

**Blue Water Task Force Board of Directors Meeting  
January 26, 2005, 6:00 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Mary Jane McGarity. Others in attendance included Board Directors Eric Becker, Mindy Nowakowski, Brad Parsch, Caroline Henley, and Ron Edwards; Executive Director Katie Alvin; and guest Amy Stix of American Wildlands.
2. **Approval of Minutes:** Eric moved and Mindy seconded to approve the minutes from the Dec. 10 meeting. Motion carried unanimously.

3. **Financial Report:** (bank transaction report attached)

- a. Checks Received: None
- b. Invoices:
  - i. Katie's Coordinator Invoice: \$250.00

Mindy moved and Brad seconded to acknowledge checks and pay invoices. Motion carried unanimously.

- c. Expenses to approve:
  - i. Katie asked for clarification about whether or not her time would be paid to attend the Soil & Water Conservation Society's erosion conference. Mindy thought that her time was included in last month's decision. Katie only had record of the approval for the registration fee. Mary Jane recommended that any future proposals for this kind of thing be written out clearly with all financial requests stated.

Caroline moved and Brad seconded to pay for Katie's time at the conference. Motion carried unanimously.

- d. FOR YOUR INFORMATION:
  - Bank Balance: \$2189.81
  - Remaining from Resort Tax Funding: \$4959
  - Total remaining operational funds: \$7148.81
- e. Volney Steele Foundation update: Katie passed out the letter to Dr. Steele that Jon wrote updating him on the growth and development of the BWTF (attached). The Board approved of the letter.
- f. Katie had a phone conversation with Bob Sumpter, VP for Development at Yellowstone Club. Bob suggested we talk to their accounting department about the possibility of getting a Dreamcatcher's grant from them. He also mentioned that they have some stream monitoring equipment that they can't use that they might be able to donate to the BWTF. They discussed some of the upcoming TMDL activities. Bob invited the BWTF to the Yellowstone Club property to take a tour of some of the naturally occurring erosion sites, and to see what kind of monitoring was currently taking place up there.

4. **Old Business**

- a. TMDL update: The board reviewed the expanded task list that Pete Schade from DEQ has worked up (attached). Katie informed the group that this task list is being reviewed by the DEQ contracting department, and will eventually be worked into the contract between DEQ and the BWTF for management of the TMDL planning project. Ron expressed concerns that this project might open up the opportunity for conflict and even law suits. Mindy said that any legislation that has the potential to restrict the way people develop their land could be considered a "taking". The Board suggested that Katie pursue getting Errors & Omissions insurance. Mary Jane recommended First West. Katie will look into this for the next meeting. Ron stressed that we need to approach this project with care and

get everyone that may be interested, whether positively or negatively, involved at the start. The Board concurred. Amy Stix asked about what kind of public involvement or education programs are included in the planning efforts. She mentioned that American Wildlands is trying to provide a service to groups like this where they help conduct public education and involvement forums. Mary Jane suggested that we add a public component to the task list. Katie will talk to Pete about it. There was some discussion about whether or not the TMDL plan will meet the same needs as the EIS that is required before making the Outstanding Resource Water designation. Katie, Amy, and Mary Jane all explained that the EIS will specifically address environmental, social, and economic impacts of the ORW designation, and will not address the greater issues that the TMDL plan does. There may be some information sharing, but the two processes are different. A key point is that the momentum from one effort will most certainly affect the other effort.

## 5. New Business

- a. HB251 & ORW: The Board reviewed Jon’s testimony (attached) to the House Natural Resources Committee in regards to HB251 (placing a moratorium on point source discharge permits until the ORW EIS is completed). He did not support the bill, but does support both the EIS and the ORW designation. The bill did not make it through review. Amy Stix provided a history of events leading up to the bill, including the fact that though the intent of Representative Chris Harris was well-meaning, many parties were left out of the loop. Both Ron and Amy informed the group that Senator Wheat was drafting a different bill that would specifically require the EIS to be completed in one year. Amy handed out copies of the bill. There is still language in the bill that provides interim ORW-type protection. The Board emphatically agreed that any bill with the interim protection language will not be supported, not only because of the possibility for local businesses to jump to the conclusion that it is a “building moratorium”, but because of the implication that Big Sky residents are going to ruin the Gallatin River in the next year if there isn’t this extra interim protection. Ron offered to call Senator Wheat to discuss the language of the bill. The Board agreed that they would support the bill as long as it only requires the completion of the EIS. Jon had asked that we write a letter to the DEQ urging them to fund and complete the EIS. Since this new bill will effectively do that, the Board decided to simply act in support of the bill. Jon had also asked that we make a statement in support of the ORW designation for the Gallatin River. Eric suggested that we wait to make that statement of support until after we see the EIS. The Board agreed.
- b. Katie wanted to make sure that all the Board members read and had an opportunity to comment on the article that was printed in the Big Sky Weekly (attached).

**6. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Katie Alvin

Attachments:

1. Bank account report
2. Jon’s letter to Volney Steele
3. Detailed TMDL task list
4. Jon’s testimony to House NR Committee

(Attachments were handed out at the last meeting. Please talk to Katie if you need copies.)

**Approved:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_