

DM RC&D Quarterly Meeting

October 27, 2011 – held at office in Ridgecrest

1259 E. Ridgecrest Blvd., Suite #7

Those in attendance at office: Doug Thompson, Donna Thomas, Debbie Hess, Danna Stroud, Deana Jerdee (Colton), Judy Hyatt, Chip Holloway, Leroy Corlett. Late arrivals: Marie Brashear, Jim Simmons

On the phone: Susan Cullen, Pete Lounsbury, Eric Johnson, Bob Robinson, Bonita Steele

Meeting called to order at 10:02 by President Doug Thompson.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by President Thompson.

Debbie Hess made a motion to accept the consent items. Chip seconded. Motion carried.

President's report. Doug reported about a meeting he attended at Owens Lake with a discussion regarding algae production for use as an alternative biofuel product. There are now USDA grants available for these alternatives. Doug also attended an Inyo Associated meeting in Bishop.

General Council member updates. Leroy Corlett announced that the Indian Wells Valley Water District has the EIR out for review for their water supply improvement project.

Pete Lounsbury presented some information about the native seed project. The native grasses are being planted in the corners of pivot watered fields of alfalfa. Since ranchers are seeing that it can be successful, more are willing to plant the grasses in the corners of their fields. Pete will try to arrange for a presentation for the April meeting.

Pete stated that Chuck Bell from Mojave Desert RCD would like to know more about the beef feasibility and mobile slaughter process. Doug reviewed that we can spend up to \$22,000 – funds that are left from the project, but any proposal must be approved by Dan Johnson from the Bakersfield RD office and also by the Davis RD office. Doug outlined the steps for a successful project: first step is the mobile slaughter facility; next the cut and wrap operation; then developing local sales; a next step could be value added grant; final step would be contracting for sales of products to government entities like military bases, schools, etc.

Mobile slaughter units are still somewhat controversial. Is there a demand for that to be developed? Are ranchers willing to make a commitment? The High Sierra RC&D has a grant to evaluate mobile slaughter facilities on a statewide basis.

Pete expressed that there may be an interest by ranchers in San Bernardino and there is a meeting coming up in November. Doug said that before proceeding with that aspect, we need to check with the Inyo National Forest and with Dan Johnson to see if the suggestion to use the funds to aid the forest in holding public meetings on the grazing issues can be approved by the RD. If not, then we can pursue another option. Danna said that Nancy Upham is out of the area. Susan Joyce may be the contact for the Inyo National Forest.

Project Updates:

3.a.iii. Report of the CPUC Commission Roundtable meeting held in Redding on October 17, 2011. Danna attended. CPUC Commissioner Kathy Sandoval was there to hear from all areas. It is important to have a policy in place to put in conduit in the ground. Verizon is not providing very good service in the northern part of the state. New rules will soon be coming out for USF (Universal Service Form). Groups will need to be accountable for the service they are actually providing. Each county needs to have a master plan for broadband in place. There is an emphasis on delivering safety, health and technology through broadband. Tribal outreach is important. School district partners also important. There are reliability concerns through the CPUC in rural areas. The commission wants to hear from rural areas. There is a potential for reservations to be providers for broadband. Danna's expenses to attend the meeting will be reimbursed.

3.a.i. CETF final report will be wrapped up in the next two weeks. It will be due the end of November or beginning of December. Maps from Erin are in the Eastern Sierra drop box and need to be reviewed for accuracy and format. If you review them, make a list of corrections needed on maps and get the list to Alice to forward to Erin.

3.a.iv. Debbie Hess, Danna Stroud, and Alice will be going to the meeting in San Francisco on Dec. 1 and 2. \$200 stipends will be available for members of our regional consortium who want to attend.

Question arose as to what is our connection with Digital 395. There is none. We have met with Michael Ort to learn about their project, but the CETF broadband grant is separate from their project. We are holding community meetings and assessing needs and demands for three counties (Inyo, Mono, and eastern Kern).

3.c. Lone Pine Wastewater Feasibility Study. \$121,000 grant from Sierra Nevada Conservancy. Deana Jerdee developed the RFP for the project. It was sent out to 9 entities who had expressed interest or been named by Council members as those who have done similar work in the area. The notice of intent to bid has been received by 3. Deana will be available to answer technical questions and help with the review process. We will have somebody on board by the first of the year. There are 3 phases to the project with about \$30,000 needed for each step in

the feasibility study. We will ask for an advance from SNC for each phase of the project. Will need to determine who our SNC Project Leader is and contact that person to request the advance.

3.d. KRV Watershed. Bob Robinson has a written report in the packets. He mentioned a few highlights that he has in his report. He is working on verifying in-kind contributions for the grant. There is one quarter of work left for the current grant.

3.e. Tui Chub contract. The end year final report for 2011 has been submitted by the contract biologist. We will be getting it out to Robert Palmer and Tom Campbell representing the Department of the Navy for review. The fish population survey was completed in early October. The fish are doing well and some will be relocated to set up another refuge site. Doug will try to set up a face to face meeting with Robert Palmer in San Diego to discuss the process for continuation of the work after the current contract ends.

New Business

2.f. The Council plans to hold a spring native plant sale with participation by Tehachapi, KRV, and Ridgecrest. It is hoped that there will be enough orders that the wholesale nursery will be able to make a delivery of the plants. Donna suggested that perhaps we might want to have a booth at the Home Show in Ridgecrest at the end of March to promote the sale. There was a followup discussion about looking at opportunities for the DM RC&D to have booths at fairs and business conferences throughout our boundaries as part of our outreach effort.

There was consensus to move New Business items 3, 4, and 5 to the agenda for the next quarterly meeting.

There was a discussion of issues around the table by members. Marie Brashear announced that the DRECP is out for a comment period regarding solar projects. There was much discussion of solar projects and how they are received/perceived by members of the general public in our area.

Meeting adjourned at 12:18 A.M.

Next quarterly meeting will be in January 2012 in Ridgecrest.

Notes by

DM RC&D Secretary

