

RAC Minutes
September 11, 2006
FINAL

The September meeting of the Crook County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) was brought to order by FY2006 chair, John Shoffstall at 6:30. The meeting was held in the Bearlodge Ranger District conference at 121 South 21st Street in Sundance with the following people present:

Category A: Major Miller, Barb Jeffres, Nels Smith, Larry Ellsbury and alternate member, Bruce Brown. Absent was Wade Pearson.

Category B: Cecilia Berg, Jeanine Dierking, Dave Hurd, John Shoffstall and Cheryl Burgess.

Category C: Stormy Burch, Deb Hougham, Steve Stahla, Joe Julian and alternate member, Jon Davis.

Also present were: Designated Federal Officer, Steve Kozel and recorder, Joyce Speidel. Ken Crowson, representing Sundance High School was here to answer questions regarding his project proposed for funding. No other members of the public were in attendance.

Major and Deb moved to accept the minutes as presented. No opposition. Motion carried.

Financial report: FY 2006 will be concluded September 30th, so no final numbers are not yet available. We don't expect there to be any carry-over funds. We are planning on approximately \$39,000 for funding approval for FY 2007. Steve has requested the fiscal officer to notify him of any left over funds available that we may get the funds obligated by the end of the fiscal year to avoid any carry over.

Old Business:

BERGLUND ROAD: Stormy reports that no paperwork for this project has come through the County Commissioners. Joyce will contact Contract and Agreements in reference to this project.

Nels asked for clarification of this project. There is a reference to Section 106 compliance in the minutes. Cheryl explained that Section 106 was set up to protect historical and archeological interests on federal lands. Carol Agard, the Bearlodge Ranger District archeologist has visited the site and inspected the road. She has filed a Level III heritage resources report with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). The report was mailed on August 25. The SHPO office has twenty calendar days from receiving the report to object to the project. If there are no objections from SHPO, the project can begin after September 20.

TRAIL GRAVELING: This project was to be funded with unspent monies from other projects. At this time, approximately \$1000 has been spent on gravel for the Cook Lake Trail.

CROOK COUNTY WEED AND PEST: The agreement has been signed and the money obligated to this project. Completion date is set for June 30, 2007 in order for the Weed and Pest the latitude to choose the best timing for the spraying.

LYTLE CREEK AND BLACKTAIL MAGWATER TREATMENTS: Stormy reports that no paperwork has been received by the County for these projects. Again, Joyce will look into it.

YCC: Five youth were able to take advantage of the Youth Conservation Corp (YCC) this summer. The feedback was good from the group. They seemed to enjoy building buck and rail fence the best of all the activities they participated in this summer.

WILLIAMS SPRING: As part of the original project proposal, Dave McKee requested that some of the funding be set aside for the creation of "dig boxes". These dig boxes were delivered to the Crook County Museum this summer. Four boxes were made as part of an Eagle Scout Project in Custer, SD. Three boxes will be kept in Sundance at the Crook County Museum and one will remain in Custer for use by Forest Service personnel. Dave McKee, Black Hills National Forest Heritage Program Manager has plans to make a two day, one credit hour class available to area school teachers to introduce and train them to use these boxes and associated materials. Nels and Major moved to have a letter of appreciation sent to Mr. McKee on behalf of the Crook County RAC members. Motion carried. Joyce will have something ready for the membership to sign.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

Nels and Jeanine moved to reinstate current officers. No opposition. Motion carried. John Shoffstall will be 2007 chairman and Nels Smith will be vice-chair.

Steve Kozel passed out an official notification of a request for Title III funds. By directive of the statute, RAC members are to be notified of all Title III requests. Request has been made by Sundance 5th and 6th grade teachers for \$900 to fund a Ranch A Environmental Experience in May 2007. Comment will be taken by Crook County Commissioners until November 07, 2006.

HOUSEKEEPING:

The Crook County Commissioners elected to assign 7.5% of Secure Rural Schools funding to Title II for administration by the Crook County Resource Advisory Committee. This is the same election as FY 2006 and will be approximately \$39,000. The same election will be set for Title III.

December 30, 2006 marks the end of Secure Rural Schools under the current legislation. The proposal to sell Federal lands to fund PL 106-393 has apparently been dropped. If

nothing is done, the funding will go back to the previous funding mechanisms. There has been talk in Congress of slowly phasing this act out. John Shoffstall encouraged members to contact our representatives in Congress to encourage action on the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act.

NEW BUSINESS:

Proposal presentations. Nels recommended looking at all the proposals and then make determinations. This recommendation was met with an affirmative consensus. Ken Crowson was in attendance to make his presentation. The committee decided to receive his presentation first.

PP #07-05 WATERSHED ANALYSIS AND SOIL SAMPLING

Ken gave a quick overview of the previously funded projects- Water Sampling with Lance Hoffland and Weed Mapping with Ken and the Agriculture Classes at Sundance High School. These projects have been successful- as far as they have been implemented. The equipment to do the weed mapping has been ordered, but has not arrived yet. The software that was purchased as part of the water sampling project has been installed. MaryJayne Jordan, the High School Librarian has been using the software and is helping with both projects that have been previously funded by the RAC. The teachers are becoming proficient in using the software, and the children are beginning to use it. Two teachers have been able to take the software training through the Black Hills National Forest. Lance has taken the class twice, MaryJayne has taken it once and there are at least three other educators that would like to take advantage of the class when openings occur. Steve K. explained that the FS teaches this course in-house. The class slots are made available first to Forest Service employees, and when there is an opening, it is made available to educators using the ARC- Gis software. The only cost to the school district is transportation and a substitute during the training.

The current proposal will bring Julie Cross into the mix. Julie teaches chemistry, physical science, junior high science and probeware. Ken, Lance, MaryJayne, and Julie are hoping to expand this project to include the English teachers (to help write technical papers) and the History teachers, so that more students are involved and to create a cross-curriculum learning environment. An open house for Ag-Students to demonstrate the tools from the previous projects will be scheduled within the month.

Nels expressed his enthusiasm for the projects and asked for clarification on the prices quoted in the proposal. Mr. Crowson indicated that the prices given were “educational” prices from Dell.

John Shoffstall asked about responses from Moorcroft and Hulett in reference to their involvement in these projects. Ken related that he has tried to coordinate field trips with the other schools within the district; however, the other schools have never been able to attend. Instead of including the other schools, he has begun to include other classes within Sundance High School.

Nels wondered if these projects would be open to participation with cooperating landowners. Ken indicated that they would appreciate the opportunity to work with private landowners.

Mr. Kozel indicated that there is a clause that allows for only \$5000 to be spent on equipment through a cooperating agreement. If over \$5000 is given towards equipment purchase, that equipment then becomes part of the Forest Service inventory and is tracked through equipment audits. Mr. Kozel recommended keeping the project under \$5000 to avoid Forest Service ownership of the equipment.

Ken went on to discuss the Cook Lake Benches project. During the April RAC meeting, Steve Stahla and Major Miller suggested that the school be contacted in reference to building the benches. The cost of commercially produced benches coupled with incredible shipping charges, made the benches project a very expensive one. Joyce contacted Mr. Crowson who agreed to build the benches at a cost of \$400 each. Ken passed around a copy of the laser design that will be cut into the backs of the benches. The seats will be constructed of nylon decking. The concrete bases for these benches were built this summer by the YCC group. We hope to be able to install them this fall. Cheryl requested that the students from the Ag class/FFA be invited to participate in the installation of the benches. When the benches are complete, the local paper and the students will be invited to participate in the installation. The installation will be done by Forest Service employees. The students, RAC members, FS staff and media will be invited to attend a dedication ceremony when the project is complete.

PP# 07-01 COOK LAKE FISHING PLATFORM

This project would provide two cantilevered fishing platforms on the south side of Cook Lake. The fishing piers would provide additional fishing access to the lake and provide a sturdy platform from which to fish. Each platform would be about 10' by 10' in size. Stairs would be needed to access the docks from the existing trail. The request for Title II funding is \$26,000. Mr. Kozel amended the request to be for one dock at \$13,000.

PP# 07-02 SAND CREEK MAGWATER TREATMENT

This proposal is for the purchase and application of magwater to Sand Creek County Road from Interstate 90 to the Ranch A border. Crook County Road and Bridge will do all of the prep-work prior to application. The request was for six miles- totaling \$21,000. After some discussion, Stormy (as Crook County Commissioner) amended the request to be for 2.5 miles; totaling \$8750.

PP# 07-03 REDWATER MAGWATER TREATMENT

The Redwater Magwater Treatment proposal is identical to the Sand Creek proposal except treatment would be from Highway 111, through Farrell to the Forest Service boundary- approximately six miles- \$21,000.

PP# 07-04 WARREN PEAK LOOKOUT TOWER

This project would provide for the removal of the existing, aging outhouse and replace it with a prefabricated concrete structure that is easy to administer and maintain and is completely compliant with ADA handicap/disabled access requirements. Warren Peak has traditionally been primarily a lookout tower used for fire detection and observation. Over the last several years, however, it has become a popular tourist destination seeing approximately 1000 visitors to the tower and 2500 visitors to the lower parking area and tower base during the peak summer months. With the occurrence of

County and Forest fires, the Sturgis Motorcycle Rally and good snowfall during the off-season; the amount of users at the tower can greatly increase. This influx of users has put a tremendous load on the restroom facility at the site. This impact is virtually yearlong, with visitation and use occurring during the fall and spring hunting seasons as well as the winter months. The request for Title II funds is \$14,000. The project will be additionally funded by the Forest Service.

PP# 07-06 SAND CREEK FIRE RISK SIGN

This project would provide for the purchase and installation of a fire risk sign to be placed on Game and Fish property ½ mile south of the intersection of Homestake Road and Sandcreek Road. This highly traveled county road is a major travelway to the National Forest. The placement of this sign would provide public awareness of the potential fire hazard to residents and non-residents using the area. Public awareness will help to reduce the human activities causing wildfire risk.

Cecilia Berg (project cooperater and RAC member) made presentation of the project and answered questions relating to this project. Stormy suggested contacting FFA class to create the sign. Discussion of the merits of the proposal and other options available continued.

DETERMINATION OF FUNDING

Nels and Jeanine moved to approve request for watershed analysis providing that the request can be split into two separate projects- to eliminate the question of ownership under the \$5000 clause to avoid the question of inventory accountability. There was some discussion in reference to clarification of the motion. Motion carried- PP# 07-05 Totaling \$6457.

Nels and Jeanine moved to recommend funding in the amount of \$15,000 to the Warren Peak Toilet project, providing that the Forest Service would cover the cost of the site work. Motion carried.

Steve Kozel pulled the Forest Service proposal for the Cook Lake Fishing platform. He reasoned that the RAC has previously invested heavily in the Cook Lake Recreation area and wanted to be sure that the RAC had money to invest in the County Roads projects. Mr. Kozel stated the County has been a great partner and wanted to ensure that their projects received proper funding.

Deb Hougham addressed the group with a proposal that would recommend partial funding for all the projects while meeting the criteria of 50% of funding apportioned to Watershed and/or Roads projects.

Bruce and Jeanine moved to rescind all previous motions. Motion carried. No opposition.

Deb and Barb moved to fund in this manner:

Sandcreek Magwater	\$ 8,750
Redwater Magwater	\$11,000
Warren Peak Lookout Tower Toilet	\$14,000
Watershed Analysis and Soil Testing	\$ 5,000
Sand Creek Fire Risk Sign	\$ 250

Funding in this manner would use all \$39,000 expected. Motion carried. No opposition.

Nels and Bruce moved that the Forest Service be allowed to use any funds left over- moving the left over funds toward other partially funded projects with the priority being the Sand Creek Fire Risk sign and then county magwater treatments. Motion carried. No opposition.

No one was present for public comment.

Jeanine visited with someone who reported that the fishing dock at Cook Lake was really a great asset at the Lake.

Major wants a call when benches are installed. He would like the paper involved. Commissioners, FFA/ Ag students, Forest Service and RAC members should all be notified.

Steve asked about the possibility of a RAC logo to be included on future projects. This idea was met with a general agreement, but nothing further was pursued.

There was some discussion of restoration of the fire boxes that were traditionally found in this area. One of these fire boxes can still be found at Farrell. It was a consensus that a project to preserve this part of our history would be considered favorably by this group.

Marlene Simons' replacement was discussed briefly. Steve K. has talked with Representative Semlek and Senator Townsend. They recommended that the RAC committee be polled to see if there was anyone interested in becoming the representative of state elected officials. Bruce Brown said that he would welcome the opportunity to be considered for this position.

John Shoffstall declared the business for this round of funding was complete and made a motion to dismiss. The next meeting will be called at the discretion of the chairman. Joe seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Joyce Speidel
RAC Coordinator