

ROSEBUD CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PO Box 1200
FORSYTH, MONTANA 59327
406-346-7479

MINUTES OF February 23, 2005 MEETING

Members Present: Wendy Warren, Doug McRae, Jim Rogers, Dave Davenport, Don Youngbauer, Steve Lackman

Others Present: Rocky Schwagler, Larry Fox, Laurie Kelley, Jerry Lunde, Steve Schmitz, Dennis Philippe

Dave Davenport called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the conservation office.

OATH OF OFFICE: Cathy Fleming, First Bank of Forsyth, swore in Dave Davenport, Jim Rogers and Wendy Warren.

MINUTES: Doug McRae made the motion to accept the January 12, 2005 regular meeting minutes. Jim Rogers seconded the motion and it passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The board discussed which account to put the \$1,867.21 administration fee from the Tongue River grant. Jim made the motion to put it into the District account, Doug seconded and the motion passed. Jim made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report, Doug seconded and the motion was approved.

MEETING SCHEDULE: The next meeting will be held March 23, 2005.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT: No questions were asked.

LOANS:

Greg Lackman: Loan has been dispersed. We are waiting for a security information sheet for Patterson.

310: Wyoming Sawmills 310 was approved without inspection. Laurie will send out an approval letter.

OLD BUSINESS:

ROSEBUD WATERSHED: The board picked two dates for potential watershed meetings. March 14 and March 21. Laurie will get in touch with the steering committee to determine which day works best for everyone. Dave mentioned that he had visited with a distributor for Monty's Plant food at the MATE show in Billings. He feels that it might be of interest to the watershed membership. He will get the information to Laurie so she can try to schedule the event. Dave asked if we had heard anything from the Northern Cheyenne tribe concerning their board member. We have not. Laurie will call again to ask for their input. Steve Schmitz told the

group that the FSA is mapping the whole state using low level infra-red and that might be helpful for us in our weed study.

FAIR: Larry will get a design and cost estimates together for a water feature he may be making for the county fair.

COMMUNITY SYSTEMS WORKSHOP: The board discussed possible grants for Laurie to work on while she is in grant writing school in Bozeman in April. Possibilities were a cooperative undertaking with Fidelity on a CBM produced water irrigation project and Rosebud Watershed weeds. The board decided to discuss it further at the next meeting.

CBM WORKSHOP: Jim and Doug will be attending the workshop. Don would like to but has to leave town to attend a funeral.

CARTERSVILLE IRRIGATION & YRCDC: The board discussed the proposed fish by-pass and also made plans to have a board member attend each YRCDC meeting from now on. It will be on a rotating basis. Steve Schmitz said it was in the district's best interest for a representative to be present at the meetings as the study, in order to be truly a cumulative effects study, needed input from all of the districts on the river.

DEQ: The letter concerning TMDL's was discussed. Everyone agreed that EIS's were being done without enough information and only an actual TMDL study could provide it. The situation needs to be addressed in the very near future as it appears that the Tongue is already being compromised. The board discussed inviting David Oppen, the new head of the DEQ, to the area to discuss the situation. Laurie will look into it.

NRCS REPORT: Rocky reported that 45 EQIP applications had been received for the initial allocation. He told the group that construction had continued all winter long and he is very busy. He asked about the capacity funds grant and Steve Schmitz told him that because it is a legislative year, money won't be available until it is voted on late in the session. He will find out the status of the district's application and if it is approved, the board wants to hire interns and pay them out of the money the district has budgeted for their portion of the costs. This will help NRCS and also give us a better chance of finding upper level range students.

TECHNICIAN REPORT: Larry reported on the discrepancy between Energy Labs soil testing reports and those that he has gotten using the HACH kit. He has done a lot of research on the results and spoken to numerous soil scientists. They have discovered that the HACH kit was developed for eastern states and the lime in our soil reacts with their solution, causing the results to differ from Energy Labs results. Energy Labs uses a saturated paste which brings the elements into equilibrium, thereby negating the effect of the lime in the soil. Steve VanFossen, NRCS, has ordered an electronic sodium probe that we will be able to use most of the time. Larry will retest one sample from each of the current USGS sites. Larry also told the board about the Ag seminar he attended in Billings.

NEW BUSINESS:

TRACK FILLER: Steve will bring the information to the next meeting. Laurie will look into contacting irrigators to see whether they would be willing to rent the unit.

BLM: Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was considered. Dave and Doug attended the public scoping meeting in Ashland. The group discussed the advantages and disadvantages of becoming a cooperating agency. One of the advantages appeared to be that the board will get the opportunity to participate in the Resource Management Plan (RMP), thereby allowing the group to have early knowledge of BLM activities. Dennis Philippe told the group that asking to be included in the Consistency Review Process as it relates to us would give us the right to preview, and comment upon, proposed BLM activities without signing the MOU. Jim Rogers made a motion to ask the BLM to be included in the Consistency Review Process rather than sign the Memorandum of Understand. Doug McRae seconded the motion. Motion carried. Laurie will write a letter to the BLM asking to be included in the Consistency Review Process.

MACD: The board discussed paying the MACD dues for 2005. The total amount paid last year was \$2,704.41, the amount asked for this year is \$3,376.65. Jim Rogers made a motion to pay MACD dues in the amount of \$3,000.00. Doug McRae seconded the motion. The motion carried. Laurie will send a check to MACD for \$3,000.00.

OTHER BUSINESS:

TONGUE RIVER: The board discussed assisting the residents of the Tongue River watershed in their efforts to form a watershed group. Due to industrial activity already in progress, any baseline information that is gathered is already skewed, but this will only increase as time passes, so it is imperative that the data is compiled as soon as possible. Laurie will speak to Art Hayes, Tongue River Water Users to set up a meeting between the water users and Powder River, Custer County and Rosebud Conservation Districts.

CONSERVATION RESOURCE MANAGEMENT: Dennis Philippe gave a brief synopsis of the CRM program which concentrates on conflict resolution and bringing people together to avoid litigation. Dennis has facilitated recent meetings between the landowners of Hanging Woman Creek and the BLM. He proposed doing a one day training session which would be open to interested persons from the Tongue, Powder River and Rosebud Watersheds. The board will take it under advisement.

DNRC: Steve Schmitz discussed the Coal Bed Methane Protection Act with the board members. He told them that the board of directors for MACD will organize a meeting with the south east conservation districts so that rules can be set up.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Dave Davenport, Chair

Laurie Kelley, administrator