

CONSERVATION E-NEWS

McCONE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Daylight Savings Time ends at 2:00AM on Sunday, November 1st



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Charles M Russell Water Compact Update

Rachel Frost, MRCDC Coordinator
406-454-0056

In response to several requests for more information on the status of the CMR Water Compact and the notices sent to those in the area, I attended a public meeting on the Compact in Jordan on Wednesday evening (September 30). The following are the main points of importance that were presented at the meeting. Please feel free to call the DNRC in Glasgow or Lewistown for further clarification.

1. The CMR Water Compact was approved by the Montana Legislature in 2013, then passed by the US Congress. The next step is for the Compact to be approved by the Montana Water Court. The compact has not been modified from the version that passed the State legislature or Congress. This is the final step in the process of the Compact going into effect.
2. During the compact negotiations, the US FWS agreed to give up their 1932 rights, (which had not been quantified, thus the reason for the compact in the first place) and settle on a priority date of 2015 for their water rights, which were quantified at that time. Consequently, anyone holding a water right, that has been properly filed with a priority date before 2015, has a senior water right that cannot be "called" for by the Refuge. There are however, restrictions on future development on tributaries. All **future in-stream development** on streams flowing into the CMR is subject to DNRC approval first.
3. Within the MT Water Court approval process, there is the opportunity for individual water users to file an objection if they feel that their EXISTING water rights are being infringed by the compact. These complaints must be received by January 26th, 2016. The objection process is somewhat different for compacts, with it being a yes/no decree, and the burden of proof being on the objector.
4. There was some discussion concerning undeveloped springs that were not allowed to be filed on back in the 1980s. These are now eligible to be formally filed on for water rights, and anyone having such a spring on their property is encouraged to file for these rights as soon as possible.

In short, the compact is set up to protect existing water rights for all users. It may affect future water development, particularly in-stream development on tributaries that flow into the CMR. It is always a good idea to verify that all existing water developments have been filed on for water rights, and that these are recorded correctly. Please contact the DNRC Offices in Glasgow 406-228-2561 or Lewistown 406-538-7459 with further questions.

Crested Wheatgrass *Plant Fact Sheet*

Description: Crested wheatgrasses *Agropyron cristatum*, *Agropyron desertorum* (desert), and *Agropyron fragile* (Siberian) are perennial grasses commonly seeded in the western United States. They are long-lived, cool season, drought tolerant, introduced grasses with extensive root systems.

Agropyron cristatum (this is most common in our area)* is not as drought tolerant as desert or Siberian wheatgrasses. They are adapted to the northwest, intermountain, and Great Plains regions with at least 10 inches of annual precipitation.

Cristatum type crested wheatgrass grows from 1 to 3 feet tall and seed spikes may be 1.5 to 3 inches long with a short-broad shape that tapers at the tip. Flower clusters within the spike are flattened and closely overlapping. Each seed has a short awn. Stems are leafy and erect, forming a dense tuft. Leaves are flat, smooth below, slightly coarse above, and vary in width from 1/16 to 1/4 inch.

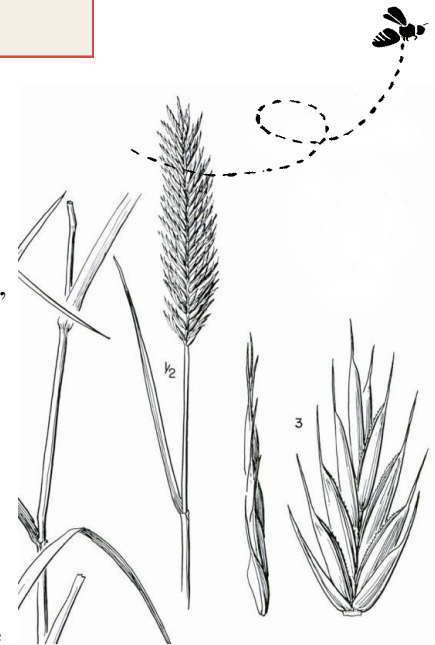
Distribution: This species was introduced from Asia and is naturalized from the Pacific coast to New York.

Uses: Grazing/rangeland/hayland: Crested wheatgrass is commonly recommended for forage production. It is palatable to all classes of livestock and wildlife. Established stands can withstand very heavy grazing.

Protein Levels: It is a preferred feed for cattle, sheep, horses and elk in the spring and also in the fall, if additional growth occurs. In spring, the protein levels can be as high as 18 percent and decrease to about 4 percent as it matures (summer). It is not considered a desired feed for cattle, sheep, horses, deer, antelope, and elk in the summer. It is commonly utilized for winter forage by cattle and horses, but protein supplements are required to ensure good animal health.

Wildlife: Birds and small rodents eat crested wheatgrass seeds; deer, antelope and elk graze it, especially in spring and fall. Upland and song birds utilize stands for nesting. Where it is planted as a monoculture, the resulting biodiversity is lower than that is found in a diverse plant community.

Erosion control/reclamation: Crested wheatgrass is well adapted to stabilization of disturbed soils. It competes well with other aggressive introduced plants during the establishment period. Crested wheatgrass is not compatible in mixes with native species because it is very competitive and will out-compete slower developing native species. This is why it is so important to get a good kill on it before planting to native species!*



Jeanne M. Janish
Cronquist et al. (1977)
© New York Botanical Garden
Bee: clipartpanda.com

Article sources: Plant Materials <<http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/>>
Plant Fact Sheet/Guide Coordination Page <<http://plant-materials.nrcs.usda.gov/intranet/pfs.html>>
National Plant Data Center <<http://npdc.usda.gov>>
*Comments, Circle field office

In next month's E-Newsletter: How to Control Crested Wheatgrass (and we hear that it is hard!)

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As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them. ~John Fitzgerald Kennedy

USDA to invest \$4 million for honey bee food sources on private lands

Contact: Justin Fritscher (202) 375-0871

WASHINGTON, Oct. 6, 2015 – The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) today announced the availability of \$4 million in assistance for farmers, ranchers and forest landowners working to improve food sources for honey bees on private lands in Midwestern and northern plains states. The targeted conservation effort by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) aims to improve the health of this critical pollinator in a region where more than two-thirds of the nation's honey bee population spends the summer months, pollinating crops and building strength to survive winter.



"The future of our food supply depends on honey bees," NRCS Chief Jason Weller said. "This effort partners with farmers, ranchers and forest landowners to ensure honey bees have safe and diverse food sources during a time when they need it most."

Honey bees pollinate an estimated \$15 billion worth of crops annually, including more than 130 fruits and vegetables. One out of every three bites of food in the United States depends on honey bees and other pollinators. But honey bee populations have suffered significant declines in recent years.

NRCS is working with landowners in Michigan, Minnesota, **Montana**, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin to make bee-friendly conservation improvements to their land, such as planting cover crops, wildflowers or native grasses and improving management of grazing lands. From June to September this six-state region is home to more than 70 percent of the commercially managed honey bees in the country. These are critical months when bee colonies need abundant and diverse forage to store enough food for winter.

During the first two years of this targeted campaign, NRCS and landowners have boosted available food for honey bees on around 35,000 acres in Michigan, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin. NRCS expanded the effort into Montana this year because of the state's prominent role in honey production.

Planting wildflowers, native grasses and cover crops like buckwheat, mustard, clover and sunflowers provides high value food for honey bees. Cover crops also increase soil nutrients, break pest cycles and increase organic matter in the soil. NRCS also works with landowners to ensure pasturelands and rangelands include a good variety of legumes, forbs and shrubs that also provide pollen and nectar.

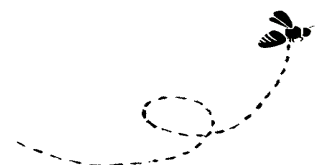
These conservation improvements not only benefit the bees, they also strengthen agricultural operations, support other beneficial insects and wildlife, and improve other natural resources. Appropriate cover crops and better rangeland and pasture management reduce erosion, increase soil health, inhibit the expansion of invasive species and provide food and habitat for insects and wildlife.

The 2014 Farm Bill's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides funding for this work. NRCS accepts EQIP applications on a continuous basis. Landowners interested in participating should contact their local USDA service center to learn more.

Learn more about the work to help honey bees and other pollinators and NRCS's key role in the National Strategy to Promote the Health of Honey Bees and Other Pollinators.

For more on technical assistance and financial resources available through NRCS conservation programs, visit www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted or a local USDA service center.

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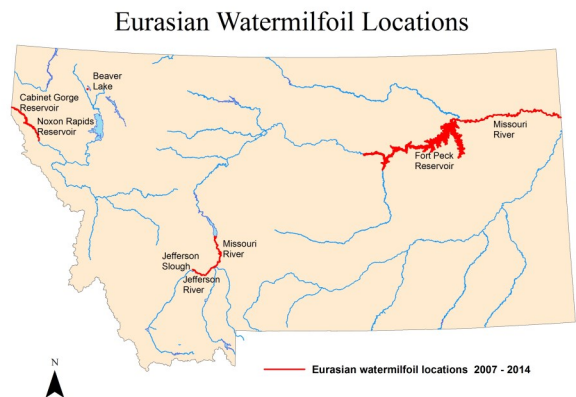
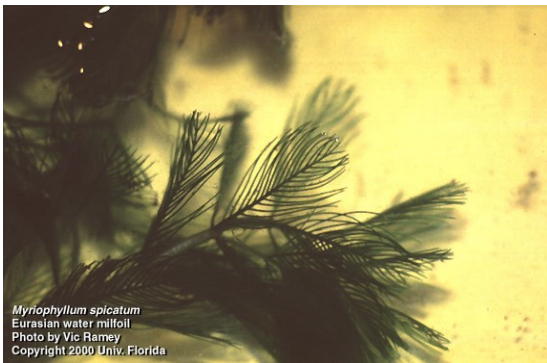


**Present
in Montana**

Invasive Aquatic Plant—Eurasian Watermilfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*)

- Native to Europe, Asia, and northern Africa
- Submersed, perennial, aquatic plant with feathery leaves arranged in whorls around the stem.
- Grows thick mats in waters less than 15 deep but can grow in water to 25 feet deep or more.
- Spreads by fragmentation and overland via transport on boats, motors, trailers, fishing nets, and other gear
- Can quickly take over shallow lakes and rivers, which can prevent boating, fishing, hunting, and swimming
- Identification
- Milfoil stems branch several times near the water surface.
- Erect stalks emerge above water with small reddish flowers.
- Typically 4, but sometimes 3-5 leaves, form a whorl around the stem.
- Eurasian Watermilfoil has 12 or more pairs of leaflets.

Source: MT FWP website



DRWA Legislation

Dry-Redwater Regional Water Authority currently has two Bills introduced in the U.S. Senate. **S.1552**, Clean Water for Rural Communities Act and **S.1365**, Authorized Rural Water Projects Completion Act. These two Bills provide much-needed funding and authorization for the construction and completion of critical rural water infrastructure projects in Montana and other states, including DRWA.

S. 1552, the Clean Water for Rural Communities Act, authorizes two Bureau of Reclamation rural water projects—Dry-Redwater Rural Water System (DRWA) and Musselshell-Judith Rural Water System (CMWA).

S. 1365, the Authorized Rural Water Projects Completion Act, would provide consistent resources to complete the construction of rural water projects that have already been authorized by Congress and also ensure dedicated funding for implementation of Indian water rights settlements.

These bills, which Senator Daines co-sponsored with Senator Jon Tester, would ensure adequate funding is directed to projects in rural communities in North Dakota, South Dakota, **Montana**, New Mexico, Minnesota, and Iowa that would provide much-needed access to water supplies.

For more information, please contact Mandi Nay, DRWA Coordinator.

406-485-DRWA

• drwa@midrivers.com

• www.midrivers.com/~drwa



November Workshops Near You

NRCS + SWCDM SOIL HEALTH workshops

2015 Dates

- Nov 2 Missoula
- Nov 3 Great Falls, Bozeman
- Nov 4 Billings
- Nov 5 Plentywood

Registration

\$15 through October 20.
\$20 after October 20
and at the door.

Lunch will be provided.

Register online at
www.swcdmi.org

For more info or to learn about
sponsor or vendor opportunities,
call 406.443.5711

About the presenters

Gabe Brown (Missoula, Great Falls, Billings): Gabe's presentations will highlight his innovative rotational cover cropping and grazing systems, and discuss how improving his soil organic matter has translated into higher nutritional values for their animals and crops.

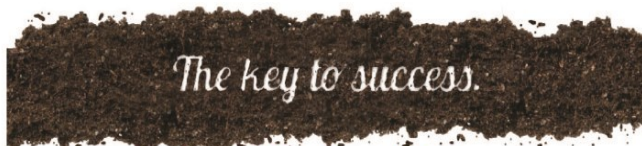
Neil Dennis (Missoula, Bozeman): Neil will share his experiences using rotational mob grazing, lessons learned, and observations on how his grazing systems have improved pasture productivity and animal and soil health.

MSU Extension Specialists (Bozeman, Billings): Dr. Clain Jones will present recent research on nutrient dynamics in single and mixed cover crop species in small grain systems. Dr. Fabian Mennel will give an overview of recent research using sheep to graze mixed species cover crops in an organic vegetable system.

Derek Axten (Plentywood): Derek Axten employs numerous practices to improve his soil's health and operation's sustainability. Derek will present on his experiences with intercropping, diverse crop rotations, one pass, and no-till planting.

Stripper header demonstrations and Q&A with representative from Shelbourne Reynolds (Billings, Plentywood).

Local producer panels (all locations): Local producers will share their first-hand experiences with various soil health practices. Opportunity for Q&A.



SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICTS
of MONTANA

NRCS
United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Little Beaver Conservation District

Range Workshop

November 23, 2015- Thee Garage

Baker, MT

9:30-10:00-

Registration

10:15-11:15- *Cattle Market Situation and Outlook*

Dr. Derrell Peel, Oklahoma State University Livestock Marketing Economist

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11:30-12:00- *Accounting on Livestock Operations*

Rusty Knuths, CPA and Rancher

12:00-12:45- *Lunch—Lunch will be provided at no cost to participants*

12:45-1:30- *How to not go Broke Ranching*

Walt Davis, Author, Rancher, and Consultant

1:45-2:45- *Building a Ranch Through Sustainable Management*

Eric Bringhurst, Colorado Rancher

3:00-4:00- *Taking Advantage of Cattle Market Opportunities*

Dr. Derrell Peel

RSVP: November 19, 2015

To register please contact Ann or Kodie at

406-778-2217 x 3

Gratitude is the sign of noble souls. ~ Aesop



Photo source: <https://cdn4.dogonews.com/images/0b82ebd3-aa6a-46aa-8761-e8228b44498a/post-what-are-you-thankful-for-thanksgiving-contest1.jpg>

An optimist is a person who starts a new diet on Thanksgiving Day. ~ Irv Kupcinet

The Calorie Control Council says the average person will eat 4,500 calories on Thanksgiving this year. That's 3,000 for dinner and another 1,500 for snacking and nibbling—a nice way of saying “all the food you'll eat while waiting for the turkey to cool”.



Factoid source: www.cnn.com/2014/11/27/living/thanksgiving-trivia/

Photo source: finecooking.com

Thanksgiving Trivia: 11 Facts You Should Know



1. **Was There Turkey At The First Thanksgiving?** There is no evidence that turkey was eaten at the first Thanksgiving, a three-day meal shared between the pilgrims and Wamponoag tribe in 1621. It is more likely that they ate venison and a lot of seafood. Today, though, we sure eat a lot of turkey. According to a study done by the National Turkey Association, Americans ate 690 million pounds of turkey during Thanksgiving 2007. That is equal to the weight of the entire population of Singapore.
2. **Of the three utensils we use to eat (fork, spoon & knife) which was not present at the first Thanksgiving Feast?** The fork. What did they use to eat their meal with? A knife, spoon and their fingers. The fork was not brought by the pilgrims. Governor Winthrop of Massachusetts introduced it 10 years later, but it did not really catch on until the 18th century.
3. **What is the relationship between frozen T.V. dinners and Thanksgiving?** Apparently, part of the reason that Swanson started creating T.V. dinners in 1953 was because it needed to find something to do with the massive amount of leftover frozen Thanksgiving turkeys.
4. **Does turkey really make us sleepy?** Not really. Tryptophan does make us tired and it is in turkey. But more of it can be found in soybeans, parmesan and pork. So what is to blame for the post-meal coma? Well, it could be the quantity of food over-consumed. The huge serving of dessert could have an effect. Or it could be the amount of booze drunk midday.
5. **Do people consume a lot of booze during this holiday?** YES! It has been claimed again and again that the night before Thanksgiving is the biggest drinking night of the year -- beating out New Years Eve and St. Patrick's Day. Why? It is the number one evening where people return home and reunite with their high school buddies. Or possibly the anxiety of being surrounded by family drives some to drink.
6. **How did the Pilgrims make their green bean casserole?** They didn't. Green bean casserole came into being just 50 some years ago and was created by Campbell's soup. It came about when the company was making new recipes for its annual cookbook. Now, Campbell's sells about \$20 million worth of cream of mushroom soup, most likely for people to make the casserole.
7. **How many turkeys are consumed on Thanksgiving?** An estimated 46 million turkeys are eaten on Thanksgiving (the birds weigh, on average, 16 pounds). That is more than double the amount eaten on Christmas (22 million) and Easter (19 million). In 2010, more than 244 million turkeys were raised and about 226 million of those were consumed in the United States.
8. **Did Thanksgiving officially begin with the Pilgrims?** It sure didn't. Thanksgiving only became a public holiday in 1863 when president Lincoln declared it so.
9. **Have turkey, stuffing and football always gone hand in hand?** Not quite. It all started in 1934, when the Detroit Lions was bought by G.A. Richards. Trying to build up the fan base for the team, he scheduled a game for Thanksgiving Day to play the Chicago Bears, who at the time were world champions. The game sold out and was broadcasted live on radio. And with that huge success, the tradition began. Since then, the Detroit Lions have played 67 Thanksgiving games!
10. **Did Fresh Cranberry Sauce Accompany The Meal At The First Thanksgiving?** The first Thanksgiving most likely did not involve cranberry sauce. While there was a plethora of cranberries for the Pilgrims to feast on (being one of the few fruits native to North America), sugar was a luxury and was reportedly scarce at the time. Unrelated tidbit: The cranberry used to be called the Crane Berry, since it's flowering fruit bears resemblance to the bird. 750 million pounds is the forecast for U.S. cranberry production for 2011. About 30 percent of that is for Thanksgiving alone.
11. **How Did The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade Begin?** The Macy's Thanksgiving Day parade began in 1924 with 400 employees marching off from Convent Avenue and 145th Street in New York City. During this time the parade was accompanied not with the oversized balloons of our favorite cartoon characters, but with live animals borrowed from the Central Park Zoo -- from camels to elephants.

December Workshop

"Soil Health & What it Means to You"

Workshop & Ag Expo
Forsyth, Montana

December 2nd & 3rd 2015



Jay Fuhrer~

Guest Speaker & Emcee. NRCS District Conservationist in Bismarck ND.
"Soil Health Matters"



Burke Teichert~

Beef Magazine ~ "Ranching for profit".
Expert in organizing farms & ranches to be very cost effective and efficient, with minimal labor requirements.



Gabe Brown~

"Regenerating Landscapes for a Sustainable Future"

Bismarck, ND ~ Gabe with his son Paul have taken a holistic approach to the family



Dr. Elaine Ingham~

President & Director of Research at Soil Foodweb Inc. The importance of a healthy soil food web and the difference between soil and dirt.



~Dr. Don Huber

Professor Emeritus of Plant Pathology at Purdue University "The Effects of Glyphosates on Soil Health, The Base of our Food Supply."

WHO: Everyone is invited to attend this workshop, it is not just for farmers and ranchers. We encourage people from all walks of life to come and take something away from this excellent panel of speakers.

Where

Rosebud Treasure County Fair Grounds
Exhibition Hall
513 N 16th Ave, Forsyth, MT 59327

For more Information on our speakers & Registration forms go to

www.rosebudcd.com



Rosebud
Conservation
District

Registration: Early registration \$75 per person October 15th– November 25th. November 26th– December 2nd will be \$125 per person * Registration include meals and refreshment during the conference. There will be \$25 cancellation fee and no refunds after November 25th

Sponsors

Talen Energy Montana,
Colstrip Power Plant
Custer County Conservation
District
Bobcat of Miles City
Custer County Conservation
District
Yellowstone County Conservation District

*Sponsors are welcome, contributions are tax deductible.

Vendors: \$125 / Booth

* All the meals included

Contact Bobbi Vannattan or go to our Website!



Call Bobbi Vannattan @ 406-346-7333 ext. 101. or
Email~bobbi.vannattan@mt.usda.gov
Go online to the Rosebud CD Website
www.rosebudcd.com



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Johnna Blankenship, DC, NRCS
Ashley Kiehl, Soil Conservationist, NRCS
Mandi Nay, Coordinator, DRWA

Upcoming Events

November 2015

2-5 Soil Health Workshops
Missoula, Great Falls,
Bozeman, Billings &
Plentywood

4 Board Meeting, Circle

5 CMR CWG Meeting, Roy

17-19 MACD Convention,
Missoula

23 Range Workshop, Baker

26 Thanksgiving Day

December 2015

2 Board Meeting, Circle

2-3 Soil Health Workshop,
Forsyth

25 Christmas Day

January 2016

1 New Year's Day

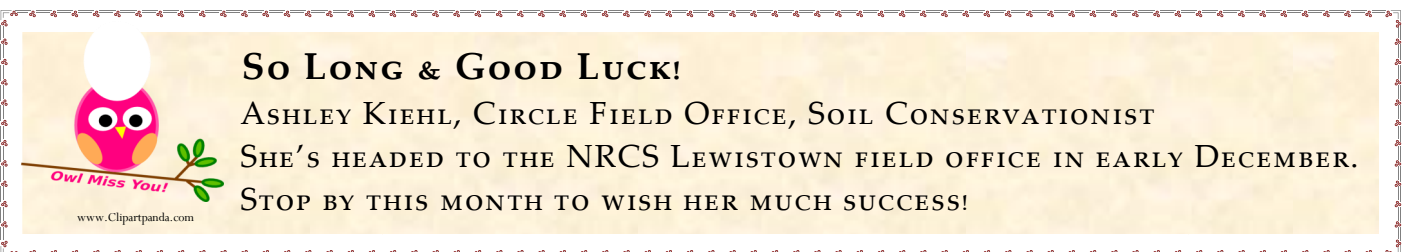
6 Board Meeting, Circle

12 310 Workshop, Dillon

McCONE CONSERVATION DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT CONSERVATION DISTRICT AUTHORITY

Mission Statement—By performing a leadership role in conservation for McCone County, the District will develop a more sustainable and economic resource management plan for the community.

Conservation District Authority—MCA 76-15-102 Declaration of policy. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the legislature to provide for the conservation of soil and soil resources of this state, for the control and prevention of soil erosion, for the prevention of floodwater and sediment damages, and for furthering the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water and therefore to preserve natural resources, control floods, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, preserve wildlife, protect the tax base, protect public lands, and protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of this state.



**Nothing makes the earth seem so
spacious as to have friends at a distance;
they make the latitudes and longitudes.**

~Henry David Thoreau

<http://i.eplung.com/>

CMR COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING

NOVEMBER 5, 2015

10AM-3PM

ROY COMMUNITY FIREHALL

ROY, MONTANA

MEETING AGENDA

- Welcome & Grounding Question
- Self-Introductions & Answers to Grounding Question
- Report from the CMR Sage Grouse Committee
- Carolyn Sime, Coordinator for the State Sage Grouse Program
- Lunch Break
- Habitat Assessment & Current Research Topics on the CMR Landscape
- Small Group Breakouts
- Report from Small Groups
- Set date for next meeting; what worked well, etc.
- Adjourn

For complete agenda, please go to: <http://missouririvercouncil.info/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/CMR-NWR-Working-Grp-Agenda-11-05-2015.pdf>