

**2012 Colorado Congreso de Acequias
Sept. 20 & 21, 2012
Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association**

Youth and Young Farmer Engagement Break-Out Session

Participants

Prax Ortega, Costilla County
Rick Manzanares, Colorado Historical Society
Delmer Vialpando, Sangre de Cristo Acequia Assoc. BOD
Junita Martinez, Sangre de Cristo Acequia Assoc. BOD
Carl Cormier, Costilla County
Ronda Lobato, Costilla County
Faleen Lobato, Costilla County student
Feliciano Lobato, Costilla County student
*Katherine Faz, National Park Service

*Facilitator/Recorder

Comments on an Acequia/Local History Curriculum:

Curtis Garcia meeting with Costilla County Economic Development Council to develop curriculum; possible avenue to get involved (10 years ago there was a push to incorporate this into curriculum – there is a need for sustainability and continuity)

Curriculum development resources:

- Dr. Rudy Chavez – Highlands
- Centennial teachers – Gilbert Apodaca and Kimba Rael
- Shirley Romero Otero
- Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

Need to incorporate both cultural and heritage, but also practical skills - vocational training and business development – both at high school, junior college, professional certification; CSU extension? Funding opportunities through the heritage area

Cinematic arts class – Kimba and Andrea (Centennial teachers) are looking for a new project

Need to put a value on all types of work in our society – especially the value of “manual labor” and need to communicate this message

School assemblies with local speakers, experts, and college students

Remember there are different age levels to consider for types of participation and possible curriculum (K-6, Junior High, High School)

- K-6 in classroom
- Junior high- teaching in the field, acequia
- High school – oral history projects

Expose students to the outside world – parental involvement is key – parent organization to help teachers take students to different communities nearby (e.g. Crestone) and completely different (Washington D.C.)

Curriculum – need parent involvement and mentors in development and implementation (pull resources together, provide continuity)

Comments on Young Farmers/Next Generation:

Recognize that there is a trend toward local food – small scale farming and understanding how food is grown – need to capitalize on this national trend to retain local youth

New farmers (“next generation”) isn’t young kids, they range from late 20s to early 40s

Need a way to help young farmers who DO come back – support structure, system for assistance (local knowledge)

Comments on Internship/Mentoring:

Local students need to understand what job opportunities are; choose students and assign them real field work projects

Identify youth-elder projects: canning, oral history, etc.

Internships for students (that pay!) – USDA + Conservation District to fund projects (e.g. for students to raise hay)

Younger people need to see an economic opportunity in farming, but also need to be exposed to why it is great to be here (lifestyle benefits)

Need to provide opportunities to make real decisions that affect farming (protection, water, water quality)

Misc:

Most kids want to go to the city, but some may want to return over time, but it will take time (economy, family hardships, other hardships)

Parents aren’t always farmers, family structure is different

Any effort needs to be youth-led; young people need to participate and define what participation means to them

**2012 Colorado Congreso de Acequias
Sept. 20 & 21, 2012
Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association**

Water Rights and Governance Break-Out Session

Participants

Crestina Martinez, Costilla County Commissioner
Patrick O'Neill, Agro Engineering
Juan Ramon Maestas, Sangre de Cristo Acequia Assoc. BOD
Rio de la Vista, RiGHT
Diana Cortez, Costilla County
Daisy Ortega, Costilla County
Charles Spielman, Rio Grande Roundtable
Tressasa Martinez, Conejos County
Ernest Sanchez, Sangre de Cristo Acequia Assoc. BOD
Larry Mondragon, Sangre de Cristo Acequia Assoc. BOD
Tom Navarro, Costilla County
Craig Cotten, Division of Water Resources, Division 3 Engineer
Joseph Lobato, Costilla County
Charles Maestas, Sangre de Cristo Acequia Assoc. BOD
*Ryan Golten, Colorado water attorney

*Facilitator/Recorder

Comments: Role of the Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association in assisting with water rights and governance

Membership – extend to all four counties where acequias are/have been found?

Common issues, but also need to acknowledge regional differences and unique challenges

Functions:

- Bylaw support
 - Provide legal and technical support/advice to acequias who want to create/revise bylaws to reflect values, but make sure that they are legally enforceable
 - Address transfer issues
 - Compatible with conservation easements
 - Supported by solid legal knowledge and by science
 - Voting system
 - Tool to “educate”/pass on practices and knowledge to future generations and/or outsiders who move into the community
- Education and training

- Acequia governance operations
- New/returning parciantes
- Defining/re-defining the role of acequias in the community
- Clearinghouse for acequia records
- Coordinate/assist acequias in structurally defining the historical practices of water sharing

Concern about water transfers; possible solutions in creating bylaws that restrict transfers and through use of conservation easements (bylaws can be changed)

Some expressed desire and necessity to maintain some flexibility in leasing rights, but all wanted to prevent water from being sold or permanently transferred out of the ditch

SdCAA could provide a thinking group to develop creative solutions that emphasize keeping water rights with the land, but allowing some leasing (esp. to other acequias/parciantes)

Community + family + water sharing vs “invidia” + fear + legal system

There is a need for identifying and advocating benefits of community – ag coops, heirloom crops, water sharing etc.

Water-sharing: there is a need for guidance with regard to inter and intra acequia allocation

Water availability concerns: depletion from well pumping and climate change – water supply alternatives?

Maintenance/easements – what are obligations and what are landowner rights?

Comments on other water issues:

Contamination and water quality; tail water – desire to share (and enforce?) best practices

Federal crop insurance – concern over how averages are calculated (acequias are unique – not comparable to larger commercial farms)

Calculating seepage in priority water calls

**2012 Colorado Congreso de Acequias
Sept. 20 & 21, 2012
Sangre de Cristo Acequia Association**

Youth and Young Farmer Engagement Break-Out Session

Participants

Prax Ortega, Costilla County
Rick Manzanares, Colorado Historical Society
Delmer Vialpando, Sangre de Cristo Acequia Assoc. BOD
Junita Martinez, Sangre de Cristo Acequia Assoc. BOD
Carl Cormier, Costilla County
Ronda Lobato, Costilla County
Faleen Lobato, Costilla County student
Feliciano Lobato, Costilla County student
*Katherine Faz, National Park Service

*Facilitator/Recorder

Comments on an Acequia/Local History Curriculum:

Curtis Garcia meeting with Costilla County Economic Development Council to develop curriculum; possible avenue to get involved (10 years ago there was a push to incorporate this into curriculum – there is a need for sustainability and continuity)

Curriculum development resources:

- Dr. Rudy Chavez – Highlands
- Centennial teachers – Gilbert Apodaca and Kimba Rael
- Shirley Romero Otero
- Sangre de Cristo National Heritage Area

Need to incorporate both cultural and heritage, but also practical skills - vocational training and business development – both at high school, junior college, professional certification; CSU extension? Funding opportunities through the heritage area

Cinematic arts class – Kimba and Andrea (Centennial teachers) are looking for a new project

Need to put a value on all types of work in our society – especially the value of “manual labor” and need to communicate this message

School assemblies with local speakers, experts, and college students

Remember there are different age levels to consider for types of participation and possible curriculum (K-6, Junior High, High School)

- K-6 in classroom
- Junior high- teaching in the field, acequia
- High school – oral history projects

Expose students to the outside world – parental involvement is key – parent organization to help teachers take students to different communities nearby (e.g. Crestone) and completely different (Washington D.C.)

Curriculum – need parent involvement and mentors in development and implementation (pull resources together, provide continuity)

Comments on Young Farmers/Next Generation:

Recognize that there is a trend toward local food – small scale farming and understanding how food is grown – need to capitalize on this national trend to retain local youth

New farmers (“next generation”) isn’t young kids, they range from late 20s to early 40s

Need a way to help young farmers who DO come back – support structure, system for assistance (local knowledge)

Comments on Internship/Mentoring:

Local students need to understand what job opportunities are; choose students and assign them real field work projects

Identify youth-elder projects: canning, oral history, etc.

Internships for students (that pay!) – USDA + Conservation District to fund projects (e.g. for students to raise hay)

Younger people need to see an economic opportunity in farming, but also need to be exposed to why it is great to be here (lifestyle benefits)

Need to provide opportunities to make real decisions that affect farming (protection, water, water quality)

Misc:

Most kids want to go to the city, but some may want to return over time, but it will take time (economy, family hardships, other hardships)

Parents aren’t always farmers, family structure is different

Any effort needs to be youth-led; young people need to participate and define what participation means to them