

**BELLE FOURCHE RIVER WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP
JANUARY 20, 2022 – 1PM MINUTES**

Call meeting to order: Tim Reich @ 1:01pm

Present: Karl Jensen – Lawrence CD, Connie McPherson – Elk Creek CD, Randy Oliver – BFID, Tristan Clements – BFID, Bill Eastman – SDGFP, Brian Dyck – Belle Valley Irrigation, Jeremy Dyck – Belle Valley Irrigation, Mike Hanson – Wildcat Irrigation, Travis Schenk – Wildcat Irrigation, Justin Boerboom – NRCS RUC, Mandy Ensrud – BCOR, Valerie Riter – NRCS, Victor Tuschen – NRCS, Amber Vogt – Lawrence County, Cheyenne Love – Campbell County CD, Justin Krajewski – BFRWP Coordinator, and Tim Reich – Butte CD. Absent: John Heisler – BFID and Yvette Kirkman – Butte CD/BFRWP.

Minutes were emailed prior to the meeting, following review, Karl Jensen moved to approve today's agenda and minutes of the September meeting, Connie McPherson seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Karl Jensen presented the treasurer's report, following discussion, Connie moved to approve the treasurer's report, Karl seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

BFID Appointment – Tim Reich explained that there are four voting members of the BFRWP consisting of the Butte CD, Lawrence CD, Elk Creek CD, and the BFID. Tim stated that John Heisler is no longer on the BFID board and Randy Oliver is the BFID chairman, so a new BFID member needs to be appointed to the BFRWP. Following discussion, Karl moved that Tristan Clements be appointed as the BFID member to the BFRWP, and Randy Oliver placed as alternative. Connie seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Grants Update

Segment 9 Contract Extensions – Justin Krajewski requested that the board approve extensions until June 30, 2022, for the remaining active BFRWP Segment 9 contracts (2020-Irr-S9-7, 2020-Irr-S9-8, 2020-Irr-S9-9, 2020-Irr-S9-11, 2021-Irr-S9-12, 2021-Irr-S9-13, 2021-Irr-S9-16, 2021-Irr-S9-17, 2021-Irr-S9-18, 2020-Rng-S9-5, 2021-Rng-S9-6, 2021-Rng-S9-7, 2021-Rng-S9-9, and 2021-Rng-S9-8). Following discussion, Karl moved to extend the Segment 9 contracts until June 30, 2022. Tristan seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

BFRWP 2022 Cost Docket – Justin Krajewski covered the 2022 BFRWP Cost Docket (Handout #1) and explained changes from 2021. The 2022 EQIP/RCPD payment schedules were released from NRCS and put into the BFRWP Cost Docket. Karl asked if we could add the water fountain to the cost docket and discussion about the Fabricated Wind Break unit cost, which has jumped 175% so Justin Boerboom was going to check to see if that was a mistake. Karl moved to approve the BFRWP 2022 cost docket with water fountain and windbreak pending additional information. Connie seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Justin Krajewski updated the board on the current Segment 9 budget and contracts (Handout #2). He also updated the board about the Segment 10 Project Implementation Plan (PIP) (Handout #3), which has been approved by the SD DANR 319 Task Force and the Board of Water and Natural Resources. Tim explained that the 319 Task Force approved to fully fund the BFRWP request of \$1,364,000, which would begin in September 2022 once EPA Region 9 approves the project.

Multi-County 2022 Open Ditch Grant – Justin Krajewski updated the board about the grant request, which was approved for \$20,000 from the Resource Conservation Fund by the SD Conservation Commission at their meeting held in November 2021.

Butte CD Cooperating Agency Invite – Tim Reich talked about the BLM letter. Justin Krajewski asked if Butte CD has a cooperating agency agreement with BLM. Following discussion, the Butte CD will respond to the invite since Lawrence CD and Elk Creek CD doesn't have sage-grouse habitat on BLM land.

RCPP/EQIP/CIS Projects – Victor Tuschen provided an update about the RCPP project and stated that the ranking is being worked on currently with hopes that contracts will be obligated by the end of February. Justin Boerboom updated on the status of EQIP for 2022, which would provide about \$300,000 of contract funding throughout west river. Justin Boerboom is working with Spearfish Creek Group for an Irrigation CIS. He also mentioned that NRCS has changed the CIS proposal process with two-page pre-proposals due by March 3rd with NRCS reviewing those and then requesting full proposals.

NRCS Snowpack – Victor updated the board about the NRCS Snowpack/SWE Report (Handout #6). The Belle Fourche Basin in Wyoming is at 54% of median snow water equivalent.

2022 Irrigation Water Supply – Tristan Clements updated the board about the Townsite and Sipalla lateral projects were completed, and the Moore lateral project will be completed by the end of this spring. These projects were scheduled as part of the RCPP project, so BFID has their partner contributions completed ahead of schedule. BFID has received funding from the USBR WaterSmart program for a pipeline project and also purchased portable flow meters to measure water efficiency of producer and delivery systems. Tristan said that Orman Dam is currently at 61.5% of capacity with about 180-200 cfs inflows. At that inflow rate, the dam will be 85% of capacity by May 1st. BFID is also cleaning ditches to restore the ditches to original design of USBR. He also reported that the BFID is processing PPDs daily and their recent meeting with the USBR provided information helpful with submitting and approving these PPDs.

Partner Reports

Bill Eastman with SDGFP updated the board that he is the new private land habitat biologist for Butte, Lawrence, and Harding County. Anna Kopp is still the biologist for Meade County. SDGFP is looking for any projects that benefit wildlife such as nesting cover, food plots, shelterbelts, and fencing. He would also be working with landowners to provide access to land locked public lands. Karl asked if SDGFP is still doing hay yard fencing and conversion of woven fence to wildlife friendly. Bill said that yes, they are and to contact him.

Mandy Ensrud with the Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (BCOR) reported that she has been hired by the BCOR and has been on the job for 3 weeks. She is looking to work with anyone that wants to work with grassland birds conservation.

Amber Vogt with Lawrence County reported that urban developments are moving. Justin Krajewski asked if the conservation districts receive a notice when housing developments are planned. Amber indicated that the notifications are sent to residences within 500 feet, but anyone can go to the county's website's "Notify Me" section and create an account to be notified when a project is in the area.

Tim Reich read an email report from Alex Roeber with SD DANR. He mentioned that the SD Conservation Commission is scheduled for January 25th and Justin Krajewski will add it to the calendar for upcoming events. The Board of Water and Natural Resources approved Nonpoint Source funding recommendations for three 319 grant applications (\$1,364,000 for Belle Fourche River Watershed Segment 10, \$123,000 for Soil Health and Planning Project Segment 2, and \$626,000 for South Central Watershed Project Segment 2). Tim also said that Bill Smith with the SD DANR was approved to serve as President for NASCA. And the SD DANR announced enrollment for the Riparian Buffer Initiative (RBI) is open now but only in the Big Sioux watershed.

Justin Boerboom asked if the if the pivot dealers in attendance could provide updates on supply issues. Travis Schenk said that there will be problems getting pivots and pipe delivery is 10 weeks out due to supply chain issues this spring, but the fall of 2022 is looking good. Jeremy Dyck said that the systems are out 60 days and PVC pipe is the major issue. Discussions continued about contracting schedules and notifying producers about project funding as soon as possible and coordination between producers, BFID, NRCS, and the BFRWP.

Adjourned at 2:47pm

Next meeting April 21, 2022 @ Christian Life Center, 1pm