



## Petroleum County Conservation District

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*Local Common Sense Conservation*

**Ralph Corbett**, *Chairman*, **Craig Iverson** - *Vice Chair*, **Laura Kiehl** -*Treasurer*,  
**Rodney Rowton**- *Supervisor*, **Sarah Stevens**-*Urban Supervisor* **Diane Ahlgren** – *Supervisor*, *MMWG*

**October 31, 2016**

Chairman Ralph Corbett called the regular meeting of the Petroleum County Conservation District to order at 2:00 pm in the Conservation Office. Members present were Laura Kiehl, Craig Iverson, Sarah Stevens Rodney Rowton and Diane Ahlgren. Also present were Carie Hess and Marni Thompson, and potential supervisor James Brady and guests Karly De Mars, Don Pyrah, and Bonnie Dill. The September 26th minutes were read; Rodney Rowton moved to approve as submitted and Craig Iverson seconded, motion carried.

### **Guest/ Public Comment:**

**Karly De Mars with Lewistown Field Office Bureau of Land Management Wildland Fire Division and Don Pyrah with Department of Natural Resources Fire Division** came in and talked with the board about the Fuel Mitigation program that the district has funding for through Snowy Mountain Development Corporation. Don Pyrah handed out an outline of the project that he had envisioned similar to the Garfield County program and the Pines Recreation Area in the Glasgow area. The end goal of the program would be to increase local fire response capabilities and to hire an engine crew and an additional type 6 response vehicle. The crews would also work primarily in the timbered areas but it was noted that they could do some sage brush and conifer work in the sage grouse core areas within the county. Questions that still remain is who is the employer and who will be the one supervising the crews.

**Bonnie Dill, Petroleum County Weed District** came in to thank the board and Travis Wilson for helping with getting Montana Conservation Corp crew into spray Saltcedar along the Musselshell River. She also informed the board that the weed district should have an applicator on hand by the start of the next spray season.

### **Reports:**

**Financial report:** Carie briefly overviewed the Petroleum CD's financial report Craig Iverson moved to approve the report as submitted, Laura Kiehl seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed. It was noted that Carie would like to transfer another \$2,500 into the savings account before the end of the year. The board was in agreeance to transfer the amount into the savings account.

Carie then briefly overviewed the MRCDC financial report, Craig Iverson moved to approve as submitted and Rodney Rowton seconded the motion passed and checks and claims were signed.

**Administrative report:** Carie went through her grant status page with the board. She noted that she was working on a few grant reports that will need signatures later on this week or next week

mainly due to the new payroll schedule that had to be made to confirm to the new Public Employee's Retirement System reporting system.

**Open Range Consulting:** Carie reported that Nikki had submitted a proposal to NRCS but that that proposal was not funded for this year but was held over for the next fiscal year as a possibility. Carie noted that there are a few grant opportunities out there that she could work on getting more information on and look at requirements for submitting an application. It was also noted that the Bureau of Land Management Lewistown Field Office was also looking for some funding to have this project done on a larger scale.

**New Working Group** – It was brought up that supervisors should come to the next meeting with some ideas as to what they would like to see this group do and Carie should have a better idea and more information on this group.

**BSWC Member Update** – We held interviews and have selected 2 members that have both accepted the position. We have all of the funding secured to pay the districts portion of their stipends and for some travel. We will continue to look for additional travel funding as they settle in and projects are underway.

**Website** - The district does have a website currently it is not live but it is hoped that by the first of the year it will be live.

**MWCC Symposium** - Carie gave the board an update on how the symposium went and that Rachel Frost, Laura Nowlin, and herself were able to get Travis Wilson's evaluation done. It was a good networking event for all but really for the watershed coordinators.

**Partner Reports:**

**MMWG Report:** Diane reported that a Montana Conservation Corp crew was out on the lower end of the river in late October working through the landowners and the Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant money to spray Saltcedar and possibly knapweed as well. It was noted that Travis has the data and he thought that he may be able to get a map completed of what was done.

**MRCDC Report:** Laura Kiehl reported she had attended the CMR Community Working Group Meeting in Jordan and that one of the presentations was on Big Horn Sheep reintroduction around the state. The Hellis in the Gravelly Mountains and the lawsuit that has been filed in regards to their sheep was brought up. It was also noted that they have to have a 14 mile separation between the Big Horn Sheep and domestic sheep along with in some places a double fence. She also noted that the CMR group held its first Bison subcommittee meeting the evening before the full meeting. She also noted that the group has an annual work plan with 5 projects that they will be working on over the next year.

**MWC Report:** It was reported that the next meeting is scheduled for December 3th in Roundup starting at noon.

**MSGOT Report:** Diane reported the October 7<sup>th</sup> meeting was postponed and the next meeting is scheduled for November 18<sup>th</sup> and that she would be listening in by phone or video conference. She also mentioned that she had listened in on the original stakeholders group who is meeting to discuss the mitigation tool and what should be included in the tool.

Lastly she mentioned that Caroline Simes would be in the Winnett area November 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>.

**NRCS:** Marni Thompson reported that they have opened the DC position as the shared position and once that was filled that they would open the regular DC position in Winnett. Marni will then move to an area planner. She mentioned that Jay Furher will be in Winifred and Lewistown areas doing workshops. The Sage Grouse Initiative will have a special initiative to be working on renovating cropland to grassland. She reported that they are working on finishing fieldwork on EQIP. She informed the board that their local work group concern from last year is soil health and that will follow through to this year as well. Lastly she noted that they are training for the new CSP program.

**Supervisors Reports:**

**Craig** Nothing at this time.

**Diane-** reported that the Rangeland Resource Executive Committee is looking to rejuvenate range committees around the state, the committee is thinking about going by MACD areas with having an area range representative. She also mentioned that they are having problems with the Rangeland Improvement Loans being used. She noted that we have had a damp October and that Petrolia, Yellow water, and Vogel were all up. Lastly she mentioned that they are going to have something similar to the Leopold Award in Montana.

**Laura** – Reported that she would like to see if the district would look into the combustible CO2 engine for poisoning varmints. She thought that the cost about \$1,200.00.

**Rodney** – Nothing at this time.

**Ralph** – Nothing at this time.

**Sarah** – Nothing at this time.

**Sig** – Absent.

**James** – Nothing at this time.

**Correspondence:** Was on the table in the folder and was read by the board members.

**Old Business:**

**Supervisor Terms & Elections** – It was noted that at the November meeting the board would finalize the appointments. Rodney Rowton moved to appoint Sigrud Pugrud to Diane Ahlgren's term and James Brady to Amanda Gillett's position. Craig Iverson seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

**Black-footed Ferret reintroduction/Prairie Dog Management** – It was thought that board members to research the costs to vaccinate and that they would review the position statement at the November meeting.

**Permissive Mill Levy** – It was noted were the board was in the process. It was noted that the board would not be looking to do any of the public hearings or advertising until after the first of the year. It was noted that the board would start discussions in late February and have Laurie Zeller and Karl Christians attend or phone in.

**Employee Policy Handbook Changes** – Carie mentioned that the changes had not been completed and that the appendices had not been received. She will inform the board as soon as they have been and then the policy can be reviewed and approved.

**New Business:**

**Permits** – None at this time.

**State Convention** – Resolutions were reviewed and it was noted that all board members should send their comments and votes to Laura Kiehl. She will be the voting member of the board.

**Announcements:**

Next board meeting November 28th, 2016 @ 5pm.

With no further business Ralph adjourned the meeting at 5:25 pm

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Ralph Corbett, Chairman

Carie Hess, District Administrator