

**SHERIDAN COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
REGULAR MONTHLY BOARD MEETING  
October 10, 2006 @ 9 am  
USDA BUILDING**

**Call Meeting to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. by Chairman Jeff Wivholm. Present were: Jeff Wivholm, Tim Holte, Todd Marsh, Jon Bolstad, Supervisors; Mickey McCall, Judy Benson, SCC District; Monica Friedrich (NRCS), and guests, Rick Sodja (USGS), and Jeff Kershner (Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center).

**Public Comments:**

No Public Comments.

**Rick Sodja & Jeff Kershner:**

Rick Sodja, USGS Wildlife Biologist and Jeff Kershner, Director of the Northern Rocky Mountain Science Center at Bozeman reported on the status of the data collecting on the continuing wetlands project with the NRCS and the Conservation District. Rick demonstrated how the core samples are taken. The District's involvement includes 30 wetlands at present, 10 prairie, 10 cropland and 10 CRP. Jeff Kershner discussed his projects and association with Montana State University.

**Approval of Minutes – September 12, 2006 Meeting**

After a review of the minutes from the September 12<sup>th</sup> meeting, Jon Bolstad made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Tim Holte, the motion carried.

**Financial Report:**

The financial report and bill payments were reviewed. Tim Holte made a motion to approve the report and the bill payments; the motion was seconded by Todd Marsh, the motion carried. Tim suggested that we review the savings account balance in a month or two and possibly transfer a portion of the balance to a CD and also check on the interest and due dates of the CDs that we have at this time.

**NRCS – Monica:**

NRCS Report

- CRP contracts not approved prior to 9/26/06 were under an injunction from a lawsuit filed by wildlife groups against the FSA. The lawsuit changed the managed haying and grazing from 1 in 5 years to 1 in 10 years (grazing timeframes may be different.) FSA should be providing further guidance.
- Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) was approved for Sheridan County for livestock water development due to drought conditions this summer. Producers can sign up for pipelines, wells, springs, tanks, and hauling water during October.

- Residue spot checks for compliance with Highly Erodible Land provisions were completed via airplane again this year, and all were in compliance.
- NRCS has abandoned storage space in the back of the USDA building due to leaking roof and possible mold problems. The office was rearranged to accommodate map cases. Most of the soil survey sheets had to be discarded.
- Tim and Monica provided assistance with the soil and range portion of the District FFA contest being held in Plentywood today.
- The Plentywood field office met all of the conservation goals set by NRCS for the past fiscal year. A huge amount of projects were completed during the field season.
- Monica will be attending a DC meeting in Bozeman next week. NRCS is going to be doing “Activity Based Cost Data Collection” the following week to determine workload and staffing issues.
- A “Zero Spread” noxious weed meeting is being held in Sidney next Thursday (Oct. 19) from 10:00-4:00. Dave White is asking NRCS personnel to attend, as this is a top priority for NRCS in Montana.
- Tim has requested an economist from state NRCS staff in Bozeman to assist producers in making a good decision about seeding all cropland to grass and changing over an operation entirely to livestock.
- EQIP ranking is due November 15, so the NRCS staff is focusing efforts on that task now.

#### **Unfinished Business:**

- New Pivot Inquiries  
Rick Hilyard, Paul Overgaard, Dave Thuesen, Eric Nielsen and Dave Friedrich had inquired about new pivots. Since some of these inquiries would involve drilling outside the Clear Lake aquifer, Tim Holte checked with the DNRC and was referred to the state as to whether the District should go ahead and process. He was told that the state would process the permits, if the District chooses not to. If we do process outside of the water reservation, it will be deducted from our total. It will have to be decided as to whether; we are willing to withstand the additional time and costs that would be involved for monitoring, etc. It was discussed that it may be beneficial for future state assistance. Todd suggested that we keep the District and State water separate. Mickey stated that he would like to be able to give information and possibly assist with applications.
- Area Meeting-Scobey  
Jeff Wivholm, Jon Bolstad, Mickey McCall, and Judy Benson are planning to attend the area meeting in Scobey, Thursday, Oct. 12, beginning at 9 a.m. at the Scobey Saddle Club. Monica mentioned at she had been contacted by Roosevelt County asking for support on a resolution that they were presenting on revising the 3 day water storage in pastures with livestock.
- MACD Annual Convention-Great Falls

The Annual MACD Convention is to be held in Great Falls at the Heritage Inn, Nov. 7 – Nov. 10. Pre-registration is to be in by Oct. 27. Each CD is asked to bring a gift item for auction. We discussed checking with Doug Smith, regarding a basket as had been done in the past. It was discussed to contact Bill Wagner and Clifford Johnson for ideas and prices. Each CD is also being asked to bring a small display board to be displayed at the convention. It was decided to make motel reservations for six rooms at the Heritage Inn in Great Falls.

- BSPPA Symposium  
The BSSPA Symposium will be held in Whitefish Oct. 25-27. Reservations are made for Judy to attend, as Rob Rung will meet with her to discuss the 319 grant.
- Montana Watershed Coordination Council Symposium  
The meeting is to be held Dec. 5 – 7 in Great Falls. It will be further discussed if anyone plans to attend. Scholarship applications are due October 18<sup>th</sup> and registration fees are due November 14<sup>th</sup>.
- QuickBooks Accounting System  
Judy reported that the QuickBooks Pro 2006 has been installed as well as the payroll update. All checks and deposits from 2002 to date have been entered. The new check blanks and envelopes from Deluxe Business Forms arrived and are in use.

#### **Mickey's Report:**

- Aquifer – The well measurements are on a 2 week schedule with the semi-annual measurements scheduled for the week of October 16. He also noted that he had assisted several landowners that have inquired about installing new pivots.
- Oil Brine – Mickey had met with Bob Schmidt and Jon Reiten as they are trying to locate a site that can be reclaimed for around \$10,000.00. Todd Marsh mentioned that he may have a site that would possibly be suitable.
- Big Muddy 319 Grant – We have received extension approval to 2008. DEQ has released funds for tasks one and two, which involve summarizing the data, creating maps, and developing a sampling and analysis plan. Jon Reiten is working on the data and maps. Mickey and Jon are working on the sampling and analysis plan. Funds will not be released until that plan has been completed. Through discussions with Dean Yashan and Jon Reiten we have a direction on the information DEQ wants summarized.
- USGS – Mickey accompanied the “pothole crew”, including Rick Sodja – USGS, Jimmy Richardson – NRCS, Greg Snell – NRCS, Jon Reiten - MBMG, Tim Solberg – NRCS, and Karen Nelson – USFWS. Currently working on landowner permissions and acquiring drilling equipment.
- RC & D – The next meeting will be held in Plentywood on Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup> at the Civic Center. The Governor's Office will have a presentation on energy issues; wind, bio fuels, oil & gas, and coal. Mickey will be giving a power point presentation on the oil brine project at Eric Nielsen's and a tour of the Prairie Seed is planned.

- Mickey is still occasionally assisting people with water rights issues as well as assisting Judy with various projects.
- Mickey has an appointment with Tom and Corrie Enander of Grenora tomorrow. The Enanders have purchased land from Marlow Onstad. and want to discuss putting additional pivots on that land.

**New Business:**

- DEQ-319 Extension  
The DEQ Contract 203074 Modification between the Montana Departments of Environmental Quality and the Sheridan County Conservation District extending the date to May 15, 2008 was reviewed. A motion was made by Tim Holte to sign the Modification and seconded by Jon Bolstad. The motion carried and the Modification was signed by Chairman Jeff Wivholm.
- Paper Shredder  
A paper shredder for security reasons was discussed; Monica brought it to our attention that there was a paper shredder available for our use in the FSA office. We will use that shredder for the present time.
- Fingerprinting  
Mickey and Judy were required to have fingerprinting done for the security check that was required by the NRCS. They were each charged a \$20.00 fee. The board agreed to reimburse them for that fee.
- New Administrator Orientation  
A new administrator training session is to be held in Glendive, Friday, Oct.13 at the Dawson County Courthouse. It was thought to be beneficial that Judy attend.
- Storage Facility  
Mickey discussed the possibility of the District putting up a storage building on the property that is being rented by Tommerup Machine. He noted that we have acquired equipment that needs to be housed inside out of the weather and we do not have the room at the office. It was further discussed that a storage container may be an option. Mickey will look into a container and other options as well as the availability of grant funding for that type of project. The Board also agreed to apply for a 223 grant for water monitoring equipment.
- Rut Filler  
Jon Bolstad suggested that the District think about a Rut Filler for smoothing ruts left by the pivots. It was further discussed that possible grant sources could be found.

**Adjournment:**

- Jon Bolstad made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Tim Holte. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy A. Benson,  
District Administrator

Approved,

Jeff Wivholm, Chairman  
Date: