 **BIG SIOUX RIVER PROJECT**

**Steering Committee Meeting Minutes**

 **June 15th, 2021**

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**Location:** Dell Rapids City Hall, 302 E 4th St., Dell Rapids, SD 57022

Virtual Zoom Meeting hosted by the City of Dell Rapids

**Time and Date:** 09:00-11:00 Tuesday, June 15th, 2021

**Attendees:** Barry Berg, Colin Chatterton, Darrel DeBoer, Travis Entenman, Jay Gilbertson, Dean Jaycox, Alexa Kruse, Dana Loseke, John Parker, Carolyn Rudebusch, Jeremy Schellhaas, Daniel Wehmeyer, Justin Weiland

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**Meeting called to order at 9:07am by Minnehaha Conservation District Project Sponsor, John Parker.**

**Approval of March 17th meeting minutes, one correction:**

Add “feet” to clarify buffer width.

Motion Carolyn Rudebusch, seconded Darrell DeBoer, motion carried.

**Approval of Agenda:**

Motion Darrel DeBoer, seconded Carolyn Rudebusch, motion carried.

**NRCS Update by Minnehaha District Conservationist Dan Wehmeyer:**

3/40 applications for this resource unit for CSP have been approved, and 6 EQIPS funded this year

Deron created RCPP Teams channel for partner staff to share information

**City of Sioux Falls Update by Colin Chatterton:**

Sustainability Master Plan—nature-based solutions like expanding green spaces

Covell retention basin and rain gardens project is ready to start bidding

Matt--watershed maintenance supervisor, looking at properties that they don’t need to hay/mow anymore

Debris cleanup effort at diversion dam next week

Wastewater plant upgrades are still on schedule

*Green infrastructure projects with water quality benefits* [*https://siouxfalls.org/green-improvements*](https://siouxfalls.org/green-improvements)

**Big Sioux River Project Update by Barry Berg:**

**Segment 4 Progress**

Finalizing digitizing sites so they can go to contract

**SRAM/RAM Status**

Finished up, 9 contracts, 160.5 SRAM, 60 RAM acres

Recently several calls from 6 producers about water applications

Upcoming meeting in Pipestone at SW Minnesota Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts about MPCA grant to incorporate SRAM into their watershed project

**EQIP RCPP**

Still some language in supplemental agreement NRCS hasn’t signed off on, so no change there

**Animal waste storage facility completed**

Planning for 5-6yrs, hog facility; 1/10 ag waste systems completed for this segment

**Working Lands Easement (WLE) Program**

109.6ac in the WLE with Northern Prairies Land Trust, hope to have it done by July 1st for closing date

**Big Sioux River Project Outreach Campaign by Alexa Kruse:**

The website and social media channels are live and a work in progress (bigsiouxriver.com and @bigsiouxriverproject), and social media soft-launch has gone very well.

Walk-through of the website, potential updates to be made soon

Future plans include marketing (spending dollars for that), “blogging” or writing our own articles, possible event planning/attendance, and continuing to develop educational materials.

**Joint Appropriations Tour Update by Jay Gilbertson:**

$3mil has been included in an RCPP-AFA (alt funding arrangement), proposing to match $9mil with local water development districts. Application went in on 28th, won’t know what happens until October, highly unlikely that any of that $3mil will come into play this year.

Tours for the project and some activities for local legislators have been arranged. At 3:00pm today Barry, Alexa, Jeremy, and I are meeting them at Tyler Klein’s feedlot to talk about BSRP.

Had a tour with local SF area folks on 26th May.

**Other Business:**

Barry—The Designated Federal Officer (DFO) for RCPP has quit, so now new DFO will be leader. Cannot give details on the separate sub committees at the moment.

Biden admin revisiting Waters of the United States Designation, which will have some implications in SD since we are actually more protective of wetlands than the federal govt.

ARPA Minnehaha county is getting $39mil, some dedicated towards municipalities for sewer upgrades, more point source related, which could possibly kick of wastewater regionalization efforts.

Justin—Are there other water quality projects that could be funded by ARPA funds? Looks like most funds are tied to the classic definition of infrastructure (pipes, etc).

Mayor TenHaken introduced possibility of a new hog production plant Wholestone farms on east side of I-229, $500mil to SF facility. Possible concerns over volume of water needed and potentially damaging discharge were discussed. <https://www.siouxfalls.business/pork-producer-owned-company-plans-to-build-500m-sioux-falls-facility/>

**Motion to adjourn Carolyn Rudebusch, seconded Justin Weiland, 10:26am.**