

Quarterly Meeting Minutes
June 21, 2023
In person and Zoom, Jordan, MT

At 4:21pm, Chair Laura Kiehl opened the MRCDC quarterly business meeting. Council members present were Laura Kiehl, Petroleum County CD; Karl Christians, Lewis & Clark CD; Steve Wanderaas, McCone CD; John Chase, Cascade County CD (Virtual); Dean Rogge, Garfield County CD; Dick Iverson, Richland County CD; Lorri Schafer, Fergus CD; Ron Stoneberg, Vally County CD; Monte Billing, Garfield County CD; and Dana Berwick, Roosevelt CD (Virtual). Others present were Brent Smith, CEMIST Manager; Veronica Grigaltchik, DNRC CDB Specialist; Liz Lodman, MISC Administrator; Emily Soreghan, MACD; Joey Grewell, Congressman Rosendale; Jon Canfield, UW-Madison; Stacey Barta, Rangelands State Coordinator; Molly Masters, MRCDC Coordinator; Katie Lund, MRCDC Fiscal Manager (Virtual); and Trish Smith, MRCDC Secretary.

General

Everyone introduced themselves. Minutes were read and John Chase moved to approve the February 21, 2023 quarterly minutes; Steve Wanderaas seconded. Motion passed.

Public Comment

None.

Financial Report

Katie stated we are sitting good right now with 90% of the income met and most purchases mentioned at the last meeting have been completed. As a whole, for the two-year budget, we are around \$64K under budget; There will be a \$25K reimbursement coming in for Quarter four. We are starting over with the SSA grant and the NACD grant is also new. The checking account has a balance of \$1500, savings account has a balance of \$45K and the vehicle is showing as an asset. Dean Rogge moved to approve the financial report; Steve Wanderaas seconded. Motion passed. Karl Christians moved to approve the outstanding MRCDC bills; John Chase seconded. Motion passed.

Old Business

No Old Business.

New Business

Officer elections (Chair & Vice Chair) - Laura Kiehl has served two years as the Chair and Karl Christians has served two years as the Vice-Chair, so it is time to renew or elect new officers. Steve Wanderaas stated that Karl Christians automatically moved into the Chair position. Dana Berwick expressed interest in the Vice Chair. Dick Iverson moved to elect Dana Berwick as the Vice Chair; Dean Rogge seconded. Dana Berwick was elected as the Vice Chair by acclamation.

Committee Reports

Executive Committee – Molly stated that they have been meeting monthly. Their minutes are posted on the website and Molly can email them to anyone interested. The committee does a financial report and go over minutes every month. They also worked on the public comment letter in regarding the BLM Proposed Rule, worked on the Work Plan that was approved to submit as a budget to the DNRC; that has been submitted. Discussed decision for the BLM letter. Laura stated that Molly had her annual review and they are pleased with her performance and suggested she get a raise.

CMR Community Working Group – Molly Masters stated they had a meeting in May at Fort Peck; main topic was the Farm Bill. Kyle Tackett (NRCS) joined us and presented on their programs. Good info given to legislators. Next meeting tomorrow in Jordan and Garfield County will be presenting their Long-Term Habitat Study on the CMR. Karl Christians discussed more on the Long-Term Habitat Study and stated the Garfield CD did a great job. Dean Rogge is hoping to use it as an educational tool, and if it wouldn't be for the DNRC helping and supporting, they wouldn't have gotten that far.

Woody Invasive Species Task Force – Liz Lodman stated the YRCDC applied for the Noxious weed Trust Fund grant and received \$65K but hasn't quite signed off on it yet. Hiring ISAN for work. Looking at all the maps that are available and best practices (Russian Olive, Common Buckthorn, and Saltcedar) and how to move forward. Bio Control will be in part of the plan as one option to control Saltcedar. Need a comprehensive map of what all have been doing to treat areas. Steve Wanderaas stated we need to know what works and what doesn't with everything that has been done so far. Have a new Executive Director for ISAN (NM) and she has done work on Saltcedar.

Living on the Bank – Molly Masters stated there was nothing new and haven't met for a while. John Chase stated work done has been so extensive and goes way beyond what expected. Huge and dedicated effort. Only reservation is how hard it will be to use for folks needing to get information. Asked all to look the website over and see how user friendly it is.

Fort Peck Test Flows – Dick Iversen stated Dana Berwick and Buz Mattlin with MRRIC were invited to meet with the Fort Peck tribes. They looked at the rural water systems and met with the tribal council; discussed endangered species. There was a stake holder meeting with the Corps of Engineering. FWP wants to make sure to have money for pump and test site issues. New member stakeholders, All Risk Crop Insurance, attended also. If manmade disaster, such as a flood, crop insurance won't cover. Dana stated when there are thunderstorms, can cause a lot more water coming down. There are two planning meetings in August and December.

River Rendezvous – Molly Masters reminded all to fill out the evaluations. Dean Rogge stated that the speaker backed out and just decided yesterday to go to Hell Creek and it worked out well. Dylan Brown spoke at the event and had a Sherp amphibious vehicle that came from Ukraine. Karl Christians discussed the EZ Ject that was presented by Steve Smith with the BLM. It is injected with shells (Mazepin) and can be injected into Saltcedar and Russian Olive to kill it

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at the root. Liz Lodman discussed how great it was to learn about saltcedar treatment on the ground.

Partner Reports

MACD – Dean Rogge stated that Steve Hertel and Rebecca Boslough went to the 3 day event in Ovando, MT. House Bill 321 was signed last week. Thanked all the CDs for all their support sending letters and doing the DNRC survey. We owe Rebecca Boslough and Jeff Tiberi a thank you for all their hard work. Took 13 times to get the HB321 voted on. It will be a 5-year plan before fully in play, and the next two years look good. Hopes CDs start getting activated with good training. Karl Christians stated that Veronica Grigaltchik is in the CDs courts to start get programs going and be our advocate.

DNRC – Veronica Grigaltchik stated the grant cycle that 7 CDs were awarded for the last spring grant cycle that closed. The next cycle opens Sept 1 (for 2024 spring or summer projects); they are reimbursable. Education grants are open year-round. For fiscal year 2023, thirteen have been funded; five are already completed. Education Grants increased to \$5000 and encouraging Districts to do multiple years in one grant, or multiple events. Funding Survey update - did first funding forum in Glendive; went over results, had 10 supervisors attend. Talked about other issues than what was in the surveys. Tasked on how to make rental agreements easier to run for longevity. Another funding forum in will be in Lewistown June 27th at 6pm at the Big Spring Brewery. Also, might be one in Lincoln and Hyshem. Went ahead with applications without waiting for a budget so CDs can still continue operations for now. Encouraging CDs to go ahead and start a second application. Veronica encouraged CDs to look at retirement, health insurance, increase wages, hiring additional staff and liability insurance. Stacy Barta stated that they concluded the Grazing Academy last week and moving to Miles City next year (capped to 30 students), MT Range Tour will be July 6th in Paradise Valley and they still have money to sponsor events like she did for Ladies Day and River Rendezvous. Dick Iversen stated that Emily has been helping them out and thanked Stacy Soreghan for getting her through the program (Working Lands Internship); it is only for two weeks.

NRCS – No report.

MRWA – No report.

MCC – No report.

CEMIST – Brent Smith stated that they meet the last Wednesday of each month. They are surveying CDs for ISAN trunk training for District Administrators to teach folks. Hosted AIS monitoring training in Miles City last week. They will have the same type of training in Harlowton in August with Craig McClain from the FWP. They have been requested to have more Eastern Heath Snail meetings; looking at doing this in Lewistown this fall.

Reach Reports

Lower Reach – Dick Iversen recommended someone from a eastern MT CD get a seat on Comprehensive Water Review. Applications due June 30 for their stakeholders' group. Info on areas going over the next two years. Stacy Barta stated they want a broader stakeholder group.

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Ron Stoneberg discussed losing water rights and wondering the reasons why. Asking why this group doesn't include water right in any discussion.

Reservoir Reach – Dean Rogge stated that he hopes all can attend their tour tomorrow. They have had a lot of rain (5.5 inches since May), grasshoppers and road damage. Crops look good and 2023 might be the best year they have head. Laura Kiehl stated that Petrolia and Musselshell is very high right now. Trish Smith stated that the PCCD purchased two EZ jects that they can rent out after MWC/MCC is done with them.

Middle Reach – Lorri Schafer stated worked on the BLM letter with Molly Masters. Talked to Steve Smith about Saltcedar on their land and he said most do not call them. They were great to work for and should get the word out to land owners that they are there to help.

Upper Reach – John Chase stated that concrete has been put in the ground for their new CD building. Negotiations are underway to have two separate buildings on the site. Karl Christians stated that a few 310 permits have been submitted due to the ice melting and pushing the banks up three to four feet; few violations. Been a learning curve on how to deal with it. Going to see a lot of bank erosion from wake boats. Took a deal to the Water Policy Interim committee to discuss an education campaign since FWP doesn't want to deal with it. Confronted land owners about purchasing land for their CD location and re-furbishing house on the property. Had a Local Working Group meeting last month.

Individual CD Reports (voluntary/as needed) - Ron Stoneberg (Valley CD) stated that the BLM rule will probably get stopped but they will keep coming back with it. Laura Kiehl (Petroleum CD) asked for clarification on requesting coordination with the BLM – does it have to be renewed? Just have to write a letter requesting cooperation to the BLM.

Steve Wanderaas thanked Dick Iversen, Dana Berwick and Molly Masters for all their support and letters. Steve suggested that the MRCDC has a representative and get a seat on the Comprehensive Water Review. State Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) is coming up July 18th in Great Falls. MISC has a Private Land Owner Representative position open. Been suggested to get a private land owner along the northern border. Karl Christians stated that STAC is a great place to bring up CD issues by supervisors. Steve Wanderaas stated that NAISMA meets in Lincoln, NE this fall and Missoula, MT in 2024.

Coordinator Update - Went over Molly Master's June Coordinator report in the meeting packet. Next in-person quarterly meeting will be in September so will need to need to figure out a date and location.

Upcoming Events/Important Dates

June

- 22: CMR CWG
- 28: CEMIST Meeting
- 29: Molly out PM
- 30: Molly out AM

July

- 4: Closed
- 7: Molly out
- 17: Molly out
- 25: ***MRCDC Executive Committee meeting***
- 26: CEMIST Quarterly Meeting
- 28: Master baby due date

August

****Molly mostly off this month for maternity leave**

- 29: ***MRCDC Executive Committee meeting***

Announcements

With no further business, Laura Kiehl asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Dean Rogge made a motion to adjourn; Steve Wanderaas seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 6:24pm.

Submitted by:

Approved by unanimous vote on November 14, 2023



Trish Smith, Secretary



Laura Kiehl, Chairman