



Final Minutes

Regular Board Meeting ****1 PM**** March 20th, 2017

Madison Valley Public Library Community Room

1. **The meeting was called to order at** 1:05 pm by Kaye Suzuki
2. **Supervisors present:** Kaye Suzuki, Neil Kent, Nick Dyk, Colten Clark
3. **Staff present:** Sunni Heikes-Knapton, Cori Koenig
4. **Others present:** Dave Moser, FWP, Dan Durham, NRCS
5. **Review minutes from previous meeting:** There were several grammatical changes from Sunni, and a clarification on a term from Kaye. Nick moves to accept the minutes as amended. Colten seconds. All in favor and the motion passes.
6. **Financial:** Janet submitted a written financial report in lieu of being present. Everyone read the financial report and reviewed recent bills. Neil moves to approve the financial statement as read. Nick seconds. All in favor and motion passes.
7. **Public Comment:** none
8. **Business:**
 - a. **#17-04 Sun West Ranch POA:** Sun West would like to clear a pipe in their fire pond of sediment. Dave and Kaye visited today. Dave felt they should do the project quickly to avoid high water while the ground is slightly frozen. It should not impact fisheries; the project should be able to be completed within 3 hours. Operator should excavate the minimum necessary to free up the pipe. Neil moves to approve with the modification of installing a temporary dam to force flow through willows and grass and waiving the 15 day waiting period. The board recommends they have an engineer review site to alleviate future problems. The permit expires 12/31/17. Colten seconds. All in favor and motion passes.
 - b. **#17-05 Wellington:** The engineer from River Design group was not available for a site visit. Dave has visited the site in the past, it's a repeat of what they've been doing to narrow and deepen the stream. Tabled until April when a site visit can be rescheduled.
 - c. **#17-02 Channels Ranch Discussion:** Kerri Strasheim with DNRC and Joe Urbani will be at the April meeting. The big question is whether or not the project is on a perennial stream. There are possible water rights issues. The board proposed a field visit at 5:30pm prior to the April 17th meeting with all possible stakeholders present. Joe Urbani, Kerri Strasheim, The board will meet at 5:30 at the office. Communicate with Mel on his return.
 - d. **Monthly time spent on 310's:** tabled until Mel's return.
9. **Equipment Rental Invoices/Income**
 - a. **New Equipment Update:** Colten picked up the track filler, it looks great. He took it to Signs West for our logo, contact and a sign "Don't Overload."
 - b. **Strategy for checking out and marketing equipment**
 - **Deposit? Contract? Maintenance/Care Sign on Equipment:** Sunni brought an example from Green Mountain CD for the board to review. There was discussion on the best course of action regarding ease of rental and renters' responsibility. The board decided it was up to the renter to document with photographs prior to rent and at return. Nick recommended renter take photos after use before they send it to the next user with a time/date stamp. Researching a GPS tracker to help document usage or a low-tech odometer was suggested as well as crafting our own rental contract.

- Colten reported on the old track filler being so torn up that it is beyond repair. The potential buyers are no longer interested. Perhaps the board should take tires and wheels off and sell it for scrap. Colten will give board a hands-on training so that anyone can efficiently check out the equipment.
- **Opportunity for Soil Moisture Monitoring Education:** Dan shared an ATTRA flyer on Drought Resistant Soil.
- **Goal for equipment income/payback:** Colten will send photos to Sunni to post on Facebook. Dan suggested looking at depreciation on equipment and make certain we're breaking even. The next newsletter should include photos. Other ideas included: a poster board of equipment for rent/sale at banquet, a raffle for couple days of work with the filler, post on Ennis yard sale and Facebook page, print an ad in Madisonian, and build a page on the website for equipment. The harrow and seeder are currently advertised on Eastern Montana FaceBook page and Billings Craigslist.
- Colten will follow up with Jacksons to see how many days we need to invoice them for.

10. Old Business and Reports:

- Banquet Sponsor Update:** The Shovel and Spoon will cater, Wylie and the Wild West band will play, and the Gravel Bar will serve as the bar. Kate finished tickets and posters. They should arrive on Wednesday.
- Stewardship Award Nomination:** We received a nomination for Janet Bean-Dochnahl, supervisors received a copy in their packets. Neil moves to accept Janet Dochnahl as the 2017 Stewardship Nominee. Colten seconds. All in favor and the motion passes. Colten will notify her of the nomination. She is currently out of the country so some coordination needs to take place to have photo done in a timely manner
- Recommended Conservation Practices Website Review:** tabled until April.
- Winter Workshop Review:** Sunni reported on the Pesticide Application workshop that happened last week. She had good attendance and good feedback.
 - **Ideas for next year?** Suggestions included: a true Pollinator Workshop partnering with ECE and MSU Extension, Jim Gerrish on soil health, if budget allows, and Clayton Marlow, Range Health. Also, an on the ground range monitoring workshop. Sunni reported that MVRG is working on this opportunity in June.
- April Meeting Schedule:** We will return to a 7:00 pm meeting time with a 5:30 field visit to the Channels Ranch project.
- Board tours:** A reminder for June- Big Sky, May or Sept- Lyons, Sept- Goggins projects.
- Comment Period for South Gravelly Allotments-** The board all received a copy of the letter MCD sent.
- Bear Creek Days May 16, 17, 18 (MCD Day):** Volunteers are needed for serving food: Kaye, Colten, and Neil volunteered. There is a grant available for the food. Cori will check with Janet to see if we set money aside for food in the budget.
- Lower Jack Creek Project:** Sunni has advertised a request for qualifications from engineering firms to help finish this project out. The qualifications are due Friday, March 24th. The application review committee will be: Sunni, Nick, Ethan, Madeline, Dave Moser, and Kevin Weinner. The board granted the ranking committee approval to move ahead with the contract negotiation. Sunni prefers to have them under contract by the first week of April.

11. New Business:

- Biologist 310 Team Participation:** We were reminded of the importance of keeping FWP involved with a memo from Bob Flesher at NRCS. Some CD's are not following this protocol. We are doing a good job communicating. Thank you to Dave for being active in this process.
- Monthly Meeting Invite to County Commissioners:** We will send them a reminder of our meeting times and an invitation to come see what we are accomplishing. Sunni will schedule a formal budget meeting with the commissioners prior to her departure. The board also discussed extending an invitation to commissioners for Board tours, especially the Lyons project.

- c. **BSWC Support:** In the past, the CD has offered an additional level of support. Kaye suggested following through the same protocol they followed with Robbie. Use Janet's budget knowledge of what has been done in the past, perhaps \$50/month toward a fuel card.
- d. **Permissive Mill Levy:** tabled until April.

12. Correspondence: Sunni shared the Biocontrol in Montana memo asking for support. Sunni shared several emails from other CD's that are choosing not to pay MACD dues.

13. NRCS Report: Dan was present.

- a. He gave a water report, and he showed the Snotel site information. The frost is out of the ground early. We need to be thinking of ways to capture it by working on soils via organic material and inner-space between particles. He shared *Drought Resistant Soil* article.
- b. Soil Moisture Monitoring Low-Cost tools and methods. Available on ATTRA. We're losing water in February and March. How do we keep moisture in soil?
- c. The Lyons project is moving ahead, currently waiting on a 404 permit.
- d. Conifer removal is moving ahead.

14. Supervisors Report: none

15. Staff/Project Report: see below

Upcoming dates:

Madison Watershed Climate Meeting: March 29th, 6:00 pm

Photo Contest Photos due: March 30th, Winners announced April 14th

CD Banquet: April 22nd

Conservation Film Fest: June 8th

Cori Koenig, Administrator

Mel McKittrick, Co-Chair

Ethan Kunard – Staff Report February 20, 2017

Madison Stream Team – We had a meeting with the Madison River Foundation and some of the MST volunteers to discuss a strategy for the monitoring this summer. In general, the discussion was centered on defining the objectives of the monitoring, while also continuing to keep volunteers engaged and interested at a high level. The monitoring objectives that we discussed include:

- Creating a comprehensive turbidity dataset for streams with sediment impairments
- Better understanding groundwater/surface water connectivity and how that relationship effects the quality and availability of water
- Identifying sources of nutrients and E. coli on Moores Creek
- Engaging volunteers and community members through education and outreach opportunities that demonstrate the importance of healthy watersheds
- Collecting additional streamflow data (using TruTracks) and precipitation data (CoCoRaHS) to better understand the “water budget” throughout the watershed.

Next, we will develop a sampling plan and a budget for the 2017 monitoring. In 2016, we came in ~\$4,000 under budget once all of my time (400 hours) was accounted for. That money will be carried over into 2017.

Watershed Planning Guidance Document – We are still waiting for feedback from SWCDM on the submitted document. Once finalized, we will be able to bill them for my full time spent on the guidance document (\$2,000).

Madison Watershed Planning – We have our next meeting scheduled for March 29th at 6:00 pm at the Ennis School cafeteria. This meeting is mostly educational, and the goal is to present research on past, present, and future climate conditions, and to discuss how we can use that information to direct our watershed planning, and identify priority locations and management practices that improve and maintain water quality and water availability.

Joining us for the meeting is Greg Pederson from the USGS. Greg is a research ecologist specializing in climate. The presentation and discussion will cover the following:

- Explain how climate (as well as weather events) affect water resources, and discuss how this can help inform our watershed planning effort.
- Provide background information on climate, and explain differences between climate and weather
- Provide general information on our local climate (e.g., 30 year averages: annual precipitation, spatial snowpack variations across watershed, current number of days in the growing season, etc.), and provide a demonstration of the resources used to develop this data (e.g., SNOTEL, USGS, etc.).
- Presentation showing past and future climate conditions in the Madison Watershed and/or Upper Missouri basin.
- Discussion on what climate predictions mean for agriculture, fisheries, and other water uses.
- Provide examples of adaptive management practices that can mitigate impacts from variable climate scenarios.

*I would appreciate any comments or suggestions you have for conducting this meeting. Please feel free to give me a call or talk with me at the CD meeting if you have any feedback.

The following meeting will be held April 26th at the El Western Conference Center. That will be an educational meeting about groundwater and surface water connectivity in the Madison. Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology will be presenting information on data they have collected related to groundwater/surface water, and we will then discuss some of the projected groundwater concerns, as well as potential management practices that can help mitigate these concerns. I would also welcome any ideas you have for this meeting.

Additionally, we are tentatively looking at March 31st for a meeting focused on “Best Management Practices.”

Improving Drought Resilience Workshop – A group of agency and nonprofit partners are organizing a workshop on “Improving Drought Resilience – Forest to Valley Bottom” from March 14-16. Madeline and I will be attending the full workshop. All workshop expenses will be covered by our watershed planning grants.

Madison CD Recommended Management Practices – This website page is still under development.

Sunni Heikes-Knapton: Watershed Coordinator

Lower Jack Creek: We decided to issue a request for qualifications for engineering firms to submit to complete the designs and oversee the remaining permitting and construction. We will need to review the Statement of Qualifications and make a selection based on the highest ranking submittal. We will need 2 supervisors to rank the submittals that we get, and then a decision to proceed with contract with the selected firm. We also need to sign the agreement with FWP.

Channel Migration Zone: No updates.

Moore’s Creek Lyons: Waiting for ACOE on the 404 permit and floodplain permit updates. Landowner has signed the MOU and contract. Need to sign the agreement with FWP.

Landowner Workshops: We are done with the winter workshop series. MVRG Weed Committee will be having a Private Applicators Training on April 20th and MVRG is supposed to be doing a range monitoring workshop with Jeff Mosely in June.

2017 Banquet: Poster and tickets are ready for printing. More sponsorships are welcomed! See updated list for what has come in to date.

2017 Stewardship Award: Please review the submitted nomination and a vote is needed to accept the nomination.

GROWW Coordinator: Nichole is on maternity leave until early April. She had a baby girl on February 16th, Amelia Rose Bailey. Good Thymes Camp is open for registration.

Riparian Restoration Planning: Liz Davis, Dave Moser and I met with Tom Parker to discuss what his approach would be for a riparian planting effort. He will be putting together a proposal to do evaluation work to identify planting areas and places where fencing/management might help riparian plant community to thrive.

Conservation Film Fest: Plans are moving ahead with the June 8th event. We have selected 5 films, which should amount to about 80 minutes of time (with an intermission). They cover sage grouse and grazing, fish populations in the Madison, natural water storage, conservation easements, and conservation in the High Divide.

Missouri Headwaters Partnership: Madison Watershed Partnership will be listed on the by-laws for this entity.

Leave Tasks: I have compiled a list of regular tasks that will need to be done while I'm gone. We will discuss this at our next staff meeting (March 28, 2017).

Madeline Pruszenski: BSWC

BSWC: In February, I attended an education and outreach training in Bozeman. The main topics were website design, grant writing, and teaching strategies. This month I attended a Service Symposium in Helena with all of the AmeriCorps members in Montana. The first day we collected food around Helena for the Doorsteps to Backpacks program. Throughout the week, we continued to talk about the importance of AmeriCorps service within Montana communities.

Snowpack Monitoring: Last month I took part in snow pack monitoring at the Four Mile site with other BSWC members. The current snow measurements seem to be right in line with historical records. We will continue to measure snow at the same site once a month until May.

Madison Stream Team: Finalized the graphs and images in the report, and it should be finished shortly. Uploaded pictures and data from previous years onto the MSU and VOEIS website. I have been looking into adding Macroinvertebrate samples into this year's monitoring.

Watershed Characterization: Putting graphs together of historical temperatures and snowpack data to get ready for our Climate meeting March 29th.

Cori: Administrator:

I've been working on various administrative tasks.

Banquet: We've been getting banquet sponsors back. See Sunni's report.

Website Profile: Mel and Colten please finish these before you leave today.

Photo Contest: We will be running this starting March 1st. Photos will be due March 30th, the contest will close April 14th.

Meeting adjourned: 3:14 pm