemorative Poster
- Presentation development for partner organizations to present
- Billing Inserts with San Luis Valley REC (fall / spring)
- Release of "photo of the month" to visually depict natural changes

Hydrological

- Installation of two additional Stream Gauges (Little Squaw Creek) with audible alarms for resort residence notifications
- Installation of protective signage for existing rain gauges
- Model development to predict potential spring run-off



Natural Resources

- Release of findings with Debris Flow Potential Mapping (USGS)
- In coordination with DWR, Installation of 6 water quality probes to monitor dissolved oxygen, pH, temperature, dissolved solids, dissolved sediments etc.
- Installation of a debris flow abatement structure at Little Squaw Resort as requested Task Order #2
- Coordination of additional research with Dr. Stednick
- Proposed upcoming projects:
 - Consider assistance with further design for boom and debris management at Lake Humphreys
 - Consider design work by Dave Rosgen for Leopard Creek debris management upstream of the 4UR
 - Consider assistance for Box Canyon Summer Home Group and debris flow behind Structures
 - Consider aerial mulching and seeding for Riverhill, Long Gulch, Road Canyon Reservoir and additional areas
 - Consider WARSSS (Watershed Assessment River Stability & Sediment Supply) in identified locations

Emergency Management

- Installation of Weather Radio Transmitter to improve coverage on Pool Table Road
- Sandbagging Workshop with the Army Corps of Engineers

Economic Recovery

- Discussion of regional marketing campaigns including 149 Strong and rebranding of the Silver Thread Byway
- Social Media training for business owners and organizations (October 2013, funded by DOLA through Lake City DIRT)
- Discussions with local Lodging Tax Boards about regional efforts

www.rweact.org

info@rweact.org

Tom Spezze, Executive Director, 970-765-4231



Rio Grande Watershed
Emergency Action Coordination Team

Hinsdale County • Mineral County • Rio Grande County

info@rweact.org