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## Quarterly Meeting Minutes August 23, 2016 Conservation Offices Winnett, MT

At 4:56 pm, Chair Jim Beck opened the MRCDC quarterly business meeting. Council members present were; Paul Gies; Fergus CD; Steve Wanderaas, McCone CD; John Chase, Cascade CD; Laura Kiehl, Petroleum CD; Dean Rogge, Garfield CD; Karl Christians, DNRC; Rachel Frost, MRCDC Coordinator; Carie Hess, MRCDC Secretary; and by phone Jeff Ryan, Lewis & Clark CD and Dick Iversen, Richland CD.

### General

1. Minutes were read and Steve Wanderaas moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Laura Kiehl seconded the motion which passed unanimously.
2. Carie Hess presented the unpaid bills report which John Chase moved to approve as read. Dean Rogge seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Carie Hess presented the full financial report which Paul Gies moved to approve as read and Steve Wanderaas seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Steve Wanderaas brought up that during the earlier evaluation session that a raise was in order for Rachel Frost. Steve Wanderaas moved to approve a 3% raise for Rachel Frost starting September 1<sup>st</sup>. John Chase seconded the motion which was passed unanimously.
3. It was noted that there was no guests in attendance, therefore no public comment.

### Reach Reports

Upper Reach – John Chase gave a little background on the North Bank Project that Cascade CD has been working on. He noted that it is about a quarter mile of river bank with a 20 inch sewer line running through it that is failing in several places. He noted that the City of Great Falls has an easement with the sewer line but that the refinery owns the land. He also mentioned that the River's Edge Trail, which is owned and managed by the city of Great Falls, also runs through the area on the easement. He reported that the district had been successful in getting a grant to do a PER and that they have been informed that the project may qualify for FEMA money but that would require match money and currently the city has signed a letter of intent but has not submitted an application. He noted that City officials and Calumet officials walked the bank and proof that irrigation of the area is one of the causes and is currently causing more damage. The city attorney wrote a letter to Calumet to stop irrigating that area. Lastly he reported that the district is working on a meeting with partners in November.

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Gallatin Conservation District  
Broadwater Conservation District  
Lewis & Clark Conservation District  
Cascade Conservation District  
Chouteau County Conservation District

Blaine County Conservation District  
Big Sandy Conservation District  
Fergus County Conservation District  
Petroleum County Conservation District  
Phillips Conservation District

Garfield County Conservation District  
Valley County Conservation District  
McCone Conservation District  
Roosevelt County Conservation District  
Richland County Conservation District

Middle Reach – It was reported that the Milk River Watershed Alliance held a tour of the Saint Mary's diversion structure. It was noted that the structure is close to a hundred years old and that approximately 625 cfs runs into the 2 syphons, through and a series of 4 drops which feed the Milk River. If this structure would fail and cease to operate, the Milk River Valley would dry up completely. It was reported that Jenifer Anderson from Phillips CD is the new Milk River Watershed Alliance coordinator.

Reservoir Reach – Steve Wanderaas reported that the MISAC is working on their strategic plan which needs to be written and submitted by December 31, 2016. He noted that there will be two public meetings in the area one on September 26<sup>th</sup> in Wolf Point and the other on September 29<sup>th</sup> Miles City. He urged council members to attend and to make comments.

Lower Reach – Dick Iversen only reported that the Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Canal breached just outside of Sidney and has created flooding and extensive damage. The Canal was turned off until repairs can be made.

DNRC – Karl reported that he has not heard much concerning the budget, other than coal tax revenues are only 60% of what they were last year at this time. He reported that the CARRD Division will be moving into the new building the week of September 6-9<sup>th</sup>.

MACD – No report at this time.

NRCS – No report at this time.

### **Coordinators Report** –

Ranching for Rivers – Rachel reported that they are still waiting to hear on the RRGL application that was submitted for review, and that grant is for \$125,000. She also reported that she has put in another proposal for \$50,000 but that she needs to have a planning meeting with DNRC to see amounts available for each section. In the grant that SWCDM is administering there is an outreach component and Rachel is currently working on that. She has been in contact with several film companies and they have chosen one to work with. The majority of the video that will be produced will be shot at Rick Anderson's place in Fort Benton. It is hoped that the film will be ready to roll out at convention.

CMR Working Group - Rachel noted that they are still working on the Conservation Menu and that things are starting to wrap up on that project. She mentioned that the next CMR meeting is scheduled for August 25<sup>th</sup> in Fort Peck and that the group will be hashing out the details within the work plan.

Montana Rangelands Partnership – Rachel reported that both technicians are busy working with producers and NRCS field office staff. Rachel reported that NRCS has given some money to the project and the deliverables are being sorted out.

CREP Revisions – Rachel reported to the council that she has had several meetings with FSA, Rick Anderson and Bill Evans in Fort Benton about the revisions to the program. She noted that Heidi Brewer with FSA has drafted the proposed revisions and steps are being taken to have the revisions approved.

### **New Business**

Strategic Planning – It was noted that the council should have a strategic meeting with a facilitator to develop the work plan and to make some long range goals. It was noted that this could be discussed at the next quarterly meeting but should happen sometime in early 2017.

Quarterly Meeting Proposals – There were several different ways discussed to make the quarterly meetings more meaningful and how to make the business portions shorter. It was agreed that the meeting at the State Convention this year will be more of a year in review rather than a full meeting.

The council discussed ideas for the next River Rendezvous and it was suggested to team up with the Milk River Watershed Alliance and have a co-sponsored event in that area.

Announcements:

Rachel showed the council members a brochure from a company in Livingston that does metal cutout signs. She asked the council if they would be willing to purchase the cutout of Montana with all of the large rivers on it. She noted that it would be about \$10 to 15 per person for the sign and that it would be the council's addition to the MACD Live auction.

With no further business coming before the Council, the meeting adjourned at 7:23 p.m.

Submitted by:

Approved by unanimous vote on November 15, 2016

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Carie Hess, Secretary

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Jim Beck, Chairman