

The McCone Conservation Board of Supervisors met on July 1, 2015 at 7:00pm at the USDA Building in Circle, MT. Those present were Steve Wanderaas-Chairman, Larry Nagel-Urban Supervisor, Brant Quick-Rural Supervisor, Josh Murphy-Rural Supervisor, Johnna Blankenship-DC, NRCS and Mary Hendrix-Administrator. Jenny Garoutte, Dusty White and Casey Nay were absent. Meeting was called to order at 7:05pm.

### **Visitors**

Mark Ockey, MT DEQ discussed TMDL or a Total Maximum Daily Load—a calculation of the maximum amount of pollutant that a waterbody can receive and still safely meet water quality standards. He updated the board on the status of impaired streams in McCone County.

Two segments remain impaired above and below the Town of Circle. Above Circle: excess nitrogen and phosphorus coming off into Horse Creek. Below Circle: pollutants coming off the waste water treatment plant into the Redwater River.

The lower third of the Redwater River—from Pasture Creek to the mouth of the Missouri River is still listed for physical substrate that may impact wildlife habitat (e.g. silt, runoffs) and alteration to streamside vegetation due to overgrazing or over browsing. It is not listed for nitrogen, phosphorus or salinity.

MT DEQ is currently working on projects in the Musselshell (due to flooding and irrigator concerns) and Powder / Tongue Rivers (due to Otter Creek and coal tracts).

319 are grants funds from the EPA and used by the state to address non-point source pollution. Smaller watershed restoration plans (30,000 or less acres) can be projects that the district can work on. These projects may be ag-related: off stream watering, corral relocation, cropland buffer or filter strips, cover crops and salinity control.

The board with the technical assistance provided by Mark, completed the Stream Restoration Policy Survey.

DEQ Authorization MTB008815 is notification of a various stream/wetland crossings in Dawson and McCone Counties and how this activity is qualified for a temporary surface water quality turbidity standard if it is carried out in accordance to the letter on hand. Steve asked Mary to contact the 318 staff to find out where this project is.

### **Correspondence & Handout**

- Noela Cusker Thank You
- June 2015 MRCDC Activity Summary
- Stream Restoration Policy Survey
- DEQ Authorization MTB008815

### **Meeting Minutes & Treasurer's Reports**

Meeting minutes from June 2015 were reviewed. Larry made a motion to approve the minutes and Brant seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Reports from June 2015 were reviewed. Josh made a motion to approve the reports and Steve seconded the motion. Motion passed.

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

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

## Field Office Report

CSP Preapprovals: 2 of 12 so far.

CSP Renewals: Two eligible contracts; both have applied for renewal.

CRP

Field Training

Producer Self Certification questions

NRCS 10% spot checks.

Ashley has completed Soil Health and Sustainability, NRCS Conservation Planning and Archeology training.

Johnna has one more training: Plant – Herbivore Interactions, July 27-30.

Agency mapping program is undergoing another re-build. We will go to Miles City for training in August.

CSP preapprovals: May be one or two more rounds. May not know for sure how many acres will be contracted until sometime in September.

Field work: EQIP applications.

## Administrator's Report

Postcards for Soil Health Tour will be mailed out July 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup>. RSVP no later than July 13<sup>th</sup>.

Working on converting financials to the BARS system (Budgetary Accounting and Reporting System) for the new fiscal year. Financial reports will look slightly different for the next meeting as number codes will also be a part of each item.

## UPCOMING

July 7—Dr. Dwayne Beck & Jay Fuhrer Workshop in Beach, ND

July 9—Rick Bieber in Jordan

July 16—Soil Health Tour to Fallon County

August 13-15—McCone County Fair

September 23—Area 1 Meeting

## Chairman's Report

Steve will be in Helena for the Invasive Species Committee meeting July 22nd. He mentioned that it is a monumental task before the committee and they are to report their findings to the Governor in two years' time.

Western Energy Alliance email—who is on the Public Lands Council for McCone County? Steve asked Mary to check with the County Commissioners.

## Old Business

**Post Pounder:** The post pounder will be purchased through Shortline Ag—they gave us a conservation district price of \$13,000. The supervisors were asked to look again at the rental price and agreement; and liability insurance for this equipment.

**Bison Procedures:** Steve is still working on procedures for the bison ordinance. This will remain under "Old Business" until completed.

**District tree plot & right of way discussions update:** Mary met with the new County attorney to discuss legal ramifications, if any, easements and the county law that requires landowners to purchase equipment (culverts) for road improvements. He met with the Commissioners and there was such an ordinance. The board's decision is to discontinue the easement and ask the county to remove the easement access turnoff after harvest. The producer may work with the county for road improvements.

**Local Working Group—local resource issue questions:** Supervisors were given a 2009 EQIP County Funding Recommendations to review in a previous meeting. Johnna will speak with Terry Heck and schedule a meeting between him and the board in the fall. This meeting will discuss better resource questions for local EQIP applications and if possibly, ways of changing them

**String of Pearls:** Brant had inquired about the "string of pearls" in the last meeting. Steve discussed this with Rachel Frost, MRCDC and there is no information and believes this project may have been scrapped

## New Business

**Bison Environmental Impact Statement:** The document is 170 pages long and the comment period is until September 11<sup>th</sup>. Steve to contact Dean Rogge for his comments. Both Larry and he asked for a printed copy to review.

### Adjournment of Meeting

Steve made the motion to adjourn the meeting and Brant seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 9:14pm. The next scheduled board meeting will be held on Wednesday, August 5, 2015 at 7:00pm.

Mary Hendrix      9/2/15  
Mary Hendrix, Administrator      Date

Steve Wanderaas      9-2-2015  
Steve Wanderaas, Chairman      Date