
UPPER YELLOWSTONE WATERSHED BASIN
PARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT

General Meeting
October 12th, 2017 at 7:00 PM
St. John's Church, Emigrant

-MINUTES-

PEOPLE PRESENT: (22 people total)

Ashley Lowrey, Watershed Coordinator
Jessica Mayo, District Administrator
Bob Anderson, L/A Ranch
Kitzy Parker
Bob Parker
Kerri Strasheim, DNRC
Ben Davis
Jerry Ladewig
Wendy Riley
Alan Redfield
Ryan Malone

Gayleen Malone
Aline Preive
Whitney Tilt
Peter Murray
Kory Shimmin
Max Hjortsberg, PCEC
Marty Malone
Jeff Reed
Kyle Richert
Miley Dailey
Mike Dailey

Alan Redfield called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.
Introduced new Watershed Coordinator, Ashley Lowrey

DNRC: KERRI STRASHEIM & BEN DAVIS

- A. Kerri began with the discussion of 'Re-examination' of water rights (another decree sent out by the water court), and Yellowstone Basin is up for reexamination and the mailing for 'Re-examination' of water rights will be going out in the next few months. The last reexamination was conducted in 2014. There are two objectives with reexamination, 1) That everything has a consistent source name, i.e. Such as Point of Diversion consistency, and 2) to eliminate duplicate rights.
- B. Alan commented, emphasizing the importance of checking your water rights. Water adjudication and water right courts are so backed up that they may not be updated. Water right 'Maintenance' is important, check dates and all documentation for all court decrees online at the DNRC website (MTWaterRightQuery). There are over 4000 water rights in the Upper Yellowstone.
- C. EXEMPT STOCK USE & EXEMPT DOMESTIC USE, the two forms sent out.
 - a. Stock Use Form: Protecting the right for your stock to use your water source (cannot be manmade).
 - b. Domestic/Well Form: Wells predated 7/1/73 need to be filed, which is required by law if being used.
 - c. Protecting natural source of your water right from recorded date of right, before July 1, 1973. These forms provide a 'filing opportunity', it is not required to file. If you feel there is a need or a reason to file on the right, then you should file,

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but it is not required to file on every right. If you do not file, you do not get to maintain your priority date. An individual can post-date with the forms, however, if one does not file then they cannot maintain their property right, and they would be considered junior. Everything after July 1, 1973 has to be filed, and there is also required filing with any use of groundwater. Newer 'exempt' wells are exempt from the formal permitting process, and when they get filed the priority date is the filing date. If an individual has already filed then they are ok. All filing needs to be completed by June 30th, 2019.

- d. Bob asked the question: "If dates don't match when we look, then what do we do?" Kerri responded that you have to compare with paper filing (the original paper), and also check legal land descriptions, as errors often occur (for example with township and range).
- e. If you have any questions whether you should file or not, contact DNRC.
 - i. Office location: 2273 Boot Hill Court, Bozeman, MT.

COMMITTEE UPDATES:

- A. Weed Committee: Gayleen announced the upcoming CWMA meeting, which provides tools for small landowners, general weed information and ID assistance. The meeting will be held on 10/28, from 8-12am in Emigrant, and 2-6pm in Livingston. Also, Traci Mosley with the Extension office is doing an experiment on Cheatgrass using fungi bio control, and is looking for new participants. The fall is the ideal time to control, so contact her if interested in participating.
- B. Irrigation Committee: No update provided.
- C. Range Committee: No update provided.
- D. Stream Stabilization Committee: No update provided.
- E. Wildlife Committee: No update provided.
- F. Mill Creek Subcommittee: Alan Redfield mentioned that the ditch was shut off early this year (about 1 week). On the 1st of October it started raining and therefore irrigators were mostly done at that time.

COORDINATOR UPDATES:

- A. Well testing kits were made available.
- B. Future UYWB meeting dates: It was decided that we would hold the meeting every other month, but keep them on the second Thursday of the month, so the next meeting is on December 7th.
- C. Upper Yellowstone River Partnership: The first meeting for the group will be held on Thursday, November 2nd, at the St Johns Church in Emigrant. A summary and update was given by Jeff Reed, who emphasized that it is a multi-interest group that is open to all stakeholders. It is not a formal organization at this point, it is in its infancy of development and has no officially developed goals or mission statement at this point. The UYRP has recognized the UYWB as an important voice in their purpose. Marty Malone stated that agricultural representation has been lacking in this group, such as from other ranchers and the Farm Bureau. Marty opened up the floor for a group general discussion on the topic, there was a round table style conversation where most individuals present started their views on the group. Whitney Tilt stated that the UYRP wants to present general concepts and determine if there are ideas to work

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with, but nothing has been decided at this point. He emphasized the importance of a transparent and honest exchange and that the agricultural community is the number one priority to have represented at the table. Everyone is encouraged to attend the upcoming meeting on November 2nd. It was mentioned that the Fly fishing community often points fingers but doesn't get involved, and Tilt said that there is a proposal to work to engage those members of the community. There was a general agreement that making the Cumulative Effects Study more readily available and distributed would be very helpful.

- D. 2017 Park CD 5th Grade Ag Fair: Jessica Mayo gave an update and summary on this years Ag Fair stating that it went well and was a success. It was the 7th annual fair and was held at Nelson's Spring Creek Ranch, and 120 5th graders attended.
- E. Election Nominations for December: To be addressed on the December 7th meeting.

AGENCY UPDATES:

No update provided.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Marty Malone reminded everyone that the Forest Service is currently reviewing their new Forest Plan, and that the public comment period is now open.

ADJOURN:

The meeting adjourned at 8:28 pm.