

ROSEBUD CONSERVATION DISTRICT MEETING MINUTES  
August 8~7 pm  
USDA Service Center, 270 S. Prospect, Forsyth, MT 59327

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7:03 pm: Meeting called to order

Supervisors present: Jim Rogers, Doug McRae, Dave Davenport, Don Youngbauer and Wendy Warren.

Others present: Bobbi Vannattan, Laurie Kelley, Rocky Schwagler, Gary Rader and Dennis Kenney, associate supervisor.

Meeting Minutes: Dave made a motion to approve, Don seconded and the motion carried.

Treasurer's Report: Don made a motion, Wendy seconded and approved.

Administrator's Report: There were no questions.

Outreach & Education Coordinator's Report: Planning for the Area IV meeting continues. Bobbi sent letters to the schools for stewardship week. The theme is water is life.

Meeting Schedule: The next meeting will be held on September 12.

Loans: Art Schiffer submitted a loan application for \$50,000, for irrigation improvements. He is offering a first mortgage on 148 acres. The total value of the land offered is \$266,400. Dave made a motion to approve the loan, Wendy seconded and the motion carried.

**310's:**

Application 07-05E: Mike Balensky submitted an emergency permit application. Flash flooding on Graveyard Creek sent debris and gravel into the pumpsite on the Yellowstone River. They used a track excavator to clear it. The pivot is about 50 feet from the river. Mike needs to rip-rap the river because if the river gets behind the pump site, it will take out the pump. Laurie will send Mike a 310 permit application to do the rip-rapping and ask that he forward it to Arlene Ham (the landowner) for her review and signature.

Application 07-04: BNSF 310 Permit. The BNSF permit was approved. It was noted that the application (item 4) specified that no further maintenance will be required.

Application 07-01 Forsyth Country Club: Gary (Skip) Rader, president of the FCC, talked to the board about a recent discussion he had with Tom Hughes, DNRC—Helena. Tom suggested that the country club use concrete blocks to divert water to the pump site rather than excavating the dirt and gravel. It

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would be simpler and less intrusive and the blocks would be removed when they weren't needed. The board agreed that it is a better alternative if USACE would approve concrete for that use. Skip asked the board to consider an addendum to the original 310 if USACE would approve it. The board agreed.

**Annual Plan Items:**

- July: Sponsor a fair booth. The booth was extremely well attended. There were over 450 contest entrants and the booth took 1<sup>st</sup> Place!
- August: There are no annual plan items for August.
- September: There are no annual plan items for September.

**FVH Collins Co (Prince) Reserved Water:** We are still waiting on word from DNRC.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

*8:00 pm:*

**Rosebud Watershed Group:** The Know Your Watershed Poker run was held during Colstrip Days. Although not a lot of people drove the route, the booth at the park was very well attended. The 50/50 Raffle netted the group \$126.00.

**YRCDC:** The Yellowstone River cleanup worked out well. Bob Hector did an amazing job. The council is trying to get things established to get more media coverage for the river. The boat trip on the Yellowstone was also very successful. Eleven USACE officials were there, including a couple of generals. Don believes that they have now established a working relationship with USACE. \$20,000,000 has been approved for river improvement and some of that will go to YRCDC. The Corp just approved allowing the Missouri River money to be used on the Yellowstone. Don thinks that everything will take off after the Intake project is started, which he believes will start within a year. They are having a joint meeting with the Missouri River Group to get them caught up on what is going on.

Public input is of the utmost importance and will assure that things proceed in a cooperative manner.

The City of Glendive came to the council to ask for their support. Ice jams are causing the river to take a turn. There's an old channel that they'd like to reopen for emergencies.

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YRCDC wants to know what kinds of problems landowners have working with the Corp. Rocky said that they aren't very consistent in their handling of permits.

Don thinks that things are finally going to start happening on the river. They want to make sure they get feedback from the landowners and users along the river.

**2007 Area IV Meeting:** The meeting has been rescheduled for September 27. Preparations continue. Laurie and Bobbi asked that everyone attend.

**Range Tour (Tabled from 6-6-07 meeting):** It was proposed that we conduct a Range Tour this year. Dave suggested having a series of meetings during the winter to jump start the range committee. We might be able to move the meetings around to Colstrip, Birney, Angela, etc and get people interested. Tony Malmberg was suggested as a speaker. The group discussed scheduling an event, sending invitations and coming up with creative ideas to get them in the door. The issue was tabled again.

**8:30 pm:**

**NRCS Report:** GLCI grant warm season irrigated pasture...there won't be any nutrition or fecal analysis done this year because it's been hailed on three times. They went in and clipped it, and some data has been collected. The weeds dropped totally out after clipping. It's going to be OK. The moisture monitoring equipment has all been installed and is working. Only one of 12 has been hit by a swather.

EQIP local workgroup meetings are on hold until the farm bill is finalized. Rocky said he thinks conservation is going to do OK.

They are working on the old EQIP and new stuff.

Rocky mentioned that Ted Dodge will be at Hysham Community Center 8-9-07 discussing carbon sequestration. They are trying to nail down how this will work. What will you get paid if you run an intensive grazing system?

Doug: Farmer's Union is running the program this year. Carbon Credits are based on dollars that industry commits to sequestering carbon. This year grazing and permanent grassland were added; previously it was just no-till.

Rocky: irrigated pasture is our best carbon sequestration bet.

Doug: Rosebud County producers are eligible for .24 an acre per year because of the drought.

The Farm Bureau is trying to get the CD's to be their enforcement bureau.

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Rocky asked the district to finance escape ramps to put in tanks for birds. He wants RCD to buy the material and have the FFA build them, then we'll sell them. Eight can be made out of a 4 X 8 panel. They are cut and bent. They will cost around \$50.00 to make and we could sell them for more. Don made a motion to purchase enough steel to make 24 ramps and Wendy seconded it. The motion carried. Larry will put it together; we will probably make some money to pass on to the FFA.

9:00 pm:

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Workshops:** This edition of the newsletter asks for suggestions for workshops for this fiscal year.

**Newsletter:** Doug agreed to write an article for the October newsletter.

**Rosebud Creek Monitoring Stations:** Laurie contacted Wayne R. Berkas Montana Data Section Chief, U.S. Geological Survey who said that both streamgaging stations on Rosebud Creek (06295250 - Rosebud Creek near Colstrip and 06296003 - Rosebud Creek at Mouth, near Rosebud) were funded by the Northern Cheyenne Tribe. BIA reduced their support to the Northern Cheyenne Tribe for water-related activities and the tribe had to discontinue those two stations.

USGS would be happy to restart these two stations. They could either start the stations as soon as practical on August 1 or the beginning of the water year (WY) on October 1. The cost to operate each station in WY 2007 is \$14,000 and the cost from August 1 through September 30 is \$1,170. The cost to operate each site in WY 2008 is \$14,600.

There is a program in the USGS that allows us to provide as much as 50 percent of the cost to State, county, and local agencies. The USGS can share cost with the Rosebud County Conservation District. Unfortunately, the money in the program this year has been obligated. Next year (WY 2008), there is money available and they can provide 50 percent of the cost. Thus, the cost to operate each gage would be \$14,600 with \$7,300 coming from the Rosebud Conservation District and \$7,300 coming from the USGS. If RCD wanted to cooperate on both gages, the total cost would be \$29,200, with \$14,600 coming from the Rosebud Conservation District and \$14,600 coming from the USGS.

The board felt the cost was prohibitive. No action was taken.

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**Elections:** Dave made a motion that the officers remain the same as last year; Doug as chair, Steve as vice and Wendy as secretary. The motion was seconded by Jim and it carried.

**Open Mike Board Members:** Dave got a call from Alan See, who bought property from the Amish. He said they wanted to default on the agreement to take out the dam because they can't irrigate all the land they were promised. Dave will contact Duane Claypool, DNRC, on Monday to see who would be best to invite to the next meeting to discuss this with the board. Later we may hold a public meeting. It might fall under the state subdivision laws as well.

**Public Comment:** There was no public comment.

**Future agenda items:** DNRC water adjudication specialist to meeting to discuss situation on the Tongue River.

**10:35 pm:** Wendy motioned to adjourn, Don seconded. Motion carried.