

BELLE FOURCHE RIVER WATERSHED PARTNERSHIP
MAY 24, 2012
MINUTES

Call meeting to order: Tim Reich @ 1pm

Present: Tim Reich-Butte CD, Tom Quinn-BFRWP, Jared Oswald-RESPEC, Karl Jensen-Lawrence CD, Yvette Kirkman-Butte CD, Sarah Eggebo-NRCS, Rod Baumberger-Consultant, Jennifer Walker-BLM, Thad Berrett-BLM, Dan Udager-NRCS, Dale Lundgren-Elk Creek CD, Matt Stoltenberg-RESPEC, Justin Boerboom-NRCS and Clint Pitts-BFID

Introductions were made around the table. Minutes were handed out, Clint moved to approve, Dale seconded, all in favor, motion carried. Karl Jensen went over the treasurer's report and reviewed all expenditures and deposits. Dale moved to approve the treasurer's report, Clint seconded, all in favor, motion carried. Karl moved to approve the tax documents prepared by Casey Peterson & Assoc., Clint seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

319 Update - Matt Stoltenberg noted that several practices have been completed and there will soon be a flurry of payment applications coming through. There is still approximately \$425,000 available for cost share in Segment V, Matt suggested another funding round for the fall. Matt also stated that he has two applications for riparian improvement projects on some areas that have been heavily used. One of the projects is located on a ½ section and the operator doesn't want to totally exclude grazing but is willing to defer for a couple of years and then get it back into his grazing rotation. Total dollar estimate for the 2 projects is around \$8000 in incentives and cost-share over 3 years. Steve Fairbairn from USFWS is also interested in assisting with some of the cost-share on these applications. Both producers are interested in getting some woody plant populations back in these areas. Karl liked the idea of these 2 applications and spoke in favor of the riparian improvement practices in general. Some discussion was held on what to pay for the acreage incentive. Under the proposed plan these 2 areas would be totally rested for 3 years and then re-introduced back into the ranch grazing systems. One area is just north of Nisland and the other area is just north of Newell Lake. The suggestion from Matt was \$5-6 per acre, per year for a deferment rate. Karl moved to approve the 2 applications, Dale seconded, all in favor, motion carried. The motion includes an incentive for deferment at \$5-6 per acre, per year plus the cost-share of needed improvements such as fencing and livestock water development. Matt reported that they got the monitoring site set up on Horse Creek and monitoring has started as of a week ago.

Judge Jessop has contacted Matt to discuss some possible range planning and follow-up work in the Belle Fourche Watershed. They have a small amount of money to invest in this work.

Irrigation Scheduling/I&E Project - Reinke Irrigation is very interested in being able to put pivots on our heavier soils in the irrigation district. NRCS has asked if the BFRWP could supply a couple of extra sensors. Dwight Kitzen is working with the partnership to get some data put together on levels of salts on irrigated heavy clays under flood vs. sprinkler irrigation. It would be some excellent data to have for irrigation in the Arpan and other heavy clay areas.

I&E Update – Soil Quality trailer went to Hot Springs earlier in the spring – poor attendance and Matt took it to Rapid City for a demo a few weeks later – good attendance for Earth Day.

Jim Thompson has contacted Matt with information on running some updated ads. Tim suggested running some ads later in the summer to coincide with the next funding round for irrigation pivots. The group thought this might be a wiser use of the advertising funds. The amount suggested was \$2000. Clint moved to go ahead with ads up to \$2000, Dale seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Tour – A date and agenda need to be decided. Matt is looking at a time frame of late July. The guest list would include commissioners, city officials, new State Conservationist, legislators and staffers, state board representatives, etc. It was decided that July 18th works best for most involved. The irrigation district will show well at that time of the year as well. A general budget for the tour will have to be around \$800 for a bus and another \$1200 for food, materials and incidentals. Karl moved to budget \$2000 for the tour, Clint seconded, all in favor, motion carried. Time of day was discussed and suggestions were mid-morning to mid-afternoon or afternoon to early evening both options with a meal. This can be ironed out later.

Jared mentioned that the next funding round for Segment VI is going to be coming up, so the group needs to be thinking of what it wants to apply for and target quantities, etc.

Some discussion was held regarding the Belle Fourche River TMDL that had been put together by state staff and some of the errors within it. This had been done with no knowledge of the BFRWP and got all the way to Denver regional EPA office before the group was able to get EPA and DENR to realize that we had not been able to comment on the report. They did open the comment period again so that BFRWP did comment and some of the inaccuracies have now been corrected. BFRWP is working somewhat with the SD Grassland Coalition now too with respect to providing them with range data from the Belle Fourche Watershed. Thad Berrett talked about a survey on dams that they are in the midst of, and they are looking for information on how and what to do to get these dams to last longer and what needs to be done to maintain dams so they last longer. The group gave Thad a few names of people they might be able to get up here to do a field day with them to go out and look at some structures. There are approx. 132,000 acres of BLM land within the Belle Fourche watershed, so it is a large percentage of the watershed, and involves 50% of the total BLM acreage in SD. BLM is interested in working with the BFRWP on range improvements on BLM and possibly non-BLM rangelands, which gets back into the riparian improvement projects previously

discussed. Some discussion was held on the amount of money that can be taken up if we get into the cost-share game of dam rehabilitation. There is a lot of interest in looking into this program, questions were on specifics such as turn-around time, availability of repair funds from BLM, engineering responsibilities, cultural resource requirements on the dam repairs etc. Also some questions on BLM policy regarding prairie dogs – in some instances BLM can get rid of prairie dog towns if their location impacts water quality or if the dog town is near a residence, etc. The range health training is scheduled for July 17-20, here in Butte County.

Tanse Herrmann asked Dan Udager to report that BOR has approved 3 center pivots over by Nisland.

Groundwater Study- Lawrence County decided against contributing to the study, Meade County and City of Spearfish have both committed, Butte Co is a maybe, and City of Belle Fourche is going to consider commitment of matching funds later this summer when they do budgets. This is only Phase I of the project.

The next meeting will be August 23, 2012 @ 1pm, First Interstate Bank, Belle Fourche.