

Petroleum County Conservation District

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Local Common Sense Conservation

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

May 25, 2023

Call to order: Vice Chair Brenda Brady called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 5:02pm. Those present were Brenda Brady, Ralph Corbett and Laura Kiehl. Others in attendance were Butch Arthur, Urban Supervisor Elect; Katie Decker, BLM Supervisory Rangeland Management Specialist; Brent Smith, CEMIST; Allison Martin, MWC Coordinator; Reba Ahlgren, NRCS District Conservationist, and Trish Smith, PCCD Administrator. Jay King, Rodney Rowton, Nate Descheemaeker and Diane Ahlgren were absent.

Everyone introduced themselves. Butch Arthur and Ralph Corbett were sworn in as Urban Supervisors after roll call by Krista Rowton, Deputy Clerk & Recorder. Due to Butch being sworn in prior to business items, the board had a full quorum to finish the meeting.

Approval of Minutes: Ralph Corbett moved to approve the April 27, 2023 regular meeting minutes with amendments; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed.

Guest/Public Comment: None.

Partner Reports:

MRCDC: Laura Kiehl discussed the last MRCDC Executive Committee meeting. The Council discussed the BLM Public Lands Rule for conservation leases and the MRCDC comment letter that they need to get sent by June 20th. There was no conclusion for the letter so they are meeting again next week to discuss and finalize it. Getting ready for the River Rendezvous June 21st event; had to have a special meeting on that since Pat Gilbert is unable to attend – so rethinking the event agenda. Trish has gathered many door prizes for the event. If anyone wants to register, they can do so on EventBrite.

MWC: Allison Martin stated she is still becoming familiar with her job duties in her new position as the MWC Coordinator including projects, grants, etc. She was able to get a grant in the amount of \$4000 for LTPBR (Low Tech Processed Based Restoration) projects. The next MWC meeting will be in Roundup, June 13th, at noon. There will be Salinity monitoring being done every two weeks. Finished all the Geomorphology Workshops with Karin Boyd.

MSGOT: Trish Smith mentioned that the range monitoring with MSGOT has been moved again and will now be June 6th and 7th. Diane will be coming along and Brenda stated that she can come along for part of it as well.

MSU Extension: Trish stated that Cody sent out an informational email regarding the black grass bug issue. There was discussion on how this bug has been already affecting land near roadways between Winnett and Mosby.

DNRC: Nothing to report; her monthly updates sheet is in the packet.

NRCS: Reba Ahlgren stated that they have two additional Sage Grouse Initiative applications preapproved for a total of three projects funded. They also have two Forestry TIPS (Targeted Implementation Plan) projects that are preapproved for funding. The office is working on developing contract documents for those projects and should have them obligated by the end of June. There is a new Range Management Specialist starting soon in Lewistown, Kalten Hendrickson, and a summer intern who started in April, Emily Webster. Mike Lucas and his wife just had a baby boy in May.

Pheasants Forever: No report.

Winnett ACES: Brenda Brady stated that the 1st Jam Session at 55 Main will be June 3rd. Kendall Wojcik will be leading pasture walks the last Tue of each month talking about soil health. Reframing rural (Megan Torgerson) will be featuring ACES. Ladies Day on the Range will be June 5th. Conservation Committee will be meeting June 7th at 4pm.

CEMIST: Brent Smith stated they have a monthly meeting May 31. May 31st is the deadline for the RFP of the Woody Inv. TF Contractor to develop the plan, which will focus on best practices, mapping and Ed and outreach. Requested 75K and got 65K. HB821 was passed which was 250K specific to Musselshell, Yellowstone and Stillwater Co. for Woody Invasive Species Management; June 13 AIS Substrate Monitoring training for Admins and partners; Harlowton may be another AIS training in Aug; MT Dept of livestock still trying to fill the Assistant Veterinarian position which will also oversee the feral pig program. Working on 2023/2024 show and event schedule – Watercraft Inspection Stations in Montana have found 24 total fouled boats to date.

BLM: Katie Decker discussed the Proposed Public Land Rule and that public comments are due by June 20, or stated Pub comments due by June 20, or 15 days after the last public meeting. Lewistown office has been looking at land health. BLM, MFWP, & PF completed 103 sage-grouse lek surveys; 66% were active with an average of 18 males per lek. Leks were around 5-10% below 24-year average. Prairie restoration workshop and field day had around 30 participants; went to Afternoon went out to Rose Creek field site in the afternoon to look at BDAs, cut short due to weather. Crooked Creek unit F was implemented last week; 3800-acre treatment, 30% removal over story canopy and lower juniper. Met objectives. Brenda asked about the travel management. Katie stated not open for public comment yet; draft back from contractor 2 weeks ago. Steve Smith is coming for the PCCD Kid's Day event. Released White top mites; Ford Creek enclosure, 5 miles north of Grass Range.

Supervisor Reports:

Brenda Brady: Mentioned Ladies Day on the Range that will be June 5th; meeting at the CD at 9:30am.

Laura Kiehl: No report.

Ralph Corbett: No report.

Jay King: No report.

Diane Ahlgren: No report.

Rodney Rowton: No report.

Nate Descheemaeker: No report.

Butch Arthur: No report.

Old Business:

- A. **Fire Mitigation Program/Info Meeting:** Laura Kiehl moved to approve the hire letter for Bruce Reid; Ralph Corbett seconded. Motion passed.
- B. **Irrigation Grant:** Trish stated she reached out to Vince Murnion for an update. They are working with an engineer to get a plan. Trish will continue to reach out to get updates on progress and how things are going.
- C. **No-Till Drill Rental Agreement Paperwork Updates:** The “committee” that was going to get together to further discuss and possibly update the No-Till Drill agreement has not had a chance to do so. It was decided to keep the agreement (numbers/pricing) as was decided at the April meeting for now and will be re-visited before fall 2023 or spring 2024.
- D. **Kid’s Education Day:** Trish discussed the general overview of the Kid’s Ag & Conservation Education Day for ages K-6th. It will be in the afternoon at the PCCC. Several organizations/agencies (PCCD, NRCS, CEMIST, BLM and ACES) will have tables/areas set up. Hoping to get this going again as an annual event since it has been many years since the last one.
- E. **Area 1 Meeting:** Trish discussed the Area 1 Meeting planning that has happened so far (secured location & catering) and that the Board needs to think of what they want to add to the end of the agenda for the CD; area tour, training, something fun, etc. She reached out to Becca Boslough to start collaborating with MACD for the event but hasn’t heard back as of yet.

New Business:

A. 310 Updates – Frank Solf & Hobbs/Ahlgren: Ralph Corbett moved to approve the Hobbs/Ahlgren permit; Butch seconded. Motion passed. Ralph moved to approve the Frank Solf application, with a 10-year maintenance plan; Laura seconded. Motion passed. It was discussed that the King BDA project does not need an application, since

not on a stream that needs permitting.

B. Urban Supervisors Oath of Office: moved to after roll call to have a quorum.

C. Consider new CD website: Tabled until the next board meeting.

A. August SET Admin Training in Fort Peck: Ralph moved to allow Trish to go to the SET training; Brenda seconded. Motion passed.

D. MRCDC's Sub-Grant/SSA agreement with MACD – Ralph moved to approve the MRCDC's sub-grant/SSA agreement with MACD; Laura seconded. Motion passed.

E. BLM Public Lands Rule Comment Letter - Laura moved to go forward with a letter using Montana Stockgrowers suggested format for a letter; Ralph seconded. Motion passed.

Administrative:

A. Grant & District Updates: Board reviewed the updated grant summary sheet and Trish's monthly admin report. Reviewed the Long-Range Plan and will revisit in 6 months. Looked over the Quarter 2 CD operational plan.

B. Telework Agreement: Ralph Corbett moved to approve the telework agreement; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed.

Financial:

A. Petroleum CD: Brenda Brady moved to move forward with Chris @RMIS and the quote of \$7033 for the whole CD, with about \$2000 of that being MRCDC's expense; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed. Ralph Corbett moved to pay PCCD unpaid bills; Butch Arthur seconded. Motion passed.

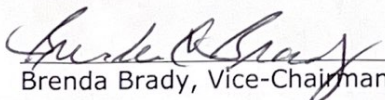
B. Missouri River CD Council: Ralph Corbett moved to pay MRCDC unpaid bills; Laura Kiehl Seconded. Motion passed.

Correspondence: Folder of recent correspondence was brought for the board to look over.

Announcements:

A. Next Board meeting: Thursday, June 29, 2023, PCCD Office

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:04 pm.


Brenda Brady, Vice-Chairman


Trish Smith, District Administrator