

BREN History

2011

On Feb. 1, 2011 Liz Paul, IRU, convened a meeting to discuss organizing a one-day conference on Boise River restoration and enhancement projects. 8 people attended. The group decided to move forward. Monthly meetings were held for the next 7 months to organize the **From Vision to Reality - Enhancing the Lower Boise River** workshop. 16 people were on the Organizing Committee.

To overcome knowledge gaps identified by the Organizing Committee, they hosted 8 lunch programs in August and September. More than 40 people attended most of the programs. Records were kept of the attendees and an email listserve was created that's still in use.

17 sponsors contributed to sponsor the workshop making it free to attend. The workshop was held Oct. 18, 2011. 106 people attended, representing at least 78 organizations. Part of the morning and afternoon were spent in small groups, and significant feedback was collected and organized. A follow-up survey was sent to all participants. See Appendix A for the participant list and report on outcomes and results.

2011 Pre-BREN Accomplishments

- Volunteers meet for 7 months to organize From Vision to Reality Workshop that was held Oct. 18, 2011.
- Volunteers organize 8 educational lunch programs
 - August 24: Enhancing Trout and Waterfowl Habitat on the Lower Boise River
 - August 31: Geomorphology and Hydrology
 - September 7: Local Case Studies
 - September 15: Enhancing Water Quality
 - September 22: Banking, Trading and Marketing
 - September 29: Boise River Ordinance and Ray Neef Whitewater Park
 - October 5: Regional Case Studies
 - October 12: Water Rights
- Creates an email distribution list that has 192 entries at the end of the year.



2012

Because workshop participants showed significant interest in continued cooperation, some members of the Organizing Committee and others continued to meet. A *Next Steps* gathering was held on May 11 to identify short-term next steps to help build a sustainable effort to increase opportunities for ecosystem enhancement of the Lower Boise River. Many ideas were generated and a Coordinating Group was created. See Appendix B for notes.

The Coordinating Group was open to all to attend and vote. It met monthly in 2012 and 2013; members networked with each other, organized many programs and field trips, maintained an email list, wrote support letters for stakeholder grants, and created a website.

On May 30 everyone was invited to a meeting to develop the name and mission. More feedback was requested via a survey sent to the email list. 43 people participated. On June 25 another meeting was held, the survey results were reviewed and the name and mission were adopted by consensus. The Boise River Enhancement Network was created.

BREN Delivers in 2012

- Selects a name
- Adopts a mission statement
- Creates a logo
- Hosts *Next Steps* work session
- Holds 2 field trips in Canyon County and 2 in Ada County
 - March 21: Marianne Williams Park and Walling Creek
 - August 29: Boise River Float Trip - Notus to Hwy 95
 - September 28: Indian Creek Restoration Project
 - November 1: Hyatt Hidden Lakes Reserve
- Hosts four educational lunch programs
 - October 23: Cleaning up Agricultural Pollution
 - Oct. 30: Rebuilding the Broadway Bridge
 - Nov. 13: Boise City Streambank Stabilization
 - Dec. 19: Wildlife Linkages to the Boise River
- Launches our On Line Networking web site and offers a user training
- Raises over \$500
- Holds monthly Coordinating Group meetings
- Maintains email list that has 231 entries by the end of the year.



2013

The Vision Committee worked for months to draft a BREN Vision statement. Feedback on the draft Vision was gathered via a survey sent to everyone on the email lists in early January, and the Coordinating Group adopted the Vision on Feb. 6, 2013.

In January, 2013, the Coordinating Group decided to prepare an application to the Bureau of Reclamation for a Water Smart grant. \$100,000 was requested to establish a watershed network that serves the stakeholders and increases opportunities for public and private enhancement project collaboration. The goal was not to establish an organization that does enhancement work. That grant was submitted in June 2013. BOR awarded the grant and work began on the following on October 1, 2013:

- Develop a structure and operating process for BREN,
- Plan and conduct outreach to increase effectiveness of BREN,
- Improve and expand BREN's communication services, and
- Work with stakeholders to write a comprehensive enhancement plan.

The Grant Team organized a Kickoff gathering on Oct. 30, 2013. More than 275 people were invited – many personally - and approximately 40 attended. A structure committee and an outreach committee were convened.

BREN Delivers in 2013

- Adopts a Vision Statement after surveying BREN members
- Works as a group to apply for a Bureau of Reclamation WaterSmart Grant
- Receives a \$100,000 2-year grant from BOR
- Kicks off the Grant with an all-BREN gathering
- Surveys members to identify volunteers
- Had a representative appointed to the Boise City Parks and Recreation Boise River Plan citizen committee and hosted 3 group discussions to gather BREN input.
- Forms an Outreach Committee and a Structure Committee
- Hosts five educational lunch programs
 - March 6: Timberline High Students Get Wet
 - June 12: A Miracle Makeover - The Restoration of Grimes Creek
 - July 9: Partnership for Salmon Rehabilitation of the Yankee Fork
 - July 16: Proposed Boise River/Eagle Island Restoration Project
 - August 21: Boise River Plan Discussion, Boise River Wildlife, Fisheries and Riparian Habitat
- Hosts field 2 trips in Canyon County and 4 field trips in Ada County
 - May 1: Hwy 16 Bridge Construction
 - May 20: Warm Springs Demonstration Wetlands
 - July 10: CB River Springs Ranch
 - July 17: Float Trip From Star to Middleton
 - July 23: Float trip From Linder to Star
 - Dec. 18: Streambank Stabilization
- Holds monthly Coordinating Group meetings
- Maintains an email list that has 255 entries by the end of the year.



2014

The Structure Committee met Dec. 6, 2013, Feb. 10, April 14, and July 7, 2014. Liz Paul, Gary Howard, Rob Richardson, Tamsen Binggeli, Gary Grimm, Ellen Berggren, Tim Breuer and Mike Somerville participated. The group drafted a BREN Structure document and invited feedback from all BREN members and people on the email list via a survey. 10 people replied. The final Structure was adopted by consensus on July 7, 2014.

The Structure Committee took on the task of recruiting a full slate of candidates and conducting the first Coordinating Team election online Sept. 9 thru Sept. 19. The first Coordinating Team meeting was held Oct. 1, the second on Nov. 10.

The first edition of the monthly BREN online Newsletter was released on June 1. The Newsletter comes out each month and draws attention to past, current and upcoming events and opportunities. It's emailed to each member and posted online.

The Outreach Committee planned many events included participating in the Canyon Soil Conservation District Water Quality Field Trip and making an enhancement presentation to the Idaho Environmental Forum at their annual Boise River Conference.

Work accelerated on the Boise River Enhancement Plan including hosting workshops to get group feedback, forming expert review teams and developing first drafts of the issue papers.

BREN Delivers in 2014

- Adopts Structure after surveying members
- Elects the first Coordinating Team
- Holds two Coordinating Team meetings
- Hosts the Boise River Bash
- Outreach Committee meets regularly
- Host 2 field trips in Canyon County
 - July 23: Greenleaf WWTP
 - August 26: Annual Boise River Float Trip, Middleton to Caldwell
- Hosts 4 educational lunch programs
 - Jan. 15: Stormwater: What's New?
 - March 19: The Boise River and its People – BSU Research
 - Nov. 6: Protecting and Enhancing the Barber Pool
 - Dec. 3: Boise River Geomorphic Assessment
- Hosts 4 lunch workshops to gather feedback for the Boise River Enhancement Plan
 - April 16: Boise River Fisheries and Aquatic Habitat: Issues and Solutions
 - May 12: Boise River Water Quality: Issues and Solutions
 - Oct. 22: Boise River Wetland, Riparian and Terrestrial Habitat: Issues and Solutions
 - Nov. 12: Boise River Geomorphology: Issues and Solutions



2015

The Coordinating Team assumed full leadership of BREN in 2015. An ambitious Action Plan was adopted in March and a number of committees were formed to get the work done. The Coordinating Team met six times. A special guest was invited to each meeting and a field trip to the Star River Walk and a float trip through Barber Pool reach were held in conjunction with the March and July meetings respectively. The Governance and Operations subcommittee finished writing the procedures and they were adopted by the Coordinating Team on March 10.

Work continued on the Bureau of Reclamation WaterSmart grant through September including development and adoption of a BREN Organizational Sustainability Plan by the Coordinating Team on September 8, publication of a monthly online newsletter, maintenance of the website and email list and a wide range of outreach activities. The capstone project was release of the draft Boise River Enhancement Plan, a 2-month schedule of workshops and listening sessions to gather feedback and final adoption by the Coordinating Team in September.



The Coordinating Team nominating committee recruited a slate of six candidates, and the election was held in September. Six newly elected, six returning and one appointed Coordinating Team members took their seats in November.

BREN played a larger role in community affairs including hosting enhancement volunteer work days and accepting invitations to serve on the Ada County Environmental Advisory Board and the Ada County Hazard Mitigation Plan update committee.

BREN Delivers in 2015

- Releases draft Boise River Enhancement Plan and makes 22 presentations to solicit feedback, including to elected officials, tribal leaders, irrigators, sportsmen, educators and the public.
- Finalizes and publishes the 41-page Plan, distributing dozens of printed and digital copies.
- Adopts Governance and Operations procedures, Action Plan, and Sustainability Plan.
- Elects new Coordinating Team
- Holds six Coordinating Team meetings
- Hosts the 2nd Annual Boise River Bash with 19 sponsors.
- Outreach Committee meets regularly, creates a display and plans events.
- Hosts 4 field trips
 - Meridian Wastewater Treatment Plant
 - Star River Walk
 - Float Trip Barber Pool reach
 - Float Trip Caldwell to Notus
- Hosts 7 educational lunch programs
- Hosts 4 lunch workshops to gather feedback for the Boise River Enhancement Plan