

Notes from the June 17, 2014 CRM Meeting

Attendees: Ken Spackman, Bruce Sillitoe, Scott McGettigan, Troy Forest, Bekee Hotze, Kevin Oliver, Karl Fleming, Dave Dahlgren, Jay Tanner, Diane Tanner, Jeff Schick, Bracken Henderson, Clint Hill, Mike Miller. Distance attendees: Anthony Von Niederhausern, Alan Smith, Scott Chamberlain, Scott Walker, Commissioner Tingey, Chris Brian, Wayne Martinson, Ron Greer

Ken Spackman welcomed everyone and turned time to Bekee Hotze until the technical problems were ironed out.

Bekee Hotze talked about the **Milk Vetch** plant which is a threatened species in a small area of West Box Elder. Questions included were, why is it such a fragile species, what species competes with it, how large of an area in West Box Elder does it occupy and so forth. In the next meeting there will be a map of the area which contains the Milk Vetch plant and more specific information about it.

Bracken led a discussion about **“How do we improve the CRM process?”** Two examples in the past year were discussed in which the communication between agencies and landowners failed. These projects included the Dry Basin project and the Straight Fork drainage project. Several people took responsibility for not bringing up concerns until much too late in the planning and not taking a step back to evaluate more carefully until the deadline. Better communication and earlier project evaluations are key in helping the CRM process function better and avoid possible loss of available funding. Some discussion ensued about the importance of monitoring projects and collection of data. Often funding for monitoring is hard to come by. We need to make efforts to obtain money for funding data collection and monitoring so as to evaluate if the projects are successful. BLM projects have three year monitoring costs built in, but that is a shorter monitoring time than the CRM group felt is needed.

Next on the agenda we discussed **a preliminary mapping of the coming year.** How often should we meet in a year and what is to be discussed at the meeting? Bracken Henderson led this discussion also. Ken Spackman recommended that meetings be held to a minimum during summer months, if the CRM wants landowners to participate. It was also discussed whether meetings should be held earlier in the day. There are some of the attendees who hold fulltime jobs that if meetings are held earlier in the day, won't be able to attend. Discussion ensued about the pros and cons of meeting either 6 or 4 times a year. At the end of the discussion it was decided that there would be 4 meetings a year with a summer tour of projects as a 5th meeting. The sub-committees will have a greater responsibility to get projects organized to be

presented two times a year to the full CRM group. Diane Tanner was asked to contact sub-committee chair- people to remind them to hold meetings and collect notes of the meetings. It was also suggested that the sub-committees recruit more people to be on the committees. Ken Spackman said that many of the landowners aren't on the computer to get emails. He thought we might get better response if we were to contact with a personal phone call to get them to join in our meetings. Scott Chamberlain said that if we had a set day and schedule we would get more people to attend the meetings. Sub-committees will have project presentations early enough that discussion and concerns can be addressed long before deadlines. There might be a project component at every meeting. Most meetings will still be on the third Tuesday of the month.

Each February we will develop the year's schedule.

April will be a hot topic meeting.

June will be the tour meeting of projects.

September will be a project proposal meeting.

November will be a follow up on proposed projects meeting.

Clint Hill gave an update on the **Dry Basin project**. The project was scaled back significantly. The cultural clearance will be all that is done this year. Chris Bryan is doing the NEPA on it.

Clint also explained about the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) which promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to producers and landowners. There is somewhere between 2-4 million dollars for our state use. The money will only be spent on private ground and matching funds are required. Proposals are due by July 15th and full proposals are due on September 26th. Clint said that he and Bracken would write proposals for the CRM. It was suggested that efforts to apply be started quickly so issues on requirements are solved soon. More information can be found at: <http://offices.usda.gov>

Meeting was adjourned at 8:30