

FLATHEAD REGIONAL WASTEWATER MANAGEMENT GROUP
MINUTES OF APRIL 13, 2010
11:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.
CONFERENCE ROOM A & B
EARL BENNETT BUILDING
KALISPELL, MONTANA

<u>Members Present</u>	<u>Members Absent</u>	<u>Others</u>
Turner Askew	Joe Brenneman	BJ Grieve
Dan Bangeman	Dale Lauman	Bill Meyers
Susan Brueggeman	Pam Holmquist	Bill Shaw
Kate Cassidy	Todd Cossett	Alan Wendt
Ned Cooney		
Joni Emrick		
Marc Liechti		
Wendy Ross		
Joe Russell		
Michael Shepard		
Jim Simpson		
Julie Spencer		
Chuck Stearns		
Lloyd Stevens, Jr.		
Susie Turner		

Call to Order

Ned Cooney called the meeting to order at 11:05 A.M.

Introductions

Each individual was introduced and stated what department or agency they were with.

Cooney reported that Joe Brenneman wrote a grant to fund the work of the Flathead Regional Wastewater Management Group. The group is to remain in effect for the next couple of years. He added that even though growth has slowed, there is still a desire to work on a cooperative approach on a regional basis to review coordinating wastewater response and treatment, as well as creating a region wide plan that will deal with septic tank discharge, sewage, etc. They will discuss existing infrastructure, techniques and conveyance capabilities of each of the jurisdictions.

Grouping Issues and Challenges Identified During March 9, 2010 Meeting

During the last meeting, the group identified and listed the wastewater management issues and challenges that are faced by each jurisdiction/agency. The group reviewed the list of issues and challenges. Through discussion, the group modified wording of several issues and then organized each item into the following categories:

Novel Discharge Agents-

- Traces in the groundwater of pharmaceutical and chemicals
- Drainage

Sewage Nonpoint Source Management Practice-

- Disposal of septage pumping
- Septic pumpers – land application – where?
- Septic management after permitting
- Adequate facilities for boats (e.g. dump stations)
- Septic systems, old or new, and cumulative effect
- County regulation to pump septic tanks
- Septic impact misunderstood

Regional Coordinated Wastewater Approach?-

- District expansion and annexation
- Communications between cities and districts
- Regional wastewater treatment plan
- Linkage between density with wastewater treatment

Policies and Politics-

- Planning decisions often challenged legally
- No County-wide building department for follow-up with planning decisions
- Growth and future needs

Impact of TMDL-

- Cold season treatment and discharge
- \$ (funding)
- Keeping rates affordable for new customers
- TMDL credit for treating new developments
- EPA TMDL requirements coming in 2011
- Cost of any improvement
- Point Source, non-point source pollution

Ground Rules

Cooney recommended that the group establish ground rules to abide by during meetings. Michael Shepard suggested that there be no such thing as a non-intelligent question. Wendy Ross proposed that they adopt the Principles for Civil Dialog. Cooney listed each rule that is included in the Principles for Civil Dialog. Shepard said that each member of the group is involved due to a common interest.

Participation by Jurisdiction and Others

Cooney asked if the group agreed upon the jurisdictional approach to create the group's participant list. The group agreed. Cooney said that because they are moving towards planning and policy suggesting, it will be up to each jurisdiction to decide what part of the planning and policies they need to adopt. The group is not necessarily open to full participation by everyone, but it is a defined group made up of jurisdictions that have influence or input on their water quality or wastewater. Cooney asked if there were any jurisdictions, agencies, or individuals that were left off the list. He added that the City of Polson has been invited to participate but have been too busy to attend the last couple meetings. Joe Russell said that Hungry Horse, Coram, and Martin City all have water districts. Coram is a water and sewer district but Hungry Horse is not a sewage district. Shepard stated that Happy Valley is a water district. Cooney wondered if there would be any value in inviting districts who do not conduct wastewater management. Turner Askew said that Hungry Horse may be working on wastewater management. Susan Brueggeman said that when Lake County was invited, they assumed that the Commissioners would represent the smaller water and sewer districts because there are many districts outside their municipalities and more are being created due to subdivision developments. She suggested keeping the smaller districts in the communication movements. Russell suggested inviting the smaller districts to the meetings to inquire about their strategic vision for sewage in their districts. The group discussed the possibility of inviting a representative from DEQ. Shepard said that until the group defines their near future plans and activities, they should wait to contact a representative from DEQ. Askew suggested submitting the meeting minutes to the DEQ and allow them to decide whether they would like to participate. Cooney stated that at a later time, they will further discuss whether they need to have Hungry Horse participate. He inquired about Glacier Range. It was said that Glacier Range is a separate district. Cooney inquired about boat facilities and their dumping tanks. Dan Bangeman said that there are areas with dump facilities for trailers which can also be used to dump boat waste.

Public Comment

Bill Meyers-

Bill Meyers suggested that the group invite individuals from the growth and development community. Such individuals may be from the Chambers of Commerce, Flathead Business and Industry Association, Flathead Builders, or realtors. Meyers announced that he is attending the meeting due to the development of a significant issue in the Bigfork Bay and urged the Flathead Regional Wastewater Group to evaluate the site. He said that for a number of years, there has been some sort of sewage, storm water, or water of a different nature leaking through his property into the Bigfork Bay. In the recent years, he has had concerns as to where the leakage is coming from. In the last week, he discovered raw sewage as well as personal hygiene products on the shoreline near the Marina Kay. Discolored soils have also been discovered. He added that Julie Spencer from the Bigfork Water and Sewer District has visited the site. Spencer mentioned that the waste material is not coming from the collection system but from some other dump. Meyers believed that there is a line that runs from the east side by the public dock to the Marina Kay, then to the sewer plant which is located on the other side of the highway. Shepard wondered if there was a non-permitted line near the area. Spencer said that she routed all of the connections that flow into the main but did not find any leaks. Bangeman referred to boats dumping in the lake and near the bay. He added that the combination of the wind and the lake currently being low, the material could be coming off the bottom of the lake and rolling to the shoreline. Thus, the material is spreading along the shore instead of being distributed to one spot. Meyers believed that it did not come from the lake, although it is possible. He added that he believes the waste material is of the result of a recent development. There has also been a growth of slime on the rocks on the shoreline and on the bottom of the boats. Old barrels have also been found in the water. Russell said that the Health Department could conduct testing in the discussed area. Brueggeman said that reports such as Meyer's statement should typically be relayed to the local Environmental Health Department in which they will follow up on the situation.

The next meeting will be held on May 11th from 11:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 P.M.

Lisa Dennison, Secretary