

The McCone Conservation Board of Supervisors met on January 7, 2015 at 1:00pm at the USDA Building in Circle, MT. Those present were Steve Wanderaas-Chairman, Larry Nagel-Urban Supervisor, Casey Nay-Urban Supervisor, Brant Quick-Rural Supervisor, Ashley Kiehl-NRCS and Mary Hendrix-Administrator. Jenny Garoutte, Matt Beery and Johnna Blankenship were absent. Meeting was called to order at 1:01pm.

Meeting Minutes & Treasurer's Reports

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

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

Following Correspondence & Visitors

John Fahlgren, MACD Range Conservationist from Glasgow presented the board with information on the Sage-Grouse Initiative. He discussed some of the projects that producers in Valley County have begun towards predictability should the sage-grouse become listed. SGI through NRCS is primarily focused on private lands. For producers that may also lease BLM or State lands, other programs should be followed. US Fish & Wildlife Services has a Partnership Program in Eastern Montana. He mentioned that the state had allocated \$10 Million in its budget for this study. If anyone in McCone County is interested in SGI, the NRCS office would be a place to begin and he would be available to assist as well. SGI has 40 different enhancements that producers may utilize including rancher monitoring, inventory process, assessment of sage brush, and identifying threats. More information on SGI can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wtlx9sWJscY>.

Josh Murphy and Dusty White were invited to preview a board meeting. Both were asked to join the Conservation board.

Dave Harris was here to administer the oath of office to Brant Quick and Casey Nay. Matt Beery was voted by acclamation in the December meeting to continue his term until a replacement could be found. He has asked to retire after 16 years on the board and was not sworn in. His position is now vacant.

Mary shared correspondence from the McCone County Planning Board regarding a public hearing notice on the proposed subdivision submitted on behalf of Charlie Noland. The hearing is on January 13, 2015 at 6pm.

Public Comments on District Business

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

Field Office Report - Provided by Ashley Kiehl

CSP Renewal: Six applications obligated.

EQIP: Had six EQIP applications, but one has cancelled. An additional application may cancel, but the producer had not made that decision yet.

SGI: SGI handouts were given to supervisors.

Administrator's Report

Circle Ag Show: Mary may have a schedule conflict for the AG Show and asked if the District should still plan to have a table there. She asked if a supervisor was interested in helping out, the hours are 10am-4pm. Brant said he

might be available. Steve suggested signing up for the table anyway. Handouts would be tree order forms, workshop information & brochures and any SGI literature and core area maps.

EMT Training

In the December meeting, Mary asked the board if they objected to her going on calls during the day. They said it was fine. At that time, there was no discussion on record keeping and if the District would still pay wages during a call. The board discussed this and agreed that since this is a value to the community, the District would pay wages during a call.

Winter Grazing Seminar will be held in Billings on January 21-22, 2015.

Scanner Copier

A scanner copier was donated to the District by Ken and Susy Ehli. Steve asked to Mary to send them a thank you card.

Chairman's Report

Upcoming Events

January 5th - Big Sky Watershed member starts working for MT Salt Cedar Team, housed in Winnett
January 8th - Rangeland Monitoring Planning Meeting, Lewistown
January 12th - Winter Series including SGI, McCone County Fairgrounds starting at 4pm
January 13th - Public Notice Hearing regarding Keystone Housing, McCone County Fairgrounds starting at 6pm
January 15th - Soil health workshop in Missoula
January 21st-22nd - Winter Grazing Seminar, Billings
January 22nd - Meet & Greet Legislators, Helena
January 24th - Circle AG Show

February 3rd-4th – High Plains No-Till Conference, Burlington, CO
February 11th - CD Board of Supervisors Meeting
February 12th – Salt Cedar Team meeting, Jordan
February 17th - Soil Health Workshop, VFW Hall, Jordan
February 18th - Soil Health Workshop, McCone County Fairgrounds
February 19th - CMR Community Working Group Meeting, Ft Peck/Glasgow
February 19th - Missouri River Conservation Districts Council (MRCDC) Meeting, Ft. Peck/Glasgow
February 23rd-26th - Roland Kroos, Holistic Resource Management, Saco

Steve is planning on attending the Northern Plains No-Till Conference in Burlington, CO. Since the conference will coincide with the next board meeting in February, it was decided that the next supervisors meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 11, 2015 at 1pm.

Missouri River Conservation District Council (MRCDC) has a meet and greet with legislators on January 22 in Helena. Steve may attend it.

Steve asked if we should have someone from BLM and maybe US Fish & Wildlife Service present on sage grouse at an upcoming meeting. John suggested speaking to Bridget (Jordan office) for name of individual for this area. Steve will contact Bridget.

He also mentioned that Montana Salinity Control Association (MSCA) is still accepting applications for baseline water monitoring. This program is available until funding runs out. Monitoring is possible only on captured springs, too.

Old Business

Winter Workshop

We have been in contact with Scott Ravenkamp, guest speaker from Colorado. Steve is still waiting to speak with Dan Buerkle from Plevna.

Rachel Frost and Ann McCauley will be present at the workshop. Rachel will speak about Salt Cedar. We may still require Ken Nelson to speak on the topic and possibly provide a power point presentation from MSU Extension.

The agenda is still being finalized. We will also look to local businesses for lunch sponsorship. Larry will speak to businesses once a menu and cost has been determined.

Local working groups help NRCS determine where EQIP dollars should be used. At the MACD Convention, Justin Meissner suggested that local working groups can initially consist of agencies personnel and key invited producers. Brant mentioned that he would be willing to help out with the meeting.

Grants

The 223 grant for a Soil Health tour to Fallon County was given to the supervisors to discuss and approve. This tour will be in Eastern Montana in July 2015. Casey made a motion to approve the grant and Brant seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Post Pounder: Casey suggested inviting Loren Logan to the next board meeting to discuss the post pounder.

CWA with DNRC & NRCS: Steve asked everyone to review the CWA included in their packet. He reiterated the importance of the cooperative working agreements between the district and agencies.

Bison Ordinance: In the December meeting, the Board decided not to provide a District fence specs dictating the type of fence to be used to control bison requiring the applicant to produce a fence design that would be sufficient to prevent bison from escaping onto adjacent lands. As fence specs were previously adopted by the supervisors, the Board voted to strike this policy. Casey made a motion to strike the previously adopted fence specs and Brant seconded the motion. Motion passed.

String of Pearls: 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. This will remain under "Old Business".

New Business

Bison Procedures: Steve will work on procedures for the bison ordinance.

Plotter: Steve mentioned that NRCS asked to use the District owned plotter to make producer maps. The wall map file produced by Cicon & Associates is not user friendly as fonts are very small and hard to read. The book maps have been outsourced. The cost of ink for it is very pricey and once an expiration date has been passed on the cartridge, will not print that particular color. Casey suggested looking at alternative sites (like Amazon) for lower cost cartridges. It was also recommended that there be a charge for each map to cover the cost of the ink.

Annual Plan of Operations: Mary will send an email document to supervisors to review. The District has accomplished a lot in 2014 and we look forward to new projects in 2015. Steve mentioned that SGI and LWG may be two things we may focus on in 2015. Casey mentioned interest in more urban projects, too.

Re-organization / Election:

Chairman: Steve Wanderaas
Vice Chair: Casey Nay
Treasurer: Larry Nagel

Brant made a motion to accept the nominations and election of chair, vice-chair and treasurer and Casey seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Josh Murphy has accepted a rural supervisor position. He will be sworn into office prior to the next board meeting.

Adjournment of Meeting

Steve made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Brant seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 3:30pm.

The next scheduled board meeting will be held on the second Wednesday of the month, February 11, 2015 at 1:00pm.

Mary Hendrix 2/11/15
Mary Hendrix, Administrator Date

Steve Wanderaas chrp 2-11-15
Steve Wanderaas, Chairman Date