

Petroleum County Conservation District

P.O. Box 118, Winnett, MT 59087-0118

406-429-6646 ext. 104

petroleumcd@macdnet.org

Local Common Sense Conservation

www.petroleumcd.com

Jay King – Chairman, **Brenda Brady**, Vice-Chairman & MSCA, **Laura Kiehl** – Treasurer & MR CDC, **Ralph Corbett** – Urban Supervisor, **Rodney Rowton** – Rural Supervisor, **Butch Arthur** – Urban Supervisor, **Nathan Descheemaeker** - Supervisor, **Diane Ahlgren** – Associate Supervisor, MWC & MSGOT

September 27, 2023

Call to order: Chair Jay King called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:04 pm. Those present were Jay King, Brenda Brady, Rodney Rowton, Butch Arthur, Diane Ahlgren and Laura Kiehl (virtual). Others in attendance were Katie Decker, BLM Supervisory Rangeland Management Specialist; Laura Nowlin, Winnett ACES Operations Coordinator; Josh Hobbs, Pheasants Forever Coordinating Wildlife Biologist; Lindsay Flint, FFA representative; Cedar Woodford, Producer; Katie Lund, PCCD Fiscal Manager; Brent Smith, CEMIST; and Trish Smith, PCCD Administrator. Those in attendance virtually were Steve Wanderaas, McCone CD; Allison Martin, MWC Coordinator; Veronica Grigaltchik, DNRC CD Specialist; and Therese Hartman, MSGOT. Nate Descheemaeker was absent.

Approval of Minutes: Rodney Rowton moved to approve the August 31, 2023 regular board meeting minutes as corrected; Brenda Brady seconded. Motion passed.

Guest/Public Comment: Lindsay Flint discussed the FFA program that a small group in Winnett is trying to get going for Winnett students. They are working with Grass Range and both Grass Range and Winnett have set up committees to figure out how to Coop together. This would not be a long term Coop and Winnett will hopefully get their own program in time; just a 2 year trial. Five Winnett girls have enrolled in the online classes that qualify them for FFA, have been to three board meetings and wrote a letter to the Grass Range board. They will need to figure out how to fundraise for their own program. The Winnett advisor has expressed concerns that they do not want it to affect any other programs in the Winnett School. FFA offers great scholarships and opportunities. Lindsay has volunteered her time to help get this going. They have programs in the summer for range and horse judging and other programs include public speaking, talent, robotic/computer-based programs, sales, mechanics, etc. Jay stated that they are here as a board to support programs like this.

Partner Reports:

MRCDC: Trish discussed the recent meetings and upcoming meetings/schedule for the MRCDC and CMR CWG.

MWC: Allison Martin discussed the Saltcedar treatment that her and a crew did the end of August in the Catcreek area. They didn't get as much treated as they hoped, but it went well. Got a DEQ water restoration plan grant last month. Oct 10th is the next MWC meeting in Roundup. Discussed the renewal of the MWC agreement/contract for Trish. Allison and Trish

will update the contract and bring to the next meeting for approval. Trish will keep following the old contract until then.

MSGOT: Therese Hartman discussed the MSGOT contracts that she has been working with the DNRC attorney. He is not comfortable with the language. It is their understanding that if the district receives over \$750K a year in total with the grants then the CD is subject to an audit so creates a concern. If there is an audit, how would the CD pay for it? Audits are now \$10K+. There was discussion on the possibility of breaking up the funding so less than \$750K. Veronica stated that a grant agreement isn't revenue. Jay wondered if you could stagger the 6 different grants for timing around the fiscal year, paid out over a period of time. The three CD grants could be held off for a while. Steve said he will bring this up at their next MACD meeting and get back to the board. Veronica discussed what the statute says about audits. Therese stated she will set up a meeting with Danielle, the attorney and PCCD Board members and MACD board members may attend also. Diane discussed past discussion with the County and getting worked in with them.

MSU Extension: No report.

DNRC: Veronica went over her October report. The Project/Planning/Pollinator grant cycle is open until October 15. If a CD long-range plan was done a long time ago it will need to be updated.

NRCS: Trish gave Reba's written update. Application batching deadline for Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) Big Game Habitat Improvement Project is October 6th, 2023. Application batching deadline for Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) & Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) is October 27th, 2023. They are also working on developing a new Targeted Implementation Plan (TIP) for more timber thinning. Currently identifying landowners in northern Petroleum County with timber and plan to meet with them over the next few weeks to prioritize areas of interest. The TIP would be for FY2025, with a signup likely happening in October 2024.

Pheasants Forever: Josh stated that they have completed one deadline; working on 8 applications and will review those at the November Conservation Committee meeting. December they will be having their last deadline for applications. Wrapping up pipelines and inspections on some of their old projects and can start on new grants soon. His position with Pheasants Forever ends in December so they are working on keeping the position open through Pheasants Forever and the Winnett ACES.

Winnett ACES: Laura N. stated that their annual ACES meeting will be January 17th and their next board meeting is October 11th at noon. She went out with the CD and Clint Smith on sept 25 for all the tour of all the upcoming Musselshell River projects. They are looking for grant sponsorship with the CD and will discuss in detail under New Business.

CEMIST: Brent stated that they had their monthly CEMIST meeting this morning and will be attending Area 1 & 4 meetings next week. Working with MISC for the AIS train the trainer workshop in Missoula Oct 17th. Will submit for reimbursement after done. Their quarterly meeting will be in Lewistown Oct 24th. There have been mussels found in the Snake River drainage in Twin Falls. Starting copper treatment soon. Tom Woolf is looking for CD support for the SD area. Working with MSU extension for the Feral Pig Highline Tour this fall. There will be

an Eastern Heath Snail meeting in December. There was discussion on reimbursement for CEMIST travel. Steve said he will discuss with Stephanie Criswell and see if there would be a work around. Jay stated we could possibly change language in the policy and this can be discussed in later board meetings.

BLM: Katie stated that the BLM has been replacing a lot of equipment. The Horse Camp crossing culvert was replaced, and a couple cattle guards were replaced on Dunn Ridge. Road agreements have been complicated. They put in rolling dips off the cattle guards. Been assisting NRCS with mesonet sites. Working on soil pits. Glacial finds in the War horse area. This week assisting a pit in Fergus County (Descheemaeker). MCC crews working on fence modifications with wildlife friendly specs in Elk Creek and also mesonet work. Steve Smith was out on the Musselshell training MWC folks on the EZ Ject on Saltcedar. Fuels project in Tin Can will pick up in mid-October. Discussed the upcoming possible government shutdown and which projects that will carry on.

Supervisor Reports:

Brenda Brady: No Report.

Laura Kiehl: NRCS and Farmer's Conservation Alliance have officially notified PID yesterday that they have been chosen for a project. PID will have their discussion about this at their meeting tomorrow. There's a chance that the CD may be involved. This will happen fast; the first meeting will take place in the next week or two.

Ralph Corbett: No Report.

Jay King: No Report.

Diane Ahlgren: Diane is resigning as the CD's Associate Supervisor. She has been with the CD for 30 years. The board thanked Diane for all her time and dedication to the CD.

Rodney Rowton: Attended the bank stabilization site tour on Monday.

Nate Descheemaeker: No report.

Butch Arthur: Steve Vantassel is a rodent specialist and puts on workshops. Maybe something the CD would be interested in for a spring workshop. Trish will keep him in mind when applying for another Spring Education Grant. Veronica stated to try and get that grant applied for by February.

Old Business:

A. **Gilly Website for 310s:** Tabled.

B. **MWC Admin Contract:** Discussed in the MWC partner update.

C. **MACD Education Work Group – Admin joining a team approval:** Tabled until

Trish visits with MCDEO at Convention in November.

- D. **Administrator Budget:** Katie went over the updated broke out Admin budget that Trish and Katie came up to help keep better track of CD expenses.
- E. **Fiscal Manager MOU:** Katie's contract will be fulfilled at the end of the year. She has a lot on her plate and will have to cut back with some of her jobs/duties. Brenda suggested forming a sub-committee for discussing the Fiscal Manager MOU. Jay and Brenda will be on that committee and another board member.
- F. **Fuels Mitigation Meeting follow-up:** Brenda and Trish discussed the meeting. There were around 15 attendees. Wendy and Bruce facilitated and it went well. Glenn Gillette and Ty Lund attended and they discussed trying to get contact info for absentee landowners and maybe sending them a joint letter from the Fire Department/PCCD requesting them to sign up for the Fuels Mitigation Program to clear out hazardous tress on their properties that cause a high risk for issues fighting fires in the area. Trish will ask Tonya from Snowy Mountain Development when the BLM grant needs to be used up.
- G. **Irrigation meeting follow-up:** There was good attendance from the water users. Katie stated that Drew from WWC would be good to work with and help with grant writing. She asked Veronica on clarification on what grant we need to be applying for and when. The RRG grant is not for just CDs but all under the DNRC umbrella. The next RRG planning grant cycle will be available this winter 2023. Rodney Rowton moved to apply for the RRG grant when it comes open; Butch Arthur seconded. Motion passed.

New Business:

A. 310 Updates - Woodford: This agenda item was moved to the beginning of Old Business. Cedar discussed his project. He has 305 feet of bank that needs to be stabilized. He discussed how he will go about doing that with layering of rock, willows, trees, etc. and reasons the project needs to happen due to the location near the road, pump site and power lines. The Board looked over the application. Laura K. added that Tim & Sarah Browning will be sending in an update for their pump site that is furthest down the river because the river changed some since they submitted their application. Brenda Brady moved to approve the Woodford 310 pending Clint Smith's approval sheet; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion Passed.

B. Protentional Government Shutdown: Discussed what was going to happen for CD operations to continue with the NRCS building being in lockdown during the possible Government shutdown next week. Rodney Rowton moved to rent the PCCC office space for \$20/day, Oct 2-Oct 5, if there is a government shutdown; Brenda seconded. Trish will post notices, and Katie and Trish will gather files and essential equipment on Monday, if needed.

C. CD project grants: Same as agenda New Business item E.

D. CD Supervisor Representative – Area 1 Meeting: The board looked over the resolutions. Rodney Rowton moved to appoint Laura K.; Brenda Brady seconded. Motion passed. Brenda moved to used up to \$200 for Area 1 Meeting door prizes; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion Passed.

E. CD sponsoring/running a DNRC Project Grant – Musselshell Stream Restoration:

Laura N. asked the CD board if they would like to sponsor the grant or take on the project themselves. The grant ask would be \$50,000 and not sure if it would be fore all three sites or just one site. Would be a good source for match for the ACES grant that was awarded for the Rowton Bank Project. Veronica stated that if we want these projects done next fall, we can apply for the spring planning/project grant. Laura believes that “Stream Bank Restoration” is in the CD Long Range Plan. We can apply for a grant for each project separately or all together. Laura N. suggested that the CD sponsors ACES for the current grant cycle and then the CD can apply for a grant (a CD project) this spring. Brenda Brady moved for the CD to sponsor the ACES application for the DNRC project grant; Butch Arthur seconded. Rodney Rowton abstained. Motion passed.

F. No-Till Drill Application & Process: Katie discussed a recent incident that she had with the No-Till Drill on the highway. It was decided to add to the No-Till Drill application the need for a flagger while transporting the No-Till Drill. Jay stated that the No-Till Drill committee will get together before next spring to go over and updated the rental application and process.

Administrative: The board looked over the Admin Aug/Sept report. Trish gave a quick overview of a few items from the last month and the upcoming Area 1 meeting. Passed around the MWC and CD recent newsletters. She stated that she didn’t have time to update the Grant Summary report.

A. Grant & District Updates:

Financial:

Katie visited with Brandon Bantz about doing an audit and he is very busy but will let Katie know if he is able to do one. If he is unable to do so we need to find someone else. MRCDC just got funded for a new grant; the first advance invoice was signed.

1. Petroleum CD: Brenda Brady moved to pay PCCD unpaid bills; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

2. Missouri River CD Council: Brenda Brady moved to pay MRCDC unpaid bills; Rodney seconded. Motion passed.

Correspondence: No correspondence.

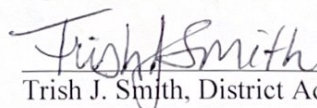
Announcements:

A. Next Board meeting: Wednesday, October 25, 2023, 5pm, PCCD Office – backup of the PCCC building.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 8:04 pm.



J.C. King, Chairman



Trish J. Smith, District Administrator