



BIG SIOUX RIVER PROJECT

Q1 2025 Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Time: 9:00 am-11:00 am, March 25th, 2025

Location: Dell Rapids City Hall - 317 East 4th Street, Dell Rapids, SD 57022

Attendees: Jay Gilbertson, Deron Ruesch, Jeremy Schelhaas, Michelle Burke, Dean Jaycox, Troy Lambert, Tanner Clausen, Gordon Heber, Emily Oyos, Jose Alvarez, Steve McFarland, Jaelynn Dreckman, & Barry Berg

1. Call to order Minnehaha Conservation District Project Sponsor - (Gordon Herber called meeting to order at 9:10am)

2. Approval of Agenda - (Motion by Jay Gilbertson, seconded by Dean Jaycox)

3. Approval of September 19th 2024 meeting minutes - (Motion by Jay Gilbertson, seconded by Dean Jaycox)

4. Big Sioux River Project Segment 4 update (Barry & Jaelynn)

- Hired Jaelynn Dreckman: Jaelynn came on Nov 4th. She has taken over the BSRP Website and started training.
- Working with SDSU (Sandy Smart) to do a study on SRAM pasture production: SDSU study on biomass, pasture quality, and overgrazing. We have not heard any updates as of recently. We will be reaching out for more of an update.
- Training and working with Jaelynn to get her up to speed with project: Been working on training by teaching ArcGIS Pro, going through materials, and attending training classes.
- NPSTF meeting in Pierre. Asked for \$1,031,750 of 319 and was granted

525,000: Pushing to carry on business with the 319 funds. Hoping to know more where the 319 stand by late summer or early fall.

- Working on SRAM and RAM with Tanner and Jeremy for this year: 2 projects that we are not collaborating on. 5 projects that we are collaborating on including SRAM/RAM and RBI. Surveying one of the collaborating projects on March 28th.
- Website: Added new educational activities such as coloring pages and word search. Will be updating the homepage video. Increasing site sessions with 91% of them being new visitors.
- Social Media: New campaigns such as Tuesday Talk, Fun Fact Fridays, and Holiday posts. Our interactions have increased by over 100% and our reach to new followers has grown 75%. 50+ new followers since Nov 2024.
- Water Festival: Attended the water festival with our watershed model. Interviewed by Dakota News Now and model was shown several times throughout the news.

5. NRCS programs update (Deron Ruesch)

- IRA funding is frozen with no update as to when it will become available to use. Several projects were funded while several not funded due to the IRA freeze.

6. City of Sioux Falls/South Dakota State University Big Sioux Stewardship Summit

- The Big Sioux River summit will take place April 16th-17th. It will be two days instead of one. Day one will be tours of rural and urban areas such as: BSRP Project, Water Facilities, Recycling Center, Cherry Rock Farms, and more. Day two will be a traditional summit with keynote speakers and lunch. Partnerships available for booths during the summit.

7. East Dakota Water Development District (Jay Gilbertson)

- Not many bills that affect water. Water bills were supported and came through relatively untouched. No extra money for BSRP like previous years.
- Known as forever chemicals. They are phasing in drinking regulations for PFOS which is less than nothing (4 parts per trillion). More sampling to come this summer, as it is a difficult process. More information to come regarding where it comes from and what to do when found.

8. South Dakota DANR Riparian Buffer Initiative (Tanner Clausen)

- Collaboration projects are underway. More money spent on other projects the more collaboration that can be done. Currently working on 11 potential buffer projects, 5 potential feedlots, and 24 buffer projects on the Big Sioux River.

9. Other business

10. Adjourn - (Dean motioned to adjourn, motion carried. Gordon Herber adjourned meeting at 10:03am)