

## **Minutes**

### **High Country Board of Directors Meeting**

**October 27, 2011**

**Fremont County Annex Building**

**1:00 PM to 3:16 PM**

**Present:** Dave Radford, Kimber Ricks, Kelly Park, Debbie Karren, Bill Fredrickson for Todd Shenton – Board Members; Woody Anderson – City of St. Anthony; Lori Ringel, Tammy Egbert, and Pam Herdrich – High Country Staff.

#### **Welcome:**

Dave Radford welcomed everyone, and asked Kimber Ricks to chair the meeting.

Woody Anderson announced that he was resigning from the City Council and that this would be his last RC&D meeting. Woody requested that the Board and Staff continue to inform the Mayor of St. Anthony of meetings and that he fully expected that another City Council member would be appointed to attend the meetings. **Dave stated that the Board was deeply appreciative of Woody's long time support of High Country RC&D and that the Board would miss his input. The Board and Staff gave Woody a round of applause and conveyed individual thanks and good wishes.**

#### **Minutes:**

The Board reviewed the minutes from September 15, 2011 meeting and tour. **Kelly Park motioned to approve the minutes as submitted. Dave Radford seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

#### **Financial Report:**

Tammy Egbert gave the financial report. As of October 27, 2011, High Country had \$72,288.95 in operating funds of which, \$31,171.72 are general administration that is not connected to projects. **Debbie Karren motioned that the financial report be accepted. Kelly Park seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

#### **BPA- Ag Energy Efficiency Project Update**

Lori Ringel made a progress report for the BPA- Ag Energy Efficiency Program. She reported that 7 of the original 8 Rural Electric Cooperatives have signed on to the project. On recommendation of BPA, she has made contacts with an additional Rural Electric Cooperative and two additional Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Nevada. Over 329 landowners have been contacted, 43 energy audits have been completed. She estimates that at least 10 field projects (changing out worn nozzles, etc.) will be completed by the end of December.

On recommendation of BPA, she is looking to add several Rural Electric Companies in the Burley, Twin Falls Area for 2012, which will provide the opportunity to partner with additional Soil & Water Conservation Districts.

BPA has agreed to fund our project through 2014. We just need to submit a budget for approval. Target date for renewed funding is December 15, 2011. **Kelly Park made a motion to continue to support the BPA-Ag Energy Efficiency Program through 2014 as lead agency; submitting a budget to BPA on a yearly basis. Dave Radford seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

### **Hold the Line Project Update**

Pam Herdrich reported on the status of the Hold the Line project. This project has many partners. While all the partners have a common goal, there are over 30 partners with many strong personalities, which makes good communication a challenge. Since April, High Country has not had the personnel to ensure that the necessary coordination, collaboration, and communication took place. Some of the partners did try to pick up and complete the deliverables, but all have full time jobs with priorities that took precedence over the Hold the Line deliverables. As a result, the 2011 field season was not as productive as 2010. We barely met most of our deliverables, and fell behind on several.

Pam talked with Janet Valle (USFS State and Private Forestry) and Heidi Heyrend (Caribou-Targhee NF and the Greater Yellowstone Conservation Coalition) our major sponsors. Despite the poor performance, they are willing to continue funding next year if High Country hires a dedicated Coordinator. They are willing to have High Country use the \$22,000 that has already been granted to the project, to support a part-time, dedicated Coordinator. They also made a verbal commitment to fund the project with an additional \$25,000-\$50,000, if funding is available.

Pam said that based on the \$22,000 on hand, that the Board could hire a part-time coordinator for the project who would start in January 2012; working 10 hrs/wk, increasing in May-June to 20hrs/wk and July-September it would increase to 40hrs/wk. If no additional funding was received by September 30, the project and project coordinator would be terminated.

Dave Radford said he considered this project High Country's legacy to the memory of Steve Smart. He wanted to do what was necessary to continue and grow the project. He requested that the board members go to their County Weed Supervisors; get support for the project and write it into their budgets. **Dave made a motion that Pam and staff take the steps to hire a part-time dedicated coordinator for the Hold the Line Project. The Coordinator will start in January 2012, working 10 hrs/wk until May, 20 hrs/wk until July and 40 hrs/wk through September. Debbie Karren seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

### **Cloud Seeding Project Update**

Dave Radford reported on the Cloud Seeding meeting that was held a couple of weeks ago. The Steering Committee is hoping to get financial support this year, despite the one good year of snowfall creating excess/flood conditions this last spring and early summer. Idaho Department of Water Resources has granted the project \$20,000 of which \$18,000 will be spent on maintenance of the 25 seeding machines that the Counties currently own, and \$2,000 for advertising and marketing the project.

### **Possible Future Projects:**

Pam reported on possible future regional projects of which she has become aware. A Community Food project, possibly with the Idaho Food Bank, Idaho's Bounty and Wood River RC&D and Three Rivers RC&D as partners, which would support the emerging value-added agriculture businesses and help address food insecurity issues of our the low income/unemployed constituents. There are several grants available on a yearly basis; we'd be looking at putting something together for 2012 or 2013.

Another project was suggested by Marla Vic (Fremont County Public Works Director) which is curbside recycling on a multi-county scale. Bill Fredrickson said that a solid waste district had been formed and that there were possibilities to work with that district. Pam will be talking with Marla and Bill to explore the idea further.

BLM has just given us an additional \$50,000 for our Wild Land Urban Interface Project. This will be used out on the desert to address the vulnerability of electric lines that run through the INL and surrounding desert to wildfire. Arco, Howe, Challis, Salmon, and many farms/ranches depend upon power that is transported over those lines. We have asked that Northwest Management, our contractor for look at subcontracting with the local Soil and Water Conservation Districts to complete the new deliverables.

### **IRCDCA Meeting Report**

Dave Radford reported on the meeting that he and Kimber Ricks attended in September. Six of the eight RC&D's in Idaho are in good shape. It sounds like the Idaho Counties in Bear River RC&D may be splitting from the Utah Counties and continuing on.

Dave will be running for President of the IRCDA in April. At the meeting he tentatively offered that High Country would host the April IRCDA meeting in Idaho Falls. He asked if the Board would support his offer. **Kelly Park motioned that High Country host the IRCDA April 2012 meeting in Idaho Falls. Debbie Karren seconded the motion. Motion Carried.**

### **Western/National Association Updates**

It was reported at the meeting that 20% of the 375 RC&D's closed their doors after the federal funds were cut in April. The National RC&D is still trying to renew federal funding for the RC&D's. They fear that an additional 20% of councils will not survive past next year without federal funding being renewed. National is trying to get RC&D funding written into the next Farm Bill.

The Western Association is strong and has plans to use the dollars it has to assist its member districts.

### **Action Item –CWMA support for 2012.**

Board discussed continuing the long term support for the Henry's Fork and Upper Snake River CWMA's. **Dave motion to continue that support for the 2012 season, by writing the IDA grants of 5% administrative fee and continuing to help coordinate the group meetings. Kelly Park seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

**Action Item – Western Association Dues**

**Dave motioned to pay the 2012 Western Association Dues of \$250. Kelly Park seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

**Closed (Executive) Session**

Kimber Ricks asked for a roll call vote to move into closed (executive) session pursuant to Idaho Statute Title 67, Chapter 23, 67-2345 Section 1c (labor negotiations). Kelly Park – yes, Debbie Karren – yes, Bill Fredricksen – yes, Dave Radford-yes, Kimber Ricks – yes.

The Board moved out of closed session at 3:10 PM.

**Dave Radford moved to give Lori Ringel a \$2.50/hr raise making her salary equal to \$22.50/hr. Debbie Karren seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

**Dave moved to hire Pam Herdrich as High Country Coordinator retroactive to October 17<sup>th</sup>. Pam will work no more than 24hrs a week on items that draw solely from High Country's General Administrative funds and additional hours on projects that will cover her salary (such as: Hold the Line and BPA). She will not exceed 30hrs/wk total (Gen Admin + Other project work) She will be paid at \$17/hr for all work, excepting the time she works on the BPA project for which she will be paid same salary as the BPA Project Coordinator. The Board will review this contract with Pam in 12 months, unless the Board deems it necessary, and/or Pam requests a review. Debbie Karren seconded the motion. Motion carried.**

**Adjourn**

**Debbie Karren moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 3.16 PM.**