

**June 22, 2021
MEETING SUMMARY**

Meeting Attendees

Community Working Group members present:

Todd Pryor – Town of Superior
Jim Schenck – Rebuild Superior, Legends of Superior Trail
Fred Gaudet – Arizona Trail Association
Arlynn Godinez – Superior Unified School District Board / Maricopa County
Mila Besich – Town of Superior
Jeff Bunkleemann – Central Arizona College
Pam Bennett – Queen Valley Community Liaison
Hank Gutierrez - Superior Copper Alliance
Lynne Nemeth – Boyce Thompson Arboretum
Rick Cartier – Superior Chamber of Commerce
Amanda Moors – Arizona Wildlife Federation
Bruce Wittig -- Queen Valley Water Department, Fire Department

Community Working Group members not present:

Tweedy Armitage – Superior Historical Society
Silvia Werre – Top of the World
JoAnn Besich – Superior Optimist Club
Ricardo Provencio – United Superiorites
Fernando Shipley – Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center Board
Pamela Rabago – Superior Chamber of Commerce
Karen Kitchayan Jones – San Carlos Apache Tribe
Tino Flores – Copper Corridor Economic Development Coalition
Anna Flores – Town of Kearny (retired from Town of Kearny and CWG)
Sylvia Kerlock – Town of Winkelman
Richard Matthews – Queen Valley Water Board
Cecil Fendley – Queen Valley Water Board
Tiffany Rowell – Superior community
Lynn Martin – JF, JI Ranch
George Martin – JF, JI Ranch
Cathy Melvin – Gila County
Anthony Huerta – Town of Superior
Mayor Bracamonte – Town of Winkelman
Gloria Ruiz – Town of Winkelman

Resolution Copper Company:

Hesston Klenk - Manager – Native American & Regional Government Engagement
Janeane Mancha
Kami Ballard
Ana Vargas

Facilitators – Godec, Randall & Associates (GRA):

John Godec, Sydney Uphouse

Guests:

Allen Haden -- JE Fuller Hydrology

Peter -- JE Fuller Hydrology

Kevin Hebert -- Matrix

Cory Helton -- JE Fuller Hydrology

Public Visitors: The public was not able to attend this online meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

John Godec welcomed everyone and asked that they introduce themselves. There were several guests attending the meeting from JE Fuller Hydrology and Matrix. The group welcomed them.

Housekeeping

Godec asked for an update on the status of the Telegraph fire. Members of the group concurred that there were still some fingers of fire that needed to be put out, but overall, Superior and the surrounding areas were in a much better place than the previous week.

Matrix and Resolution were asked to share the results of recent and regular water monitoring tests.

Resolution hydrologists use SVL Analytical Inc. to test water. A graph was shown of samples taken since 2017 as well as tables containing data on individual wells (e.g. Gallery Well, Martin Well, Castleberry Well). No exceedances were detected in regard to contaminants tested for any of the sampled wells. Resolution and Matrix explained that differing results are typically due to normal fluctuations. In the past some samples were tested using normally accepted groundwater standards while other testing was based on stricter drinking water standards. Arsenic levels based on drinking water standards are sometimes elevated because of naturally occurring higher levels that exist in the Copper corridor. ** Additional water samples were taken on June 23.

Members asked if there would be any particular analysis after recent fires. There was a great deal of discussion about water sampling protocols and priorities and it was explained that the intention of the sampling program is to sample wells where it is most likely to find contamination (i.e. shallower water wells).

Fire Mitigation and Post-Fire Hydrology

Experts from JE Fuller explained that post-wildfire flooding is a huge concern as there is 200-400% increase in the flow of water across the landscape, and infrastructure in the area is not built to handle that kind of flow. It's predicted that an increase in runoff and sediment deposition and suggested that it will take several years for vegetation to grow back and reestablish normal flow levels. The anticipated USFS Burn Severity Map and BAER Report will

look at the hydrology, fire intensity, soil conditions, etc. post-fire. The BAER report would also identify recovery resources for federal lands.

Lynne Nemeth from BTA explained that we are currently seeing a regime shift in the ecology of certain areas post-fire, which brings about the concern: What do we plant and how do we move forward with restoration? Allen Hayden stated that restoration needs to take place both on a short-term and long-term basis in terms of hydrology, ecology, etc. He says CWG and its partners need to look at what tools are available to them in the short-term and then turn to the long-term. Lynne said that she would like to look at, study, and plan for what sort of vegetation to expect in places like Arnett Canyon 20 years from now. However, short-term needs require revegetating now to avoid soil erosion and flooding.

It was suggested that we be looking at grant possibilities for BTA.

JE Fuller is currently working with Pinal Co. to gauge rainfall and depth of water in Telegraph Canyon and Arnett Creek. They are primarily focusing on the Top of the World area and possibly Superior for monitoring. They want to understand what's changed in the watershed as a result of fires and identify flood hazard risk. He stated that flood risk in Superior is currently low to medium.

The BAER report will provide suggestions on how to slow run-off. CWG members and Superior residents were encouraged to look into FEMA flood insurance, as qualification rules have recently changed with regard to wildfire flooding. Basically, you do not have to be in a flood zone for FEMA flood insurance, meaning that private landowners and ranchers will likely be eligible for funding to help restore their properties in the short-term.

The group asked those from JE Fuller how they will be monitoring rainfall and where. JE Fuller will compare data to models developed using statistical averages from the past 30 years. Satellite images of the recent burn scars showed where rainfall gauges will be established. Snow and light rains would be ideal for the watershed at this time.

Todd and Mayor Besichwere asked if they have any plans in effect for protecting Superior from flooding. Todd explained that they previously had little notice about impending flood waters. However, they had been able to evacuate everyone. Currently, the Pinal Co. flood team is making plans for flood and water surge prevention. Todd stated that it will be interesting to see if they can get proposed projects out and implemented before monsoon season establishes.

Congressional Letter

The group agreed to move forward with sending the previously edited letter to Arizona's congressional delegation. GRA will send an additional copy of the letter to members of the CWG and will take comments until July 1st. The letter will be sent after July 1st.

Next Meeting

Wednesday, July 14, 2021

6:00pm

In-person at Superior Town Hall and online via Zoom

RSVP needed in order to prepare meals for in-person attendees.