

A regular meeting of the McCone Conservation District Board of Supervisors was held on June 4, 2014 at the McCone County USDA field office. Those in attendance were Steve Wanderaas-Chairman, Matt Beery-Supervisor, Larry Nagel-Urban Supervisor, Casey Nay-Urban Supervisor, Johnna Blankenship-NRCS, and Mary Hendrix-Administrator. Brant Quick and Jenny Garoutte were not in attendance. Meeting was called to order at 7:04pm.

Meeting minutes from May 2014 were reviewed. Casey made a motion to approve the minutes and Larry seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Reports from May 2014 were reviewed. Matt made a motion to approve the reports and Larry seconded the motion. Motion passed.

#### **Following Correspondence & Visitors**

Steve shared with the board that Ray Beck, the head of Conservation at DNRC was promoted to Deputy Director of DNRC. Ray has been a strong advocate for conservation districts and will be missed. The new top person at DNRC Conservation Districts Bureau has not been selected yet.

Mary shared with the board that Irene Rathert stopped in to let us know that they applied to move their water right through DNRC in Glasgow. She mentioned that the dike moved due to changes in the river. She just wanted us to be aware of the change.

#### **Public Comments on District Business**

There were no public comments on the Districts business at this meeting.

#### **Administrator's Report**

Soil Health Field Trip: Dates have been set for July 8-9. The registration forms were distributed to the board, these will be mailed out separately from the Summer newsletter. Discussed advertising for tour: mass mailings, summer newsletter, printed flyers, Credit Union marquee, website, local papers, Facebook and radio. Still working on meal at Menoken Farm, but will probably use Lady J Catering to provide a buffet there.

Summer Newsletter: Waiting to receive back from the printers, will mail out on Friday. Gave a copy to each board member.

Tree Sale: Still have 44 trees left, asked if anyone needed any trees. ☺ Circle Community Club declined to take the remaining trees to plant around Circle as part of a beautification project. They could not commit to the time to plant them. They suggested we contact them next spring for this project.

223 Grant for Conservation Planning on Grazing Lands: Discussed 223 Grant round coming up in July. Mary prepared a draft 223 grant for board to look over. Asked the board if they would consider incorporating a Fall workshop on Range Conservation Management as part of the grant. Steve suggested forwarding draft to Karl Christians and Mark Henning for feedback. Will follow-up with board at the next meeting before submission.

#### 2014-2015 Fiscal Budget

Mary prepared a budget worksheet to go over with board. She has added and eliminated line items to the budget.

#### **Field Office Report**

Programs 2014--EQIP

- 62 2014 EQIP applications in the Miles City Area.
- Ranking will be completed by June 10; we should know soon if and how many of our 2014 aps will be funded.
- There is very little funding for Technical Service Providers for FY 2015. We are asked to provide technical assistance in house if at all possible. Kathy Miedinger (Terry) and Douglas Jones (Glasgow) currently provide technical and engineering assistance to the Field Office as requested.
- CSP: Contracts to expire in 2014: All will expire on September 30. We learned that we can make payments after the contracts expire. The option to renew or 'roll over' the 2010 CSPs may become available. Guidance is coming. Our clients expressed interest. Certification must be completed by September 30. I sent letters last month to advise all 2010 CSP participants that I must have all practice documentation in my hands by September first.
- EQIP: According to Eric Selfridge, there is \$1.35 Billion dollars for the program (nationally) for 2014. Five percent of this is targeted to wildlife. 2014 contract obligation deadline is in September, tba.
- All 2014 EQIP applications in Montana have had to be re-ranked due to problems with the ranking tool.
- CPPE (conservation practice physical effects) tables were not updated which lead to mismatches between identified resource concerns and the practices proposed to address them. McCone EQIPs were re-ranked. Overall, there was little change to the ranking scores.
- Miles City Area has 26 EQIP grazing applications. McCone has 2. MCA allocation is \$1,312,841. McCone is asking for \$350,000.
- MCA Cropland has 6 high-priority applications, McCone has 1. Area allocation: \$205,905.
- BFR/SD: MCA has 9, McCone has 1.
- Total MCA initial allocation \$2,410,513
  - 80% to Local Work Group Priority Concerns (Grazing or Dry Crop)
  - 20% to Forest and Irrigated Crop

Programs 2014—CSP

- 17 applications submitted. Six promoted to Pre-approved status:
- 3 General
- 2 Socially Disadvantaged (Low Income)
- 1 Beginning Farmer Rancher
- The latest correspondence from AO: It is likely that the minimum ranking score will be lowered and more applications will be selected for funding.
- Circle FO: One SD and one BFR may be deferred. Waiting for the applicants' decisions on whether or not to proceed.

Programs 2015

- Seven 2015 EQIP rangeland applications. The Field Office is in the process of scheduling field visits and beginning resource inventory.
- One irrigated crop. Land has just come out of CRP and so cannot meet the eligibility requirement of having had to have been irrigated 2 of the last 5 years. The application will be deferred. Circle Field Office will continue to work with Douglas Jones, CET Glasgow, to design alternatives.
- CSP continuous sign-up, one inquiry so far.
- CRP: The Secretary of Agriculture announced today that farmers, ranchers and landowners may now sign up for the Conservation Reserve Program. He pointed out that, "The average age of farmers and ranchers



in the United States is 58 years, and twice as many are 65 or older compared to those 45 or younger." Retiring farmers enrolled in CRP could receive incentives to transfer a portion of their land to beginning, disadvantaged or veteran farmers through the Transition Incentives Program (TIP).

#### Civil Right Review

- The recent review found that Montana is not consistent in including the non-discrimination statement and statements about reasonable accommodations in its correspondence and other printed materials. The guidance we received from the State Office follows:

##### Accessibility Requirements

- NRCS must ensure that no one is prevented from using our services or having access to our information because of a disability. Any notice for an NRCS sponsored public meeting should contain the following statement, "NRCS provides reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities to participate in NRCS programs and activities. If you require special accommodations, please contact \_\_\_\_\_ (name) at \_\_\_\_\_ (phone number) by \_\_\_\_\_ (a date at least two weeks prior to the event)." The local contact person is the person responsible for setting up the meeting such as the district conservationist, assistant state conservationist, technical specialist, public affairs specialist, etc.

##### Nondiscrimination Statement

- In General Manual 230 – Equal Opportunity, Part 405.5, it states that in accordance with Departmental Regulation 4300-003, Equal Opportunity Public Notification Policy, the appropriate nondiscrimination statement must appear on all USDA/NRCS materials produced by USDA, NRCS, or recipients of USDA or NRCS program assistance for public information, public education, or public distribution including, but not limited to program information, district newsletters, agency letterhead, fact sheets, publications, etc. The full statement can be found in the Equal Opportunity folder on the Montana SharePoint site.
- If the material is too small to permit the full statement, the material will, at minimum, include the nondiscrimination statement shortened version: An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.
- David Pratt is attending the MACD Spring Board Meeting this week. He will discuss requirements that pertain to the Agency and the Districts with Jerry Snows and the MACD Board.

#### Upcoming Events: Field Office

- June 6: Pesticide Applicator's Exam, Glasgow.
- June 16-20: Cultural Resource Training in Bozeman.
- June 20-24: Johnna's vacation on the Highline.
- July 7-11: Fish and Wildlife Habitat Training in Miles City.

#### Upcoming Events: Area

Montana Stockgrowers Association Mid-Year Meeting  
June 13-14, 2014. Miles City, MT  
For more Information: 406-442-3420

BBQ for Soil Health Team from France  
June 18, 2014. Baker, MT  
For More Information: Baker FO @ 406.778.2238 x. 3

French Group Soil Health Tour in Fallon County  
June 19, 2014. Sikorski Ranch, Fallon County  
For More Information: Baker FO @ 406.778.2238 x. 3

Montana Range Days  
June 23-25, 2014. Havre, MT  
For more information: Jon Siddoway

Ladies' Day on the Range  
Glasgow. June 25

Range Tour in Fallon County  
June 26, 2014. Fallon County  
For More Information: Baker FO @ 406.778.2238 x.

#### July 2014

Agronomy Tour in Fallon County with Dr. Dwayne Beck  
July 2, 2014. Fallon County  
For More Information: Baker FO @ 406.778.2238.

Montana Youth Range Camp  
July 7-11, 2014. Dupuyer, MT  
For more information: Heidi Crum

Farm Tour and Workshop with Dr. Clain Jones  
July 8, 2014. Conrad, MT  
For more information: 406-494-8636

Montana Natural Resources Youth Camp  
July 13-18, 2014. Greenough, MT  
For more information: Martin Twer

Farm Tour and Workshop  
July 16, 2014. Toole County, MT  
For more information: 406-494-8636

Farm Tour and Workshop  
August 16, 2014. Whitefish, MT  
For more information: 406-494-8636

#### **New Business:**

Telecommuting or Four Tens. CD Board input sought.

**Old Business**

Financial Book Audit: Mary and Mandi will go through Quickbooks to do a year end audit and close.

CWA with DNRC & NRCS: Per David Pratt, this is still at the State Office awaiting signature. This will be noted in the old business section until completed.

Baseline Water Monitoring: The participation request form was submitted to Alice Stanley with DNCR. We are still waiting to hear back from her to determine our next steps.

Upcoming Events:

6/17/2014	CMR Community Working Group, Malta
7/8-9/2014	Soil Health Tour
7/16/2014	CMR Rangeland Monitoring Fest, Malta
7/23/2014	Garfield County Soil Health Tour
8/27/2014	Salt Cedar Team, Jordan

**New Business**

2014-2015 Fiscal Budget was worked through item by item by the Board.

Steve made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:39pm and Larry seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

Next board meeting will be held on the first Wednesday of the month, July 2, 2014 at 7:00pm.

Mary Hendrix  
Mary Hendrix, Administrator

8/20/14  
Date

Steve Wanderaas  
Steve Wanderaas, Chairman

8-20-2014  
Date