

DRAFT
W₂ASACT MEETING MINUTES
April 13, 2010
10:00 am to 2:00 pm
Department of Natural Resources & Conservation
1625 11th Avenue
Basement Conference Room

MEMBERS PRESENT INCLUDED:

Mark Smith	DEQ/SRF	Nick V. Clos	MRWS
Anna Miller	DNRC	Debra Demarais	CDEV-TSEP
Bob Fischer	DNRC/RRGL	Valerie Short	CDEV-TSEP
Rick Duncan	DNRC	Matt Jones	USDA-RD
Pam Smith	DNRC/RRGL	Kim Maines	USDA-RD
Amy Personette	DNRC	Dennis Horn	BOI-Intercap
Alicia Stickney	DNRC/RRGL	Hal Fossum	MDT-Planning
Lindsay Volpe	DNRC/RRGL	Jim Ferch	DNRC-WRD
Joan Specking	DNRC	Jason Smith	Commerce
Jim Edgcomb	TSEP	Heather Sobrepena-George	DOC-ICEP
Steve Troendle	USDA-RD	Jay Sinnott	EPA
Brianne Rogers	Senator Baucus' office		

CALL TO ORDER, SIGN-IN SHEET, AGENDA CHANGES

The scheduled meeting of the Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team (W₂ASACT) was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on April 13, 2010 by Pam Smith, Chair. A sign-in sheet, agenda, and minutes of the last meeting were made available to those in attendance. Anna Miller moved to approve the minutes; Jim Edgcomb seconded the motion; the minutes were approved and adopted. All those in attendance introduced themselves.

Guest speaker, Matt Jones, State Director from Rural Development (RD) in Bozeman, matthew.jones@mt.usda.gov 406-585-2580; did a presentation on the updates on ARRA funds and what is in the future for Rural Development in Montana. His presentation focused on the five priorities of Tom Vilsack, U.S. Secretary of Agriculture: 1) the importance of rural communities and their creation of sustainable wealth, 2) National Forests and climate change, 3) sustainable crop production, 4) children's health, and 5) helping USDA's constituents understand and appreciate what RD does to serve communities. He explained the goals from these five priorities and the various programs that RD offers to assist communities. There was discussion regarding how to keep other funding agencies in touch with progress on RD projects.

RD is moving towards regional innovation initiatives. These initiatives will be funded with 5% off the top of their budget and will create a special fund for innovative regional strategies. Approximately \$150 million would be in the fund.

Regional Development Councils: Montana does not have a regional RD development council (partnership) but the national office is highlighting this, so Montana is looking at forming a regional council to take advantage of this opportunity.

Rural Development has a number of programs offering grants and loans: (1) Business programs for grants and loans, (2) Housing programs for guaranteed loans and direct loans (3) Community Facility programs for grants and loans, (4) Water programs (5) Broadband program, (6) Library Initiative (7) Know your farmer, know your food program grants and loans, (8) Rural Energy for America program grants.

Guest speaker, Hal Fossum from Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) gave a presentation on MDT's new website called "Montana Transportation and Land Use Resources for Growing Communities." He explained that the website (which is still in draft stage) is designed to make technical and financial tools and resources accessible for local communities who are involved in transportation and land use planning. MDT has designed the web page as a tool kit for planners. Questions were asked regarding how a small community would use the web site tool kit to determine what entity would pay for required infrastructure work in conjunction with a road project. It was unclear how the web site would be a useful tool for communities with those sorts of questions.

Hal received comments from the group that at first review the web site looks like it may be difficult for small communities to use. Group members suggested that infrastructure laws and coordination could be included on a separate web page linked to the MDT toolkit. There was discussion of forming a W₂ASACT subcommittee to discuss MDT's role in project work and funding but no decision was made; MDT was asked to consider having someone come to W₂ASACT meetings in the future.

UPDATES FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

WORKSHOPS- Bob Fischer: The spring workshop was well attended. The Webcast had about 35 people and they may do more of those as they are convenient and cost efficient. The next workshop will be in the spring of 2011.

UNIFORM APPLICATION- Jim Edgcomb: No updates.

STANDARD DOCUMENTS- Bob Fischer: No updates.

INTERNET WEBSITE- Pam Smith: Lindsay Volpe and Ross Campbell have been working together on the internet website to get it updated and there will also be a new updated map.

PICNIC COMMITTEE- Bob Fischer: There was discussion on different options. Some of the options are Canyon Ferry; Lakeside, or the Overland or the Yacht Basin. The picnic will be after the meeting in August 2010.

UPDATES ON ONGOING TOPICS

EMERGENCY GRANTS-

Brady requested an emergency grant to fix their water plant that is full of erosion and rust. They did not receive the grant because it was determined it would not solve the communities problem.

Nick Clos asked if Wilsall would qualify for an emergency grant. The center of the shaft holding the water tank top up is broken. Bob Fischer stated there is very little money in the emergency grant program. If the problem is a repair or routine maintenance the town should not apply for an emergency grant but should try to get an Inter-cap loan for the repair.

TRIBAL ISSUES

The Blackfeet are still working on the treatment plant and need to have the distribution system in place in order to test it. The pipeline is currently out to bid. The Crow Tribe is ready to start lagoon construction. An RD application is pending on phases 3A and 3B. An Environmental Assessment is needed and federal legislation language has to be changed on this project as the 2010 STAG grant earmark reads "lagoon" and should read "infrastructure improvements".

Applications are open for Rocky Boy's (2 with 1 wastewater). The Fort Belknap water filtration plant is complete. The Indian Health Service (IHS) manager mentor program is assisting with education to run the plant which took 10 years to complete. They are glad to see it done. He said that the North Cheyenne has applications open for Muddy Cluster and solid waste equipment.

TSEP is expecting another application from the Crow tribe.

The North Cheyenne Walking Horse project, RD Application, was reviewed but there are very few homes involved. Out of 11 homes, only 4 are occupied and 7 of the homes have never been occupied. There is a high amount of arsenic in the local water. Jay Sinnott said that, years ago, EPA put the houses in before the water was tested. RD recommended the homes be moved to where there is adequate water. MAP and IHS are working with them.

REGIONAL WATER PROJECTS

Fort Peck- Dry Prairie

Work on the regional water treatment plant (WTP) continued through the winter months, to stay on schedule for completion of the WTP by July 2011. The contract for construction of raw water piping from the intake to the WTP was awarded to Apollo Construction.

Dry Prairie is in the process of completing two projects and planning several others. The operations and maintenance (O&M) building on the north side of Culbertson is scheduled for completion in May. Phase One of the Valley County project, an interim water supply from the Boeing/MARCo WTP to Nashua and rural connections in southeastern Valley County, began the 2010 construction season in late March; over 90 percent of the project is complete. Planning, design and hydraulic modeling for the North Bainville (east) and Valley County Phase II (Area C) projects are moving forward, including easements and rights-of-way, and sign-ups for rural customers to be served by these latest phases.

Rocky Boy's-North Central

The Chippewa Cree Construction Corporation (CCCC) continues to move ahead with plans for installation of the first and second segments of 36-inch steel water main of the Core pipeline which will transport water from the regional WTP to Box Elder. Issues on the easement and rights-of-way process continue to be active, with the Tribe having recently requested a 100-foot-wide permanent easement across State school trust lands. The Tribe has revised its previous application (through the North Central

Authority) from \$2 million to \$3 million in TSEP Regional Water funds for the purchase of pipeline materials.

Winter conditions have prevented completion of the project to bring an interim supply of water from the City of Havre to the North Havre County Water & Sewer District, but the contractors expect substantial completion by May of this year.

Dry-Redwater

The Authority's annual meeting was held on March 9th in Jordan. Authority representatives are awaiting word as to the current status of the authorization legislation which had a Senate sub-committee hearing in July 2009. There is nothing further to report on the system at this time.

Central Montana (Musselshell-Judith project)

The Central Montana Regional Water Authority is in the final stages of negotiations with landowners north of Judith Gap for potential location of a well field for the regional system. The Authority is awaiting reports from Reclamation as to the acceptability of its 2007 Draft Appraisal Report as an appraisal level study as per Reclamation's process. Further progress on this system is dependent upon that, and on the publication of the Final Rules resulting from the 2006 Federal Rural Water Supply Act. The next Authority meeting will be in May in Harlowton.

W₂ASACT Project Tracking Sheet- No updates. There should be updates by the next meeting.

ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – SECTION 595 PROGRAM

Applications closed March 1, 2010 and Montana's Senators are reviewing them. Representative Rehberg did not accept applications for the 595 grant program or for the STAG grant program this year.

STAG PROJECT UPDATES

The Butte-Big Hole Diversion project is undergoing environmental review. STAG 2010 guidance was sent out and there are 5 new applications. They are waiting for Environmental Assessment on Crow.

PROGRAM/PROJECT UPDATES

Steve Troendle(USDA/RD):

RD is in the process of reviewing applications. They have added a lot of new staff. In response to requests for conference calls on RD projects, to include all funding agencies and bond council, he will start with 8 projects and evaluate it from there.

Anna Miller (DNRC/SRF):

The ARRA deadline for having projects under contract was February 17, 2010. The SRF program met that deadline. Currently funding for SRF wastewater projects is tight. The program will rely on their Priority List for ranking them.

Mark Smith(DEQ/SRF):

The advisory committee is reviewing draft Intended Use Plan (IUP) for this year and it will go to public comment mid-May. Currently the program is working on the 2010 EPA grant and working on the base program for next year. There will be some loan forgiveness in the 2011 FY for projects funded with EPA capitalization grant (CAP) money.

Jim Edgcomb (TSEP):

TSEP is expecting at least 85 applications, or more, but will only be able to fund about 30 of them. Applications are due April 16th. Valerie Short has been on board as a new employee for six weeks, and they are hoping to fill another position that is currently vacant. At this time the position is being considered by the Governor's office.

Pam Smith (RRGL):

The RRGL program may get as many as 140 RRGL applications which are due by May 15th

Kathy Brendan (CDGB):

The applications for the CDBG program's public facilities are due on May 19, 2010. .

Nick Clos (MRWS):

He explained what happened with the Boulder water incident and said they will have to fence the storage tank. There was no emergency response plan in place at the time, but the city is now working on one.

OTHER ISSUES

The Bureau of Reclamation has a new grant program called "Water Smart" grants. These grants have different levels of funding available. The applications are due May 4, 2010.

Bob Fischer said that Montana Water Course is holding an all day workshop in Missoula on April 27th and he said he thought it was well worth attending because there are water rights issues on many projects.

Pam Smith is working on a draft of the Report to the Governor and will get it to Jim Edgcomb and Gus Byrom for their review .

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for June 8th, 10 a.m. at DNRC.

MEETING ADJOURNED (approximately 2:00 p.m.)