

FBC Meeting Minutes

July 20, 2011

Tribal Council Chambers, Pablo

Attendees: Jack Potter, Jasmine Courville-Brown, Kate Hunt, Mark Reller, Chas Cartwright, Jan Metzmaker, Dan Bangeman, Tom Smith, Rich Jansen, Susan Brueggeman, Mickey Sogard, Virginia Sloan, Caryn Miske, Verdell Jackson, Janna Taylor, Bonnie Ellis and Tyler Tappenbeck.

Introduction from New Chair: Chas Cartwright outlined the continued need for the FBC and the importance of its mission, ranging from its transboundary work to its work on Aquatic Invasive Species. He urged members to continue to contribute to the organization to order to protect water quality and natural resources in the basin, and to develop relationship between members. The new Chair stressed the value of sharing information, and the functionality of the FBC in providing this linkage between federal, state, tribal and local entities.

Introduction of new members: The newest FBC members, Jasmine Courville-Brown, Kate Hunt and Jack Potter were introduced.

Paul Williams Stewardship Award: The award was jointly presented to Senator Verdell Jackson and Representative Janna Taylor for their work on Aquatic Invasive Species.

Groundwater Presentation by Bonnie Ellis: Dr. Ellis presented the results of the Phase I shallow aquifer groundwater study. The results presented showed that the majority of shallow groundwater wells sampled had varying levels and types contamination due to the presence of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semi-volatile organic compounds (sVOCs), and/or pharmaceutical and personal care products (PPCPs). Dr. Ellis agreed to return later in the year to present the findings from the Phase II work.

Strategic Plan: C. Miske explained that the Strategic Plan Committee had not be able to meet since the last FBC meeting in May. In order to facilitate forward movement on this effort, it was unanimously decided that Ms. Miske would prepare another draft prior to the next meeting in September to serve as a straw dog for discussion purposes.

Transboundary Update: C. Miske summarized the current transboundary efforts which include: (1) securing funding for the BC-MT Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); and (2) participation in the Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative (GNLCC), the entity currently charged with implementation of the MOU. Members raised concerns about TNC's efforts to secure funding, and C. Cartwright agreed to contact TNC to determine if there is anything the FBC can do to assist. C. Miske explained that she and Erin Sexton had met with Mike Volesky, and the FBC would now be sanctioned to participate in the GNLCC effort. Erin Sexton would represent the FBC in the day-to-day effort to work with the GNLCC and C. Miske would participate as needed. C. Miske agreed to send the MOU to members again as a refresher. Mark Reller agreed to contact representatives from the Columbia River Trust (CRT) to schedule an update from the CRT at the November FBC meeting.

AIS Update: C. Miske provided an update on the Basin inspection stations, noting that the Ronan mandatory boat inspection station was now in place, and the Clearwater Junction inspection station was to be in place shortly as the funding had been secured from the US Forest Service. Members raised questions about the hours of operation at the Ronan station noting the station closed at 4:30 pm. Miske responded that the station should be open until 7:00 pm and would look into this further. Members also raised questions about the efficacy of the roving check stations. Miske responded that she was scheduled to meet with FWP and would discuss the possibility of reassigning the roving inspector to a site on highway 2 (i.e. Browning or Columbia Falls).

Members then inquired about the statewide border inspection stations. Miske said that the last she heard there would be two border inspection stations – one at Wibaux and the other at Culbertson. She said she would confirm the locations of the stations when she met with FWP. Members expressed concerns about the small number of border inspection stations.

Miske said in addition to the inspection stations at Ronan and Clearwater Junction, other positive things were happening with the AIS effort. Lake County agreed to provide personnel and resources by volunteering the use of its transfer station and personnel for boat decontamination. Lake County is also serving as the funding conduit for the AIS consultant Erik Hanson. To date, all of the FBC members and partners contacted have all agreed to assist in the funding effort to continue support for the AIS consultant who is working on EWM survey work, rapid response planning, AIS training for law enforcement and others, and a variety of education and outreach work. Lake County, the Flathead Conservation District, the Flathead Lakers and the FBC had all pledged resources towards this effort.

C. Miske stated that she had received notification from FWP that the Region 1 AIS Coordinator was being reassigned. Members expressed concern, and Mark Reller inquired as to the status of the BPA funding that had been supporting that position. C. Miske responded that she was uncertain as to the status of the funding. It was unanimously determined that M. Reller and C. Cartwright would schedule a conference call with FWP to ascertain the status of the BPA AIS funding.

In addition, the following decisions were unanimously passed:

- The FBC would request that FWP provide a summary of the actions being undertaken during the 2011 field season at the September meeting. The recommendations generated by the Flathead AIS work group would also be discussed. It was agreed that Eileen Ryce and Bruce Rich should attend in order update members, and Linnea Schrooer should attend in order for members to meet the newest member of the AIS team.
- The FBC would request that FWP provide a full debriefing of the efforts undertaken during the 2011 field season. It was agreed that it would be optimal if Eileen Ryce, Bruce Rich and Mike Volesky could attend in order to facilitate a meaningful discussion.
- The FBC discussed the efforts of the Flathead AIS work group, and determined that a summary of the prioritized list of actions (both local and statewide) previously recommended by the work group should be forwarded to the FBC.

- The FBC would have a strategy meeting, if necessary, prior to the September and November meetings to discuss the status of the AIS program at both the state and local levels.

Other FBC Updates: C. Miske, picking up where Dr. Ellis left off explained that the FBC will be undertaking education and outreach related to the results of the shallow groundwater study this fall. She also reported that the Volunteer Monitoring Program is on track, and renewed efforts on the TMDL work, including the possibility of a nutrient trading program was now being considered. She also noted that the web work, including the AIS link, remained outstanding, but was a continuing priority.

Public comment/new business: Members asked for an update from the storm water management group. Members also discussed the possibility of amending the meeting schedule to better reflect the needs of the FBC members and the mission of the FBC.

Vice Chair position: Members unanimously agreed to assemble a nominating committee to select a Vice Chair. Mickey Sogard was selected to head this committee.

Meeting adjourned.