

EASTERN PLAINS RC&D AREA, INC.
ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING
January 31, 2007

The Eastern Plains RC&D Area, Inc. quarterly council meeting was held on January 31, 2007, at Eastern Agricultural Research Center in Sidney, MT. Those present were Dixie Berwick (Town of Culbertson), Ginny Archdale (Town of Wibaux), Dick Iversen (Assistant RC&D Coordinator), Sarah Herman (RC&D Administrative Assistant), Kevin Dukart (City of Baker), Mike Carlson (RC&D Coordinator), Cal Oraw (Certified Regional Development Specialist), Ray Trumpower (Fairview), Stark Ickes (Treasure County), Randy Phelan (NRCS), Heather Ripplinger (Custer Co Commissioners), Gene Buxcel (DCEDC), Darcy Klasna (EPRCD), Lyn Guenther (Roosevelt CD), Richard Rice (City of Plentywood), Sharon Gookin (SMART), Desiree Bertsch (Fallon County), Jerry Jimison (City of Glendive), Carol Markuson (Town of Circle), Mickey McCall (Plentywood CD, Commissioners), Dan Rice (Dawson County CD), David Pratt (NRCS), Julie Goss (Richland CD), Glen Hutchinson (Wibaux Co. Commissioners), Tod Kasten (MT. D.O.C.), Jeff Roel (Williston Basin RC&D).

Chairman Dixie Berwick called the meeting to order and meeting participants introduced themselves. **The agenda was reviewed and approved by a motion from Jerry Jimison seconded by Carol Markuson and carried.**

MINUTES AND TREASURER'S REPORT: The minutes were reviewed and approved by a motion from Richard Rice, seconded by Desiree Bertsch and carried. The Treasurer's report was reviewed. **A motion to approve the Treasurer's report was made by Ginny Archdale and seconded by Mickey McCall and carried.**

COORDINATOR'S REPORT: Mike Carlson presented his quarterly written report. He noted that they had hired Darcy Klasna in November, as a temporary help, while Sarah Herman was on maternity leave. Mike also talked about wind energy development and recent projects and process in eastern Montana. He will be speaking at the ARS and this years GATE Ag Seminars, on wind energy development in eastern Montana. Mike briefly talked about Gateway to Opportunity attendance and that it was successful.

ASSISTANT COORDINATOR'S REPORT: Dick Iversen presented his quarterly written report. He talked about the barley-ethanol feasibility study that was done for the Glasgow area and how helpful that has been. The ethanol group is planning to take a trip to Richardton to see some of the feedlots and to see the new ethanol plant. Dick also talked about the grant that he put in for some discretionary funds to use for a feasibility study for an ethanol plant in other areas. Dick has also been helping work on the dredge. The dredge is up and running and it can be used on the Missouri and Lower Yellowstone rivers.

CRDC REPORT: Cal gave a PowerPoint presentation that summarized the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation, which consists of Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie and Wibaux Counties. The draft copy of the CEDS was accepted by the US Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). We are now waiting for Economic Development District (EDD) designation and we are in the process of completing an EDA Investment Assistance Pre-Application

HOMEBUYER EDUCATION PROGRAM: Khrystye gave a brief summary of what she had done this past year; she had 12 classes and taught 135 students. This year she will start charging a \$20 fee per certificate given out; this fee will go into a special account and will be used when there maybe reduced funding from the Montana Homeownership Program. Khrystye has also started giving one-on-one counseling, and this is very helpful to the clients who need more individual help.

OLD BUSINESS: Annual Plan of Operations- The plan was handed out and reviewed and approved by a motion from Jerry Jimision seconded by Sharon Gookin and carried. **Fairview Pool Project-** Mike briefly talked about the pool and how they are trying to raise \$750,000. The group is currently trying to get some additional grant money to complete the project. They have currently raised \$580,363. **GTO-** Darcy talked about this years GTO, it was on January 4th in Glendive at the college, there was also a career fair on January 3rd. GTO had 24 classes and there was around 200 people that showed up. On the night of January 4th there was a Taste of the MonDak region gathering, where they served wine, meat and sausages from the MonDak region. **Revolving Loan Fund-** The contract with the Southeastern Montana Development Corporation was handed out and reviewed and approved to sign was made by a motion from Mickey McCall, seconded by Ginny Archdale and carried.

NEW BUSINESS: Election of Officers- Dixie told the group we need 2 new officers for 2007 as Mickey McCall, vice chairman and Bruce Smith, treasurer, were both up for election. Ginny nominated that Mickey McCall stay Vice Chairman, and Mickey agreed. **Jerry Jimision nominated Kevin Dukart as Treasurer seconded by Stark Ickes and carried.** **Americor Vista Program-** Melissa Boyer gave a PowerPoint Presentation about the Vista Program. The Vista's are in service for a full year, they receive health insurance with a \$5 copay, and their prescriptions are free, living allowance of \$800 before taxes, relocation allowance of \$550, and an education award of \$4,700 when they complete there time. To get a Vista you have to have a matching cost-share of \$2,500 an year and fill out an application that has your mission, vision and a job description. Melissa Boyer will try to find you a vista that will work for your organization. Melissa Boyer can be reached at mbhealth@richland.org , or access the website at www.communitiesinactionmt.com. **Carbon Sequestration Project-** Ray Trumpower gave a PowerPoint presentation on The National Carbon Offset Coalition, Inc. (NCOC) which is comprised of seven Montana non-profit corporations. NCOC provides a unique opportunity for landowners, public and private corporations, tribal, local, and state governments to participate in a market-based conservation program that can help offset the environmental impacts of greenhouse gases. The sequestration of carbon through natural resource based programs can help reverse soil, water and air degradations, while providing enhancement of wildlife and recreational opportunities. The NCOC program is designed to assist landowners in planning carbon sequestration activities and documenting the resulting Carbon Sequestration Units (CSU's) in a manner that adheres to international standards and protocols, and meets the needs of potential buyers. The program offers participating corporations a cost-effective way to achieve their carbon dioxide emission reduction goals. Those CSU's are packaged into portfolio units and offered for sale on the emerging private carbon trading market. Funds realized from the sale of CSU's provide cost-sharing for participating landowners, funds to the seven Montana non-profit organizations, and helps further the NCOC's efforts. Additional information about NCOC is available at Info@ncoc.us. **2006 RC&D Annual Report-** The report was handed out and briefly reviewed. **Northern Plains ARS Advisory Committee Fund Adm. -** Mike handed out a contract and it was reviewed. Mickey McCall suggested to email out this info and the executive board will a make decision at a later date.

REPORTS, HAPPENINGS & ISSUES IN RC&D AREA-

Lyn Guenther (Roosevelt CD) - Have been working on the conservation dredge project.

Julie Goss (Richland CD) - Yellowstone Aquifer study was funded through the Growth thru Ag and will start this summer

Kevin Dukart (City of Baker) - Highway 323 from Baker to Ekalaka is proposed for construction by 2008.

Sharon Gookin (SMART) - Geo-Thermal study looks optimistic- the test well produces 360 gal/minutes @ 150-180° temperature.

Dan Rice (Dawson County CD) - Buffalo Rapids Project.

CIRCLE- Sewer project and housing project.

WIBAUX- Sewer project and Horizon Study Circle.

Gene Buxcel (DCEDC) - Sr. Housing Project will use low income tax credits, which will have 18 units near Sr. Citizen Center, Big Sky Bio-diesel project, Prairie Development Center will include Business Incubator, Farm to Table Project and Commercial Kitchen.

Tod Kasten (MT. D.O.C.) - serves 16 county area, has been working on ethanol efforts, Big Sky bio-diesel in Glendive, and 6 different projects, Dry Redwater Rural Water moving ahead, Workforce Training efforts- have more training money available.

Heather Ripplinger (Custer Co Commissioners) – has had 83 clients, created 72 jobs, has 4 loans SE MT for \$1,000,000, Value Added Ag, Self Help housing demonstration project.

Mickey McCall (Plentywood CD, Commissioners)-Westby Elevator is cooperating with Fortuna, expansion Montana Dakota operations, building a new high speed grain loading facility called New Century Ag.

Desiree Bertsch (Fallon County) - Iron Horse Park, Baker Dam spillway repair, housing projects, wind energy development, MET tower- private investors plan to have wind turbines up in 2 years.

Ray Trumpower (Fairview)- Fairview Pool Project, Fairview Bridge- new ramp and parking completed, and now handicap accessible, Participates on Richland County Planning Board which development new Growth Policy and will use Vista volunteers to update grow policy annually.

Jimmy Jimision (City of Glendive) - Celtic Celebration in Glendive on March 17, 2007.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held on April 18, 2007 at 10:00am in Miles City, at Fort Keogh, which is located at 243 For Keogh Road.

The meeting was adjourned for lunch by a motion from Mickey McCall, seconded by Ray Trumpower and carried. Jeff Roel of Williston Basin RC&D was the luncheon speaker. His topic was "Working Together in The MonDak Region," and he gave a power point presentation on projects they have worked on.

After lunch a tour of USDA- Northern Plains Ag Research Lab was given by Tom Shanhower and Bob Evans of ARS, and Dr. Jerry Bergman gave a tour of MSU- Eastern Ag. Research Station.