



Big Hole Watershed Committee
Monthly Meeting Minutes
March 18, 2009 – 7:00 pm
Divide Grange Hall

In Attendance:

Bill Anderson, Anderson Engineering; Bill Cain, BHWC; Darren Olsen, USFS; Emma MacKenzie, BHWC; Garth Haugland, Bvhd Cnty; George Trischman, rancher; Harold Peterson, rancher; Jami Murdock, rancher; Jeff Everett, USFWS; Jim Olsen, FWP; John Dillon; Lauren Ellingson, Meriweather Ranch; Marlene Gallwitz, Anderson Engineering; Marty Hovan, BSB Water; Mike Bias, BHRF; Nicole West, outfitter; Noorjahan Parwana, BHWC; Peter Frick, Green Bridges; Randy Smith, Chair, rancher; Russ Riebe, USFS; Travis Zangri, DNRC.

Introductions

Jeanne Caddy is unable to attend this meeting and will give the update on the weed committee work plan at a future meeting.

Review of February minutes

No changes to minutes

Drought Management Plan

Copies of the Drought Management plan which was adopted at last month's meeting and phone tree for the non-CCAA reach of the Big Hole Rive are available from Noorjahan. Let her know if anything is missing. Andrew Hansen is on vacation and will have information regarding the Outfitter/Guide phone tree at a future meeting.

Precipitation and stream flow report

The report from Dave Amman at DNRC is attached. Travis reports that things are looking up at the moment, the Big Hole is close to the historical average, though we still have half a month to do. There is nothing yet to report on stream flows, he hopes to get instruments in this week – at the beginning of April at the latest.

BHWC Annual Meeting Budget Review

The 2009 budget and the monthly budget sheet were reviewed and there were no concerns or questions. The information had been carefully reviewed and approved by the steering committee and the treasurer prior to the presentation at this meeting. If you'd like a copy please contact the office.

Old Business

- Potential topic list

Noorjahan presented the list of potential topics for the next year (attached). Other topics were also suggested. Noorjahan and Emma will arrange for speakers and presentations.

New Business

- Committee Reports:

The wildlife committee met in February. Mike Bias, Jami Murdock, and Harold Peterson attended and gave an informal report of the discussions which centered around elk management. The minutes

will be available and up on the website. The next meeting of the wildlife committee will be on June 16 at the school in Jackson.

Announcements

- Land Use Education Forums

The dates for the first set of education forums will be Monday, April 20 (Wise River Community Center); Wednesday, April 22 (Jackson Hot Springs Lodge); Thursday April 23 (Twin Bridges, Montana Room at the school). The forums will run from 6:30 pm through 9pm and will be presented by Karin Boyd of Applied Geomorphology, Inc. in Bozeman. Call BHWC office at (406)782-3682 for more information.

- Kids Day

Lauren Ellingson of the Meriweather Ranch presented information on the 2009 Kid's Day sponsored by the Big Hole River Foundation, Southwest Montana Area Guides, and the Meriweather Ranch. The date is Saturday May 9 at the Meriweather Ranch and is open to the first 75 youth to register. Activities include seminars on fly casting, fly tying, entomology, river safety, wetland education, and a short float on river.

- Volunteer Willow Day

Monday, March 30 through Thursday, April 2. Meet Jeff Everett at the Jackson Hot Springs each morning at 9am. Bring water, lunch, snacks, and hand-pruners. Dress for the weather and bring snow shoes if you have them.

- Vacancy at Forest Service

Ed Coon has moved on and they are looking to fill that Weed Coordinator vacancy. This is a permanent part-time Range Technician position. The grade level begins at GS-5, with promotion potential to the GS-6/7. Position has a guaranteed work tour of thirteen pay periods, usually beginning around the third week of April, and working through the first week of November. Health benefits and housing in government quarters (rentals) are available. The position will function as the noxious weeds coordinator for both the Wisdom, and Wise River Districts, involving hiring and supervising summer crews, calibrating equipment, GPS'ing locations of infestations and treatments, creating reports, and managing databases and other WEED WARRIOR-type duties. If you know someone who is interested and may want to find out more, please have them call or contact Kevin Greenwood kgreenwood@fs.fed.us or Russ Riebe at (406) 689-3243.

- Commercial license training

Some in attendance were interested in receiving the schedule for weed spray training. Jeanne Caddy has that schedule and can be contacted at (406)267-3354.

- Private Bridge Issues

Randy requested, on behalf of Jim Hagenbarth, that BHWC discuss the definition of a structure. Definition of "structure" is not consistent among the four counties. Noorjahan agreed that this is an important topic, but requested that the committee discuss this after the land use education forums so as not to confuse the two very separate topics.

April Agenda

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 15. Marty Hovan will present information on the status of the Big Hole diversion and other BSB municipal topics.

Attachments:

- Precipitation and stream flow report
- Topics for monthly meetings

ATTACHMENT I PRECIPITATION AND STREAM FLOW REPORT (DNRC)

BIG HOLE BASIN SNOWPACK UPDATE March 18, 2009

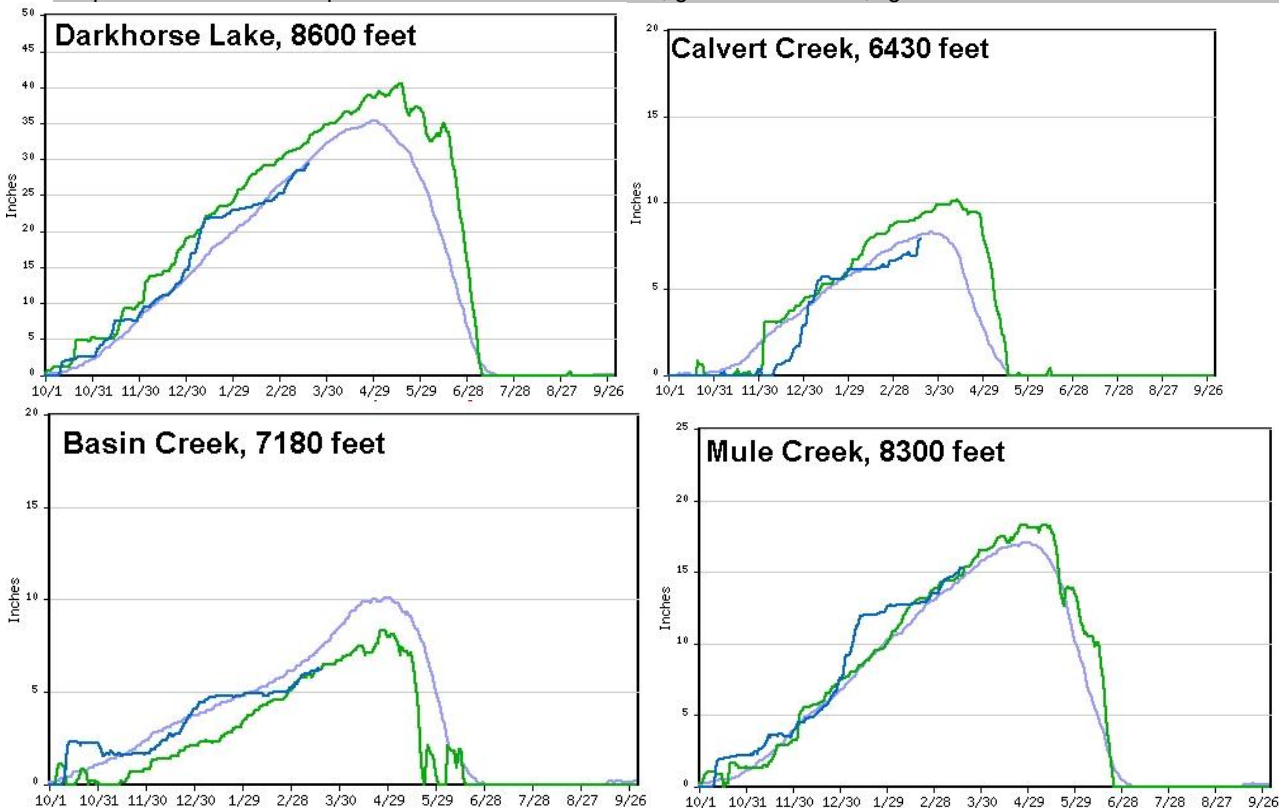
Snow pack conditions in the Big Hole Basin still looks good today, with the storms of the past week adding substantial snow water. Higher elevations are at or above normal snow water, while mid-elevations are running just below normal. Peak snow water conditions typically occur in late April, so we are about 80% through the typical accumulation period.

The CPC forecast of Feb. 18 generally predicts above-normal air temperatures and below-normal precipitation through nextfall. However, a new report should be issued by the end of the week showing conditions improving.

New Format tabulated as **Percent of Normal** (instead of inches of Snow Water)

	6-Jan	12-Jan	21-Jan	4-Feb	18-Feb	3-Mar	18-Mar
Barker Lakes	139	136	124	116	108	110	117
Basin Creek	118	112	107	98	89	87	85
Bloody Dick	107	124	111	102	93	91	103
Calvert Creek	105	119	104	102	89	88	98
Darkhorse Lake	119	133	120	111	100	95	100
Moose Creek	104	127	110	103	95	91	93
Mule Creek	127	143	129	120	107	102	106
Saddle Mtn.	103	117	104	99	89	87	91
BASIN AVERAGE	115	126	114	107	97	94	99

Graphs of Snow Water Equivalent: dark blue line is 2009; green line is 2008; light blue line is 1971-2000 normal accumulation.



March 16: NRCS forecast the following flow volume projections, based on the 50% and 70% chance of exceedance:
 Big Hole River at Wisdom, the **forecast is for 98% to 75% of normal volume**
 Big Hole River near Melrose, the **forecast is for 106% to 95% of normal volume**

D. Amman, Montana DNRC,
444-6648

ATTACHMENT II

Potential Topics for BHWC Monthly Meetings

Topic	Speaker	Y/N	Time/hrs	Date
Climate Change	Dr. Steve Running (UM) (Nobel Laureat)			
Annual Snowpack and Previous Year Flow Report	Mike Roberts and Dave Amman (DNRC)			
Status of Fluvial Arctic Grayling	Jim Magee (MFWP)			
Status of the Big Hole Fishery	Jim Olsen (MFWP)			
Research on Berkeley Pit Water in Butte	Dr. Andrea Stierle (Montana Tech)			
Update on BHWC-Funded Projects and Research				
Bird Survey	UM Avian Science Center			
PIT Tag Study	Shane Vatland - MSU			
Willow/Weed Surveys	Emma Rens (MFWP)			
CCAA- Restoration Projects	Jeff Everett (USFWS) and Peter LaMothe(MFWP)			
FLIR Study	Jim Magee (MFWP) – Amy Chadwick and Shane Vatland (Mid July through mid August NOT good)			
Big Hole Macro-Invertebrate Monitoring	Mike Bias (BHRF)			
BHWC projects in Progress – Reevaluation of Lower BH Prioritization	Noorjahan Parwana (BHWC)			
BHWC Annual Meeting (Work Plan/Budget Review)	Noorjahan Parwana (BHWC)		2	02/10
Status of Big Hole Diversion and other BSB Municipal Topics	Marty Hovan (BSB County)			
DMP Committee	Jim Olsen (MFWP) and DMP Committee			
CCAA-Update	Peter LaMothe (MFWP)			
Advisory Panel Recommendations for BHWC Funding	Advisory Panel Spokesman			

Standing Items at BHWC Meetings

Introductions and Review of Previous Month's Minutes	10 Minutes
Snowpack/Stream Flow Review (DNRC)	10 Minutes
Committee Updates (Weed; Wildlife; Land Use Planning)	10 minutes
Old and New Business	15 Minutes
Break	10 Minutes
Set Next Month's Agenda	<u>5 Minutes</u>
	60 Minutes