

The McCone Conservation Board of Supervisors met on October 1, 2014 at 7:00pm at the USDA Building in Circle, MT. Those present were Steve Wanderaas-Chairman, Jenny Garoutte-Vice Chair, Matt Beery-Rural Supervisor, Larry Nagel-Urban Supervisor, Johnna Blankenship-NRCS and Mary Hendrix-Administrator. Brant Quick and Casey Nay were absent. Meeting was called to order at 7:12pm.

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

Treasurer's Reports from September 2014 were reviewed. Steve made a motion to approve the reports and Jenny seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Following Correspondence & Visitors

2 emails shared—Kit Fischer letter to Governor Steve Bullock & MACD & MRCDC Greater Sage Grouse Issues. Steve asked supervisors to read at leisure and forward comments to either Mary or him.

Public Comments on District Business

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

Administrator's Report

Avery Sukut Fund—Mary asked the board if we could donate to this fundraiser. She also inquired how the Conservation District should handle solicitations and donations. The supervisors thought it was appropriate to bring donation requests to board meetings for discussions, but felt perhaps it was not appropriate to use tax dollars towards donations. Steve asked the supervisors present if they (supervisors as a group) would like to personally donate to this fund and the consensus was yes.

Area 1 Draft Meeting Minutes—Mary provided the draft minutes to supervisors who were unable to attend the area meeting.

MACD Convention—Passed out forms and asked that if there was any interest in going, to please return back soon as scholarships are very competitive.

Convention Auction Item—Asked if anyone had a suggestion for a convention auction item. Jenny thought that a local furniture craftsman might have something that could be our district donation. She will let us know.

Spring Soil Health Workshop—asked if we should re-submit the cover crop cost share again as part of the spring soil workshop. The board voted that we should make available cost share dollars since we had to turn away a few producers last time.

Opening(s)—we have an opening for a Rural Supervisor right now and Matt's replacement beginning in January 2015. She asked the board for any suggestions or recommendations and if we should advertise for the opening(s).

Wibaux CD is interested in hosting a new supervisor training in their area. Mary asked that if anyone is interested in attending to let her know.

Field Office Report

PROGRAMS

CSP Renewal

Six participants have elected to renew. Guidance is forthcoming, we are told, soon. Field visits to all applicants are required. Some are scheduled, the others will be soon. We plan to have all field visits completed this month.

CSP 2014

- Total 2014 CSP contracts: 11
- 44,879.6 acres.
- Payments will be \$330,257.00 per year and \$1,651,285.00 for the five-year contract cycle.

EQIP 2014

Both active applications were promoted to contract. EQIP allocations for 2014 total \$385,629.00.

EQIP 2015: Seven applications. Terry Heck has consented to FO request to prioritize applications owing to the CSP contracting projects, issues with contracting program and mapping program, staff, etc. that precluded completing any field work this past summer. FO is asking for CD Board input on the question of whether or not it will be appropriate to prioritize.

MACD MEETING in Jordan: Joyce Swartzendruber presented awards to McCone CD and the Field Office for the success of our co-operative efforts.

ASHLEY KIEHL started work September 28, 2014. Ashley will introduce herself at the conclusion of the Field Office report.

Fall Grazing Workshop: Field Office is to give a very short presentation about the purpose and importance of the Local Work Group. Virginia Power will cater the lunch. DC will assist.

Upcoming NRCS Events:

- **General Composting Principles Including Animal Mortality Composting**
October 21, 2014
Shelby, MT
- **General Composting Principles Including Animal Mortality Composting**
October 22, 2014
Hobson, MT
For More information:
- **Soil Health Workshop**
November 3, 2014
Missoula, MT
- **Soil Health Workshop**
November 4, 2014
Bozeman and Great Falls, MT

- **Soil Health Workshop**
November 5, 2014
Billings and Wolf Point, MT
- **Soil Health Workshop**
November 6, 2014
Miles City, MT

Upcoming Field Office Events:

Ashley goes to Economics in Albuquerque in November.

Johnna takes 2 days off to build fence.

Johnna and Ashley will present to the Daisies on October 24. We will talk about soils, plants, seeds and rocks as part of their "Journey Between the Earth and Sky" discovery unit.

October 31: MCCD has announced that there will be an Office Costume Contest. Johnna will dress up like a crabby, mechanically challenged single mom.

Thoughts on the Local Work Group Meeting**Local Work Groups**

Local Work Groups are composed of agricultural producers, owners/operators of nonindustrial private forest land, professionals representing agricultural and natural resources interests, and individuals representing a variety of disciplines in the soil, water, wetland, plant, forestry, and wildlife sciences who are familiar with agricultural and natural resource issues in the local community.

Role of Local Work Groups

Local Work Groups provide recommendations to the District Conservationist and the State conservationist on local natural resource priorities and criteria for conservation activities and programs.

Membership

Local Work Group membership aims to be diverse and focus on agricultural interests and natural resource issues existing in the local community. To ensure that recommendations of the Local Working Group take into account the needs of diverse groups served by USDA, membership shall include, to the extent practicable, individuals with demonstrated ability to represent the conservation concerns of particular historically underserved groups and individuals including, but not limited to, minorities; women; persons with disabilities; and socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

Local Working Group meetings are open to the public. Individuals attending the Local Working Group meetings will be given the opportunity to address the Local Working Group.

Conducting Business

The meetings will be conducted as an open discussion among members. Discussion will focus on identifying local natural resource concerns that can be treated using programs and activities. Summaries for all Local Working Group meetings will be available at the appropriate local NRCS office.

Advantages of the Local Work Group

- Local Input
- Priorities established
- Everyone's vote is counted
- Helps to remove concerns about bias
- Helps to establish rapport and improve communication among the CD, the FO and the public.
- Gives the Conservation District and the Field Office a stronger voice in Area policy and decisions.

Do not recommend combining the LWG annual meeting with another function such as the annual CD banquet. An all-business venue is more appropriate.

Chairman's Report

The CMR will be hiring a new refuge manager. Steve, Rachel Frost and Dean Rogge will be meeting with the Regional Director in Denver on October 7th to relay the council's hope that the new CMR Refuge Manager will have a long tenure and be committed to working cooperatively with the different agencies. While there, they will also meet with the endangered species person there regarding sage grouse.

Joyce Swartzendruber is retiring in January 2015 after 33 years with NRCS. Mark Bostrom is the new DNRC Conservation District Bureau Chief. He was formally with DEQ. Steve thought that Mark had some connection to Circle.

The Monitorfest will be on October 3rd and will be just north of the Fred Robinson Bridge. It will begin at 9:00am.

The Bison Advisory Council will meet at the Holiday Inn in Great Falls on October 9th. The county commissioners have been updated on this meeting and encouraged to attend. It was discussed at that last CMR meeting that discussions on bison will be back on the agenda.

Baseline groundwater sampling—Scot Brown had been working in Richland County, but sampled 2 wells in McCone County recently. He will be back in October to complete sampling.

Steve will ask Alice Stanley at the convention if in the future flowing wells can be added to the sampling program.

The HB223 Grant for the post pounder was denied. Steve asked if we should add this to the evaluation form on the Fall Grazing Workshop to see if what tool would be preferred: post pounder or no-till disc drill. Mary will add this to the form. He would also present a brief power point presentation during his welcome speech. Brant had inquired about the "string of pearls" in the last meeting. Steve will discuss that with Rachel Frost, MRCDC and report back to the group at the next meeting.

Old Business

CWA with DNRC & NRCS: Per David Pratt, the CWA is currently with DNRC. Steve will contact Karl Christians on the status of CWA. This will be noted in the old business section until completed.

Bison Ordinance: We are awaiting verbiage on fence specs from Laurie Zeller.

New Business

New policy: FSA will not be allowed to drive NRCS vehicles.

Adjournment of Meeting

Steve made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Jenny seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10pm.

The next scheduled board meeting will be held on the first Wednesday of the month, November 5, 2014.

Mary Hendrix 11-5-2014
Mary Hendrix, Administrator Date

Steve Wanderaas 11-5-2014
Steve Wanderaas, Chairman Date