

Agenda Items:

- 10:00 Meeting called to order
 - Introductions
 - Approval of minutes
 - Financial report (Kelly)
 - Board decision on funding 2013 Range Camp
 - Board action to allow Mike Kelly bank access

- Project Coordinator update (VanWinkle)
 - Legacy contract review and board approval
 - FRPP Sheridan County project status
 - RLine easement conflict status
 - Birdwood project
 - WEA updates

- Strategic Planning Committee Update

- 12:00 Lunch
 - Update from Wyoming Partners event (AB, Mike, Kenny)
 - Beef Sustainability Workshop (Mel, AB)
 - Board decision on easement defense fund
 - Discussion of wind generation and RLine issue

- 3:30 Adjourn

Next Task Force Meeting:

The next Task Force meeting is on **Tuesday July 23rd** at Stub's Restaurant in Thedford. The meeting begins at **10:00 a.m. central**.

2013 NET grant final funds

Jim has submitted the NET request for our 2013 Gracie Creek grant award. Barb has submitted the claim for the 2012 NET grant funds during for the year to date. The STF board will need to finalize the transfer of Secretary/Treasurer duties at our meeting on the 23rd for Mike Kelly to have access to bank accounts. With projects in the development stages varying from water control and stream restoration to grazing system development it is expected that 2013 will result in a variety of projects.

Strategic Planning Committee Meets in N.P.

Ted LaGrange, Homer Buell, Kenny Dinan, Mike Kelly and Jim Van Winkle met June 26th in North Platte for a work session on the 2013 strategic planning process. The full board will review and move the effort along at our July 16th meeting. Kyle Graham was absent suffering from complications from an emergency appendectomy.

Drought conditions ease.

The biggest news in the Sandhills started in April with several snow storms that broke the severe dry pattern that had persisted throughout 2012 and early 2013. May 18th brought much needed rain across a large portion of the region and since that time abundant moisture has blessed much of the region. Range conditions have rapidly improved with most ranches having reduced stocking rates incorporated into their planning. With carry over hay almost nonexistent hopes are high and rancher spirits greatly improved.

Tri State Livestock article.

Jim worked with the Price family and a writer for Tri State to help compile a story about the Gracie Creek ranch and easement. Link to the article is <http://www.tsln.com/home/6717090-111/ranch-bob-easement-conservation>

Sand County Foundation's Leopold Award.

The Beel family were the winners of the 2013 award. Governor Hineman presented the award in Lincoln at the capitol on April 19th. The award is given to a private landowner(s) who has demonstrated good sustainable stewardship of the land. The Beel family has worked with STF in the past on stream renovations on their ranch. Last year the Board supported that award by providing \$3000.

The Sand County Foundation is planning a July 24-26th Symposium in Nebraska entitled "Private Conservation for the Pubic Good" with guest speakers including Homer Buell. The Rainwater Basin and Spring Creek Prairie Preserve are featured sites to be included.

Beef Sustainability Workshop

Melody and AB have participated in the coordination of a Sept. 16-18 Nebraska tour of various aspects of the beef industry within the state. NCBA and the World Wildlife Fund are the hosts

NPPD offers to inform STF Board on RLine status.

Projects coordinator Jim Van Winkle has had discussions with USFWS staff and met with NPPD staff in efforts to see that the two easements held by STF within the study corridor are not compromised by the future line. NPPD staff have made themselves available to meet with the STF board as new information becomes available and have offered interested board members a tour of the Doniphan statewide distribution center as well as extended their conference room at the site for a future STF board meeting should the board be interested.

Long Pine/Bone Creek Watershed Project.

The STF supported a successful grant application to NET to kick off restoration planning for this severely degraded stream in Brown County. The first open house meeting was hosted in Ainsworth by the Middle Niobrara NRD. A standing room only crowd was enthusiastic about finding solutions. JEO was selected as the engineering firm and is collecting data and full on planning efforts are underway that should be completed within one year. Our Lidar project will provide a great boost to the efforts.

Michael Kelsey headed for Oklahoma

STF board member Melody Benjamin will be the Interim Executive Vice President of the Nebraska Cattleman. A permanent replacement is expected to be hired by September.

Legacy Funds for future STF projects.

Jim, Kyle and Ted LaGrange have had discussions with Kristal Stoner the Nebraska Wildlife Diversity program manager and have developed a contract that will allow funding of various STF projects to implement habitat improvements that benefit Tier 1&2 species. Board will be asked to review and approve.

Future Sandhill Lake Renovations.

Kyle and Jim have continued to focus on various opportunities for major lake renovation projects across the Sandhills. NGPC is moving forward also as well as Valentine refuge personnel. Each drainage is unique and has its own series of complex public/private resource issues. Landowners, biologists and sportsman seem to share the view that future renovations may have a greater positive impact on species diversity, water quality and quality of life issues than any activities the STF has undertaken to date.

Jim Van Winkle