

BELLE FOURCHE RIVER WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP
APRIL 16, 2009
MINUTES

Call meeting to order: Tim Reich @ 1pm

Present: Tom Quinn-NRCS, Diane Gronlund-NRCS, Karl Jensen-Lawrence CD, Dale Lundgren-Elk Creek CD, Thad Berrett-BLM, Bill Anderson-BFID, Kody Steinbrecher-SEO-WY, Pete Jahraus-SD-DENR, Lee Baron-SD-DENR, Robert Smith-SD-DENR, Don Liebelt-Butte CD, Wayne Garman-CCNRD-WY, Steve Fairbairn-USFWS, Rod Baumberger-Range Consultant, Jared Oswald-RESPEC, Matt Stoltenberg-RESPEC, Tanse Herrmann-NRCS, Cory Foreman-RESPEC, Joyce Williamson-USGS, Clint Pitts-BFID, Don Newton-WYDEQ and Tim Reich-Butte CD

Tim Reich called the meeting to order and asked for introductions around the table. Minutes from the last meeting were reviewed, Karl Jensen moved to approve and Clint Pitts seconded, all in favor, motion carried. Karl Jensen went over the treasurer's report. \$129,000 remains for irrigation cost share and \$141,000 is remaining for range. Most of the above balance has been allocated but not spent yet. Dale Lundgren moved to approve the report and Clint Pitts seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Matt Stoltenberg and Jared Oswald went into the field report and Matt started by going over the handout that he had passed out. On the 319 Segment III budget, the dollars have all been allocated but due to weather conditions this past Fall and Spring, there is a bit over \$52,000 remaining that is unspent.

Jared went over the progress on the CIG Grant. Fourteen (14) producers are currently involved but Jared is looking for more. He would like at least twenty (20) by the end of this year. Tim pointed out a typo at the top of page 3 of the handout. The CIG Grant is a 3yr project and not 2yr. Jared went over the progress on the water quality demonstration trailer that the partnership has ordered. It is supposed to be here by the end of the first week in May. Bud, the manufacturer, has offered to stay one extra day to help with an actual field day demonstration. The big event, The Water Festival, is coming up in Rapid City on May 21-22. They are expecting about 1700 students to go through the displays/demonstrations at the Water Festival.

DENR has requested an audit be done of the partnership since we are spending more money for various projects now, over \$500,000.

The BFRWP web site has been updated, and RESPEC personnel and Yvette King from the Butte CD will be responsible for keeping the website updated.

The Partnership has applied for \$800,000 per year for 5 years through an AWEF grant with NRCS. The BFRWP should know within a few months if they are approved.

Matt Stoltenberg is also working on a CCPI grant and with the RWA completed, we have a good chance of being approved for this grant. This will be a prioritized funding mechanism for specific BMP's, though not sure on the dollars available under CCPI yet. These will be dollars that will be used for cost-share conservation practices on private land.

The BFRWP is also ready to apply for EPA targeted watershed grants if there is any funding available for these grants.

TMDL – Upper Belle Fourche Watershed

Don Newton, WYDEQ, stated he wanted to attend our meeting to see how we're working on watershed concerns within a multi-county partnership. Don stated in WY there is going to be a big push on TMDL's and watershed activities over the next few years. They plan on using the stimulus funds that are coming down to the states from D.C. Don is hoping their TMDL efforts will piggy-back onto the extensive watershed work that has been on-going in Crook and Campbell Counties in WY in the Belle Fourche Watershed. Tim Reich stated the BFRWP stands ready to assist and work with the Conservation Districts and Counties that are within the Belle Fourche Watershed in WY. The BFRWP is willing to share any information we have and would be very willing to work together on projects across the state line.

Wayne Garman, CCNRD, stated he was happy to be at the meeting and they are interested in working with us on watershed activities. Karl Jensen stated that the watershed project in SD can easily be re-defined as needed, as the TMDL project moves forward in WY. Wayne stated that they are still in a fairly steep learning curve and it's going to take some time to get the efforts organized in WY, but they are committed to move forward. Everyone agreed with Karl's summary of a TMDL as being a process with somewhat of a moving target. Wayne stated they are just getting started, but they do want to work with us where possible, and they don't plan on re-inventing the wheel on the TMDL process.

Joyce Williamson-USGS, stated the gauge readings on all the tributaries have obviously been very high and have shown record or near record high flows. The continuous reading station will be set up on Horse Creek fairly soon, as soon as our current flood flows have subsided. Don Newton asked Jared where 319 dollars were spent relative to the Belle Fourche Irrigation District. Jared responded that most of the dollars were spent on automation to try to stabilize the amount of water in the canals and limit as much as possible, the return flows. The tie-in to EPA-319 funds is the

limiting effect that stabilized canal flows have on suspended solids and irrigation flow caused erosion in the canals. Jared stated he is hoping we can truly see some good results with our automation efforts during this coming irrigation season. Joyce Williamson asked about the funding on Horse Creek from June 2009 and forward. Pete Jahraus stated the work plan has been approved but they don't know exactly on the funding yet. Dale Lundgren asked Don Newton who they were going to be working with on the TMDL's. Don stated that they were going to be interviewing 3 different consulting firms in the next few weeks and then the selecting committee would choose the consultant that is going to do their project and working with DEQ and the local Conservation Districts in the Belle Fourche watershed in WY.

Rod and Matt brought up the upcoming riparian workshop that is going to be held on June 9-11. It will be headquartered at Western Dakota Vo-Tech in Sturgis and will be emphasizing management on riparian areas that are associated with prairie streams that are privately owned. Wayne Garman asked Matt to send some information over to Sundance on the Riparian workshop. Some good discussion ensued on the I&E efforts that are going to be ongoing using the new water quality trailer.

Pete Jahraus reported the funding for Segment IV is coming, just not sure when yet but hopefully soon. He stated that they met with a group from Hill City yesterday and they used the BFRWP as an example of a good working partnership. Pete thanked Clint and the BFID folks for the tour of the Irrigation District and the update on what the 319 dollars have done to date. Tim mentioned to Pete the need that the Partnership has specified on creating a groundwater database to monitor, conserve and care for the limited groundwater resources we have in this watershed.

Thad Berrett-BLM, is interested in working with Rod and Matt whenever he can, and sharing information with the Partnership whenever he can.

Clint Pitts mentioned that fragmites has been listed in Butte County as a locally noxious grass. The Butte County WMA is very concerned about this species (pompous grass) because it is very invasive. They are also working with Crook County Weed and Pest, with more subdivisions coming into Butte County, enforcement will soon be an issue. Funding for pest management control has always been and still is a serious problem, very deficient from traditional funding sources. Don Newton mentioned that at a recent Water Quality Conference he attended, the idea of addressing a water quality problem preemptively came up. Same theory needs to be used in the areas of pest management.

Announcement: Yvette King is going to be going full-time at the end of April, 3 days with the Conservation District and 2 with the BFRWP.

The BFRWP just recently contracted with Jim Thompson to do \$5500 worth of radio advertising. All on local stations and will be aired 3 times a day for 3 months. If the WY portion of the watershed wants to be included, the ads can be altered very easily. Also, any information that Crook or Campbell Counties want included on the website can easily be added. Wayne asked where we were in SD on the e coli readings in the Belle Fourche River. Bob Smith, DENR answered Wayne, and they discussed the issue. The next meeting is scheduled for June 18, 2009, 1pm at First Western Bank in Belle Fourche.

To follow up on groundwater, Don mentioned that there is currently an ongoing study using 319 funds to study the effects of going from flood to sprinkler irrigation on the nitrates in the soil profile and shallow water tables.