

BELLE FOURCHE RIVER WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP
FEBRUARY 14, 2013
MINUTES

Call meeting to order: Tim Reich @ 1:05

Present: Steve Fairbairn-USFWS, Tom Quinn-BFRWP, Karl Jensen-Lawrence CD, Yvette Kirkman-Butte CD, Sarah Eggebo-NRCS, Justin Boerboom-NRCS, Tanse Herrmann-NRCS, John Rombough-Lawrence CD, Zindie Meyers-Lawrence CD, Matt Stoltenberg-BFRWP, Tate Lantz-NRCS, Tim Reich-BFRWP, Cliff Conry-Butte CD, Jared Oswald-RESPEC, Justin Krajewski-RESPEC, Crystal Hocking-RESPEC, Nate Jagim-Meade Co W&P and Clint Pitts-BFID

Absent: Dale Lundgren-Elk Creek CD

Tim Reich called the meeting to order and with all the new faces in attendance asked if everyone would introduce themselves around the room.

Minutes from the last meeting were made available, with no discussion, Karl Jensen moved to approve, Clint Pitts seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Karl Jensen presented the treasurer's report, noting that 2 small cost-share payments had been distributed since the last meeting. Clint moved to approve the treasurer's report, Karl seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Matt Stoltenberg reported on the Segment V schedule and progress. He stated everything was on schedule to complete the outlined work and obligate the remaining funds by July 2013 and have them applied in 2013.

According to NRCS staff, to date, 2 center pivot applications were funded in Butte Co. and so far none in Meade Co. Clint with BFID mentioned that a Meade Co. producer had already ordered a pivot, thinking he was approved for funding. Tanse will touch base with this producer to make sure he understands he has not been approved for cost-share at this time. Due to lack of funding this year with the EQIP program, there will be no piggy-back funds for cost-share between EQIP and BFRWP.

With regard to watershed funding, there are enough funds to cost-share 4 irrigation projects at the same level as EQIP funding. Matt suggested capping the cost-share on one producer's irrigation pipeline because it is very long (5400') and ties up a lot of cost-share funds on one project. It was also discussed capping a second pipeline (2400') due to the length. An additional pivot project, ranking 5th in overall applications, is pending dependent on left-over Segment V funds and approval of the Segment VI budget. Currently, \$11k is left to invest in the Segment V range budget, which could be re-allocated with DENR approval to help fund this as a pivot project in Segment V. Karl Jensen moved to approve the 4 irrigation applications, approve the caps on the pipelines and move the \$11k in range funds to irrigation in

Segment V and postpone the Segment V range projects to Segment VI, Clint seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Tanse Herrmann reviewed a potential erosion control project in Meade County with a lot of riparian emphasis and grazing management involved in the proposal. Pending the Segment VI budget approval, Tanse is requesting \$20k in watershed funds to piggyback on this EQIP project. Karl move to approve the request pending budget approval, Clint seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Tim asked a question on the irrigation ranking worksheet, regarding how the points were allocated. Matt Stoltenberg explained the point system and the reasons for specific point allocations.

Matt led the discussion on the proposed Segment VI budget. He and Jared went through the budget and made some proposals for needed cuts. Clint noted that he felt there could be further cuts in the irrigation scheduling and those additional funds used for more pivot irrigation projects. Discussion followed on the effectiveness of irrigation scheduling on flood vs. pivot irrigation. Clint feels the scheduling is way more effective for pivots. Jared stated that the irrigation scheduling is beneficial for flood irrigation also, but is probably more efficient when used for pivot irrigation.

Discussion was held on the Storm Water Master Plan with the City of Belle Fourche. DENR wants to reduce the funding by \$20k but the board felt that it is a very worthwhile project and it needed to stay in the budget as is. Karl moved to adopt the proposed Segment VI budget with amendments, Clint seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

CCPI Update – Tate Lantz, NRCS led this discussion. Allocations to this point have been based on a percentage of what the BFRWP asked for initially, so if the State of SD NRCS only gets a portion of what they ask for, then the BFRWP is only getting a percentage of the actual distributions to the State of SD. The board is asking for a better explanation because they feel that NRCS is not living up to their agreement to provide \$700,000 per year for a period of 5 years for CCPI funding in the Belle Fourche Watershed. Tate is going to go back and get some more detailed answers to some of the concerns of the board. He is now the Area Resource Conservationist for Programs and there are 3 of these positions in the state. Clint asked Tate to email the board with any answers he receives and he agreed.

Crystal Hocking, RESPEC, explained the Groundwater Study and went over the maps, which will be kept in the Conservation District offices. The maps offer some excellent information regarding availability and depth. There are other concerns and layers such as water quality, salinity, etc. that could be added at a later date. The depth shown on the maps indicate the top of the various formations in that location. The group agreed there excellent outcomes from this ground water project.

Of what the Conservation Commission originally funded, \$24k has been invested and \$18k of local match funds. There is about \$23k left to invest if the \$14k of local match can be secured. These maps were presented to the Butte County Commissioners and they were impressed with the current results of the project. Karl asked if a presentation had been made to the Lawrence County Commissioners, who did not participate in the first phase, to see if they thought it was a worthwhile project and if they would consider future match for the additional layers. With the additional match, several layers could be added such as water levels, vulnerability, etc. Some discussion on whether to gather up more match and use the rest of the Conservation Commission funding or go back to the commission to basically request a new project to add the detailed layers with a new timeline. Crystal and Matt felt it might be better to use more of the funding that has already been approved. Matt suggested that he and Crystal may come up with a summary of what has to be done and then have a questionnaire asking potential funders what additional layers or concerns they would like to see addressed and would be willing to provide match dollars for. On this ground water project to date the cash match has been provided by Butte Co., Meade Co. and the City of Spearfish, at a rate of \$6000 each. Some discussion was held on who would be able to attend the various local meetings. Karl stated that either he or John Rombough of the Lawrence CD, could attend the Lawrence Co. Commissioners meeting. Nate suggested that Jim Schroeder go to meet with the Meade Co Commissioners and the City of Sturgis. Some ideas were passed around on other groups that might be interested such as Wharf Resources, Spearfish Canyon Society, Rural Water Assn., etc. Contacts will be made with these groups.

Envirothon – Tim Reich gave a report on the SD Envirothon efforts. Initially this will be a one day state competition located in Pierre. Most of the interest to date has been shown by schools on the eastern side of the state.

Nate Jagim reported on the BF Weed Management progress. Tree seedlings and grass plugs have been ordered from Yvette at the Butte CD. Some encapsulated seed has been ordered which is meant to be sprayed out on to the snow and then gets incorporated with the spring thaw. To date, close to \$100k has been invested in the phragmites project and they are projecting total funding of close to \$90k for this coming year. (The figures for acres and miles treated and the cost per acre for the project beginning in 2010-see handout) Some questions on the restoration costs, but they haven't done enough restoration to have this information available yet. Blowing in the grass seed will be fairly efficient, but the tree planting is more labor intensive and takes longer, so it costs a lot more per acre. Some consideration being given to using fabric squares around the tree plantings to try to give the new seedlings some protection from competition. The Weed & Pest Conference is in Huron, Feb. 20-22.

The new NRCS State Conservationist, Jeff Zimprich, would like to attend one of the groups next meetings. Tim has invited him and Tate mentioned that Zimprich has stated he is very interested in attending.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 2, 1pm @ First Interstate Bank, Belle Fourche.