

11/28/2007

MEMO

TO: All Interested Parties

FROM: Jim Robinson, Planner, jrobinson@mt.gov, 406.444.4247
MT Dept of Natural Resources and Conservation

SUBJECT: November 15, 2007 Mill Creek Meeting at Chico Hot Springs

Attendees (Names from Sign-in Sheet):

Scott Opitz, MT DFWP	Lewis Wilks
Jack Taylor, Rancher	Alan Fairchild
Jerry Petrich, Rancher	Paul Schram
Jim Robinson, MT DNRC	Bruce Malcolm
Marlene Schram	Wendy Davis
Guy Schram	Carol Endicott, MT DFWP
Alan Redfield	Elaine Hale
Marty Malone	

- Unacceptable to not involve everybody. (Or at least those that are interested) A better job of notification needs to be done.
- This effort is in its infancy and as things become better organized, better notification will take place.
- Many Mill Creek property owners are skeptical regarding DNRC's motivation for being here.
- Why is everyone looking at Mill Creek? Answer - Significant resource conflicts that reflect similar situations around the state.
- DNRC Role – Is there one? Some say yes, and some say no.
- Objective of DNRC – Education and water resource improvement
- NRCS Watershed Plan of 1986. How good were the predictions of benefits used to justify expenditure of public monies on pipeline project?
- Missing Paradise Canal property owners from this meeting.
- Mill Creek dries up almost every year in late summer. The drought of the last 10 years has reduced the snow pack.
- Start the collaborative process completely over. New meeting with all parties. Notifications of meetings need to be by DNRC or some other independent party.
- Have a public scoping meeting that airs all issues regarding Mill Creek, not just in-stream flows.
- Trout Unlimited needs to be involved
- Forest Service needs to be involved
- DFWP – Mill Creek one of the top four Yellowstone cutthroat trout producers. Existing management position – no plans for additional leasing of water.
- Annual Mill Creek snow pack has declined significantly. Need another Snotel gauge in the upper watershed to document conditions.
- Robinson will discuss Mill Creek at the next UYWB meeting, Dec 6 @ 7:00 PM, St. John's Church, Emigrant.
- Issue: Erosion threat to fishery and irrigation systems. What about reseeding after recent fire in upper Mill Creek? See USFS BAER Report. BAER – Burned Area Emergency Rehabilitation. Most of the most severely burned portion of the watershed is in the Wilderness.