

RAC Minutes

September 11, 2007

FINAL

The September 2007 meeting of the Crook County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) was brought to order by FY2007 chair, John Shoffstall at 6:30 PM. The meeting was held in the Bearlodge Ranger District conference room at 121 South 21st Street in Sundance with the following people present:

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

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

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

Also present were: Designated Federal Officer, Steve Kozel and recorder, Joyce Speidel. Ken Crowson, representing Sundance High School, Cherie Zube, representing Crook County Emergency Management and Dan Blakeman, representing Crook County Fire were here to present their projects and answer questions in reference to their proposals.

Minutes: Stormy and Deb moved to accept as presented.

Financial report: Very little carryover expected. Anticipated revenue for this FY is approximately \$40,000. Joyce handed out a spreadsheet detailing the funds spent since the RAC was first authorized in 02 through FY 07. Total RAC funds were \$355,618.72 which translated into \$857,671.71 worth of projects. Thirty-six projects have been completed with the use of RAC funding.

Steve gave an overview of Secure Rural Schools funding this year and in the future. This year's funding came as part of an Iraq spending bill. The long-term existence of this Act is unsure. Steve encouraged the committee to keep an eye on the legislation.

John Shoffstall congratulated and thanked the County Commissioners for their foresight in supporting natural resources through the creation and continued support of this committee.

Review of previously funded projects:

- Berglund Road- complete, have received several positive comments.
- Trail graveling: complete.
- Weed and Pest- complete, have some funding returned.
- Lytle Creek and Blacktail- complete.

- Williams Spring- Carol Agard, Bearlodge heritage specialist and Joyce have proofed the signs that will be part of the museum display. The signs will be complete
- Sundance High School- Have not been able to follow-up as much as we would like, but are working to work more closely with SHS in setting up and monitoring their projects.
- Cook Lake Fishing Platform- The platform is installed and receiving heavy use.
- Sand Creek and Redwater Magwater treatments- All magwater treatments have been completed.
- Warren Peak Lookout Toilet- Crook County has dug the foundation site and prepared the sand bed. The toilet has been ordered. We are waiting for its arrival, installation will proceed this fall.
- Sand Creek Fire Risk Sign- sign will be placed on Ranch A property. Project proposers are working out the details with landowners.

Because just two members of Category A were present, there was a discussion of quorum requirements. Jon Davis, replacement member of Category C applied to represent commercial timber or affected public at large. He is currently representing the affected public at large in Category C. He is qualified to represent commercial timber in Category A. Cheryl moved/Deb seconded to move Jon Davis to Category A to represent commercial timber to fulfill the quorum requirements in order to do business tonight. Motion carried. No opposition.

Nomination and election of chair/vice chair for Fiscal Year 07-08. Deb moved/Steve seconded to leave positions as they were last FY. Motion carried. No opposition. John Shoffstall will remain Chair, Nels Smith Vice-chair.

Review of project proposals:

- 1) Dan Blakeman, Public Works Director, discussed the county's project proposals before the committee.
 - a) Project Proposals numbers 08-04 through 08-07 are for the reapplication of magwater to portions of Lytle Creek, Sand Creek, Blacktail and Redwater roads.
 - b) The project proposals request the RAC pay for the magwater, the County will cover the cost of labor and equipment for application.
 - c) Project Proposal number 08-10 is requesting assistance from the RAC to help to rebuild the Bearlodge Ranch Road. This travel way is used by recreationists and ranchers to access the Forest. There have been requests from landowners, recreationists and firefighters to have this road rebuilt. The project would result in a similar road to the Berglund/Reynolds road that was funded previously by the RAC.
- 2) Stormy addressed Project Proposals #08-08 and #08-09, the Emergency Operations Center Status Boards and the Fire Cache Trailer and #08-03 the Sundance High School Watershed/weeds/soils project.

- a) All three, he said, would fit the descriptions of acceptable use for Title III money. He suggested that the project sponsors consider requesting the Commissioners for the use of Title III money.
 - b) The consensus of the committee was to listen to the presentations of the project sponsors and then make a recommendation of whether or not to send the projects to the Commissioners to request Title III funding.
- 3) Steve K. described the process the Forest Service went through to retro-fit their fire cache trailer. Pictures of the Bearlodge Fire Cache trailer were distributed.
- a) The proposal for the county trailer would be similar, with the Bear Lodge/Sundance FFA doing the welding work on the inside of the trailer.
 - b) The Bearlodge Ranger District has found the mobility and security of the trailer to be valuable in providing needed supplies at the fire site.
- 4) Cheryl asked about the county's magwater proposals. "Would the County be able to find funds in other places to carry on the magwater applications if the RAC did not approve the current proposals?"
- a) Dan explained that continued application is necessary to maintain the integrity of the road base.
 - b) The standard has been set for dust abatement and road maintenance; he felt that the landowners and others using the roads would demand that the current maintenance schedule (with magwater treatments) be continued.
 - c) If the RAC does not fund the magwater application, the county would have to find other funding sources to sustain the current maintenance schedules.
- 5) Cherie Zube was asked to introduce the status boards proposed for the County Emergency Management and Sheriff's offices.
- a) There was a short recess while Cherie took the committee-members to the Ranger District's fire dispatch office to look at their status boards. The proposed status boards would be similar.
 - b) The County EMS is requesting funding for three of these status boards.
 - i) One to be placed in the Road and Bridge office,
 - ii) one in the Emergency Operations Center in the Courthouse basement
 - iii) And a smaller, mobile one to be wheeled into the Sheriff's office during incidents.
- 6) Ken Crowson, Sundance High School gave an overview of the current project proposal and status of previously funded projects.
- a) Ken has explored and received funding from other grant sources to expand his projects.
 - b) Soil testing was scheduled for today, but due to unforeseen circumstances, the testing had to be postponed.
 - c) The current proposal would provide a white-board to be placed in the main High School building.
 - i) This would provide for the expansion of the current projects to include classes other than those in the Ag classroom.

- ii) Currently, the one white-board is being moved from building to building.
 - iii) This practice is cumbersome and puts the white-board at some risk of damage.
 - d) The request also includes a funding request for additional cameras.
 - i) Additional cameras would enhance the learning experience to include a greater number of students.
 - e) Ken reported that students are excited about the employment opportunities that have been created by learning how to use the equipment and associated programs.
 - f) Cis asked about the ages of the students involved.
 - i) Ken stated that the classes involved include students from 7th to 12th grades.
 - ii) Geography, Earth Science, Ag classes and some High School Science classes are involved.
- 7) Nels asked Dan to prioritize the funding requests from the County.
- a) Dan said that the magwater applications need to continue, but suggested that the request for the Sand Creek magwater be reduced to 2.5 miles.
 - b) This would decrease that funding request to \$8750.
 - c) This would provide for magwater application from the Interstate to the Sand Creek Country Club border.
- 8) Steve Kozel reminded the committee and the project proposers the \$5000 rule for accountability of property.
- a) Any equipment funded in excess of \$5000 is counted in the Forest Service (FS) inventory and must be reclaimed by the FS at the end of the project.
 - b) Title III, however, doesn't have the same accountability rules as Title II.
 - c) Consequently, this project would be perfect for Title III funding.
- 9) Project #08-01 would provide for three permanently affixed, vandal resistant picnic tables at both Cement Ridge and Warren Peak Lookouts.
- a) These tables cost approximately \$1000 each.
 - b) Steve Kozel reduced the request to cover one picnic table at each site. This would reduce the request to \$2000.
- 10) Project #08-02 requests funding for an additional floating dock to be placed at Cook Lake.
- a) The dock placed this summer has seen a tremendous amount of use.
 - b) It has been well received by the recreationists at Cook Lake.
- 11) Nels asked Stormy about the Bearlodge Ranch Road.
- a) Stormy stated that the County has received several landowner requests for maintenance on this particular road.
 - b) Because of the layout of the road, even "fixed up", it would remain open only seasonally. It receives high use during spring and fall hunting seasons, minimal use outside of hunting season, unless the road is used as access to a fire.
 - c) Stormy said that he would consider this road a low priority as we consider the County road projects for funding.

- 12) Cheryl would like to see another cooperater come alongside to fund the dock.
 - a) She asked about impact money from Campbell County.
 - b) Steve Kozel said he didn't see the dock as a priority for funding this fiscal year.

- 13) Steve Stahla and Deb Hougham moved to fund:
 - a) Two picnic tables, Blacktail, and Lylte Creek in full, Sand Creek as revised (\$8750) and Redwater at \$15,250.
 - b) This would fund PP#08-01, -04, -05, -06 and the balance to 08-07.
 - c) No opposition, motion carried.

- 14) Deb Hougham suggested to Ken Crowson that he pursue additional funding through the Jacob Woods Ranch Foundation and PRE-Corp.

- 15) In closing, Steve Kozel thanked the members for the commitment and their time.
 - a) Unless there is a need to meet again, we will schedule another meeting in September 08 if funding is granted.

- 16) No members of the public were available for public comment. Meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Speidel, RAC Coordinator