

**Bear River Resource Conservation and Development
Council Meeting
Thursday, May 8, 2008 at 1:00 p.m.
Conference Room, Extension Service Building in Preston, Idaho**

Attending:

Mick Atkinson	RC&D Chair, Franklin County
Scott Ferguson	Project Coordinator, RC&D
Jay Hardy	RC&D Vice Chair, Box Elder County
Cami King	Financial Assistant, RC&D
Montain Kunz	RC&D Vice Chair, Bear Lake County
Lynn Lemon	RC&D Secretary/Treasurer, Cache County
Dallan Nalder	RC&D Vice Chair, Oneida County
Lloyd Rasmussen	RC&D Vice Chair, Caribou County
Boyd Bradford	District Conservationist, Preston
Bill Cox	RC&D Vice Chair, Rich County
Dennis Duehren	Montpelier Ranger District-District Ranger

Welcome

Mick welcomed everyone in attendance and especially thanked Bill Cox for representing Rich County. Montain suggested one correction to the minutes of the March 20, 2008 meeting, and then the minutes were accepted.

Minutes

Cami presented the financial report. Lynn pointed out a mistake on the reconciliation as compared with the balance sheet. Cami explained that the difference of \$300 came from the creation of two new accounts at Wells-Fargo. This bank intended to take \$300 from the Zion's debit card to open the accounts, but never did. Cami deleted the payment in the middle of creating the financial reports and thus, the \$300 difference.

Financial Report

Cami explained that opening the new bank account has not gone as smoothly as hoped. She and Mick have met several times with the bank, but have not been able to achieve the desired outcome. Cami would be required by the bank to be a signer if she wants to perform transfers online. This is not a good internal control and Bill confirmed that this would not be a wise practice. Cami and Mick are recommending that another bank with an Idaho branch be considered.

Amend By-laws

Mick asked the council to consider amending the by-laws to require two signatures on every check as an additional internal control. Bill proposed that an electronic signature can be set up with many banks. He has seen this kind of technology work well, but says that there is an annual cost of about \$75, but is cheaper than paying for the mileage.

Lynn motioned that the change be made and Lloyd seconded. The council was in favor. Scott offered to make the change to the by-laws.

Project Applications

Mick reminded the council that the new project application is available for proposing ideas for the council to consider. He asked Boyd if his Conservation District has anything ready to propose and he indicated that they have just begun to look at ideas. Bill asked that a copy of the application be sent to him.

Hazardous Fuels Reduction

Scott reminded the council that a hazardous fuels reduction grant is likely forthcoming. He asked if there were areas in their counties that they think would have need for this service. The Thatcher area was suggested by Mick, and Dallon proposed Wright's Creek, which is above Daniel's Reservoir. Dennis asked if the Ranger District could have access to our success story on the previous year's project to help educate others about hazardous fuels reduction. Scott agreed to get this to Dennis.

Timber Thinning at Youth Camp

Scott reported that bid proposals for thinning the timber at the Youth Camp had been sent to those the council had recommended, but no responses have been received. He also suggested that it was unlikely that the council would make any money on the project as had been previously hoped. Breaking even would be a more appropriate goal, since there are only about 2 truckloads of lumber. A desirable scenario would be: we pay the Forest Service \$1500 for the timber. The contractor pays us \$1500. The contractor then sells the lumber for a profit.

Other names that were suggested for contact were: Hal Keller (Mick and Dennis); Mr. Hubbard (Dallon); Earl Sompson (Lloyd); Phil Christensen (Lloyd and Dennis).

Insurance

Cami reported that the insurance company representative, Susan Smith, had given several recommendations regarding the Youth Camp. She assured us that we do have coverage, but that it would be in our best interest to protect the organization from a lawsuit by requiring that each group sign a release of liability. Further, she recommended that each group could be required to insure themselves. Youth groups typically have a policy already in place. The council could ask for a certificate that shows the RC&D as "additional insured." She felt confident that this would not be a hardship for most youth groups. However, for families using the campground for reunions, she felt that "event insurance" would have to be purchased by the family, at a cost of about \$200.

The council discussed the pros and cons of her recommendations, noting that the main purpose of the camp is for the benefit of youth groups, thus her ideas don't really create a problem for us. Cami reported that currently, families and wards are the sole users of the camp for the upcoming season. No youth groups have called for information or made reservations. Additional marketing to those groups will be needed.

Susan had also strongly suggested that the council make every effort to educate the public that they are incurring their own risk as they use the camp. She suggested that we post

signs indicating that it is a fee site and only available by reservation. She discouraged having a host on site, because it implies that the RC&D is providing supervision over the activities of the campers, which we are not.

Jay asked if there is any way we can offer them the event insurance, and Lynn asked if it would be acceptable to have them supply us with a home owner's insurance policy number. Lynn feels that a happy-medium may be the best route, fearing that no one will want to use the camp if we require event insurance on families who reserve the camp.

Camp Gate

The lack of a gate on the road leading to the camp increases the council's liability with non-authorized users which are growing in numbers. Many people, including Dennis, report that they often see the camp being used by individual with no reservations. The Forest Service has recommended the installation of a gate for years. Dennis suggested that it can be a simple Powder River gate with a set of two locks. One for the RC&D and the other for the Forest Service, should an emergency arise. The locks would be at opposite ends, between two separate lengths of chain.

The council discussed possible locations for the gate and concluded to meet at the camp on May 29th and 10 a.m. to finalize the decision. Anyone is welcome to come.

A pull-out area from the road was suggested by Lynn. Mick will contact the Idaho Department of Transportation to see if they will meet us on the 29th. Dennis suggested a wide V-shaped entrance, similar to the one at the parking lot just up the canyon from the camp. The gate could be at the tip of the V.

Dennis suggested that the council consider including in our special-use permit the land to the left of the road as one enters the camp. This land has a dispersed campsite, owned by the Forest Service, which has a latrine and a picnic table and could be used to expand our camp. If the council decides they do not want this additional area, then the gate will need to be placed further up the gravel road, closer to the camp. Dennis suggested that youth group leaders are likely unhappy with strangers using this site located so close to the organized camp. A truly exclusive camping area may be obtained only by our including this piece of land. Our yearly fee of \$300 may be increase slightly. No decision was made on the addition of the extra land.

Mick would like to see improvements at the camp, so that more youth groups will be drawn there. Spring development is first on the list. With improvements and increased revenue, hiring a camp host could be considered in the future. Dennis suggested that there are likely grants for the improvements that the council has in mind. The Forest Service goes to the state for improvements. Perhaps there is an avenue for funds there.

Annual Operating Plan 2008 for Youth Camp

Scott reported that an operating plan needs to be updated yearly. Scott has put it together for this year, though it was previously done by Lyle Holmgren. Dennis would like it to

include all of the decisions made during this meeting (i.e. gate installation, release form, etc.) We may also opt to complete it after the May 29th meeting at the camp.

Job Description

Scott has written a job description for Cami. Her job title has been upgraded to office manager. The council asked Cami if she has read it and feels okay about it. She responded in the affirmative. Lynn motioned that the council accept the job description, Dallan seconded, and the motion carried. The document was signed by Mick.

Memo of Understanding with NRCS

Natural Resource Conservation Services (NRCS) is the organization which formed RC&Ds and provides the council with a project coordinator (Scott,) as well as a building and supplies. A Memo of Understanding with NRCS specifies which items are the responsibility of the NRCS and which items are the responsibility of the council. A copy of the MOU was presented to the council for their review. Questions or suggestions from the council on this document are welcomed.

Carbon Credits

Scott informed the council that Three Rivers RC&D in Idaho has become involved in selling carbon credits for a coalition from Montana. Some of the rangeland owners who have signed on are from counties in our RC&D area. This RC&D would like to know if our council would like to be involved and make a small profit in the process. Scott suggested that if the council would like to learn more, Kevin Coster could be invited to explain this at a council meeting. Dallan suggested that Scott could contact Tony Bennett. Scott told Montain that he would get a list of the landowners in his county who are involved.

Utah Association of RC&Ds

Mick would like the Utah council members to know that the Utah association is trying very hard to get up and running, but needs the support of our group. Lynn offered that the date of their annual meeting usually conflicts with the Utah Counties annual meeting. The Utah association has outlined a Plan of Action and an Organization Charter. Mick asked that the Utah council members read over the Plan of Action and give any feedback to him. The council suggested that a representative from the Utah association could attend a future meeting and let us know how their organization can help us in our endeavors.

Next Meeting

Mick kindly offered to have the next meeting at his home in Riverdale, Idaho, on July 30, 2008 at 1:00 p.m. Spouses are invited and a meal will be provided. A map will be sent to all.