

BELLE FOURCHE RIVER WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP  
JANUARY 19, 2010  
MINUTES

Call meeting to order: Tim Reich @ 1pm

Present: Karl Jensen-Lawrence CD, Tim Reich-Butte CD, Tom Quinn-BFRWP, Yvette King-Butte CD, Sarah Eggebo-NRCS, Matthew Odden-NRCS, Steve Fairbairn-USFWS, Matt Stoltenberg-RESPEC, Brittney Molitor-Pennington Co., Dale Lundgren-Elk Creek, Clint Pitts-BFID, Jared Oswald-RESPEC, Tanse Herrmann-NRCS, Dave Kimble-SD GFP, and Zindie Meyers-Lawrence CD

Tim Reich called the meeting to order, copies of the minutes and treasurer's report were distributed. One minor wording correction was made to the 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph and Karl moved to approve the amended minutes, Dale seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Karl Jensen went over the treasurer's report, which included the sale of the Chevy Blazer. Dale moved to approve the treasurer's report, Clint seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Matt Stoltenberg presented the field reports. We are still waiting on approval of Segment III, all reports have been submitted. Matt then went over the new planned budget for Segment IV and stated the need for the review of the ranking worksheets so that riparian improvements can be better identified. To date under Segment IV, we have already invested approximately \$156,000. Discussion was held about increasing the cost-share on sprinkler irrigation by piggy backing onto EQIP sprinkler irrigation cost-share. There was discussion on meeting a goal percentage of about 35%. There are quite a few producers who may be persuaded to switch from flood irrigation to sprinkler irrigation if they could get at least 25% cost-share. Matt has discussed the costs of pivot systems with one or two of the pivot dealers in the area. The watershed funds will not be used for cost sharing the cost of bridges over laterals and canals etc. The deadline for having the Segment IV money invested is June 2011, so the 2010 construction season is going to be very important. Another suggestion is on any new pivot system installed; supply a soil moisture sensor so that the producer has real time measurements. The cost-share amounts on irrigation water monitoring has gone up, but the final draft of the 2010 EQIP cost-share amounts is not out yet nor is the ranking worksheet, so those documents need to be finalized before the watershed can make their final decisions on amounts to be piggy backed. On a system installed in 2009, the producer received 25% in combined cost shares between EQIP and BFRWP. There was considerable

discussion on where we can get the best bang for the buck and Clint pointed out that he strongly feels that the best use of the cost-share funds is on full quarter section pivots, however there are a lot of good fields off the South Canal that are tailor made for pivots but are smaller than 100 acres. Some discussion was held on whether or not to have a minimum acreage per pivot and also capping the amount of watershed cost-share at 15% above the amount paid by EQIP. In 2010, the proposed EQIP cost-share is \$220/acre under the nozzles. The board had a lively discussion about how to enhance the proposed EQIP cost-share – the ideas thrown out were bumping up 2009 cost-share to a maximum of 25% and 35% for 2010 applications or not to exceed \$150 per acre over the EQIP cost-share. If a pivot system was installed that met specs but was not cost-shared under EQIP, that producer could be eligible for up to 35% cost-share from the BF Watershed project. Revised discussion: The Belle Fourche Watershed Project will pay an additional \$150 per irrigated acre under the drop nozzles over and above the cost share paid by EQIP. Total cost-shares paid on combined cost-share systems will not exceed 50%. Karl moved to approve, Dale seconded, all in favor, motion carried. If sprinkler system is cost-shared solely by the BF Watershed, it will be cost-shared at a rate not to exceed 50% of the total authorized cost.

Soil moisture meters and CIG – we have the opportunity to apply for an expanded CIG grant, up to \$1 million. Some discussion as to the amount of time and work needed to service all of the monitoring stations that we could potentially have out there. Karl moved to require an electronic soil moisture sensor on all pivot systems that the watershed is involved in, Clint seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Matt reported he is working on a revised AWEP proposal and he has contacted Denise Gauer on this, some discussions on whether to include the Cheyenne River Watershed and the BF Watershed in Wyoming. All were in agreement with the inclusion.

Discussion was held on whether we need a deadline for applications from the BFRWP. It was generally decided to use the same call for ranking deadline as EQIP.

Jared, Matt and Tim gave a brief report on the Non-point Source Task Force meeting that they attended on 12/15/09. The funding outcome of that meeting for the BFRWP was very good, as previously reported. We were also able to address the criticisms we've been getting from some, east of the Missouri River by reporting what we are actually achieving per administrative dollar vs. other projects in the state.

The RedWater Irrigation District Assessment project will need letters of support from the BFRWP, Butte CD and Lawrence CD.

Jared discussed the groundwater study and the need to get letters from the State Water Board supporting the study. It would also be important to get letters of support from the County Commissioner's and

municipalities in Butte, Lawrence and Meade Counties. Jared is going to check on when we will need those letters. The board agreed that they should re-submit the application with the recommended changes.

Tim introduced Sarah Eggebo as the new DC for NRCS in Belle Fourche and Brittney Molitor with Pennington County, the lead on the Spring Creek Project.

Dave Kimble, SD GF&P gave a brief presentation on a New Grassland Restoration Project that SD GF&P is partnering on to enhance native grassland habitat. The project goal is to restore native vegetation on 4000-8000 acres in SD and NE. This CIG grant from all sources is \$1.3 million over 3 years. Questions were asked about ranking procedure. Dave wasn't sure yet what that would be. Tim asked who to apply to if you were interested in participating in the program. Dave answered it would be to the EMRI group out of Montana. Tim stated the BFRWP would be interested and information would need to be sent to the Belle Fourche or Sturgis Field Offices so producers would have proper contact information.

The next BFRWP meeting is scheduled for 4/22/10 at 1pm in First Interstate Bank, Belle Fourche.