

MRCDC Executive Committee Meeting Minutes October 27, 2025 at 1:00pm via Zoom

At 1:04pm, Vice Chair Dallas Diehl called the MRCDC Executive Committee meeting to order.

Council members present were **Laura Kiehl, Petroleum CD; Lorri Schafer, Fergus CD; John Chase, High Plains CD; and Dallas Diehl, Broadwater CD**. Others present were Dona Stafford, Fergus CD; Robbie Savelkoul, Roosevelt CD; Shane Lammerding, Phillips CD; Brent Smith, CEMIST; Molly Masters, MRCDC Coordinator; and Trish Smith, MRCDC/PCCD. *Executive Committee Members in **BOLD**.

APPROVE MINUTES

Minutes were reviewed from the September 22, 2025, MRCDC executive committee meeting. John Chase moved to approve the minutes; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Laura Kiehl moved to pay the unpaid bills; John Chase seconded. Motion passed. Molly stated that Katie did update the budget to reflect the time period of July 1-June 30. There was a little money left in the 707 grant; invoiced towards capital improvements. Submitting the 707 for a final reimbursement this week to the DNRC. John Chase moved to approve the financial report; Lorri Schafer seconded. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

Fort Peck Test Flows – Molly reported that Cameron finished with the irrigator outreach surveys September 30. He will be mapping pump site locations. Robbie stated that there is still funding left for that. Molly discussed the updates she will be doing with the River Rendezvous PowerPoint and making a simple info sheet. There was a stakeholder meeting early October; showed the proposed next test flow and in summary addressed concerns based on impacts saw in 2024 test flow. Looking at lowering the high peak more and low flows are going to be higher and the 2nd peak going to be about the same height as the 1st peak. Their theory is they won't have the large debris issue. The MRRIC Plenary meeting will be the same week as Convention. Robbie suggested using the remaining Roosevelt CD Fund to host an irrigator event with a dinner; travel expenses for MRCDC Council could be covered. That funding is not tied to wage restrictions and requires no specific grant reporting.

CMR Community Working Group – Molly been in touch with Bill Milton and they feel the group has low

momentum. The last Planning Committee meeting was in August. Last CMR CWG meeting was October 2024. Laura reiterated with the current administration in MT locally, meeting changed to just a listen session for agency reports and no action items. Maybe when administration changes will have a more active group and the CMR CWG can be reconvened and revisited. Brent stated to put it on pause unless a hot ticket item for discussion comes up. Will keep on agenda as a standing item.

Living on the Bank – No report. Trish will add to their CD website.

Woody Invasive Species Working Group – Molly reported that the YRCDC grant that funded the Invasive Species Action Network coordinator ends October 31. Partners are exploring a potential float event for August 2026, likely in the Billings area. Sara sent extensive edits to the publication company last week for the statewide Woody Invasive Species Management Plan. It must go for public comment by October 31. Public comment period is for approximately one month. The core partners plan to have a comprehensive meeting around March.

MRWA (Milk River Watershed Alliance) – Molly reported that they are having an in person meeting during the MACD Convention. Meeting is scheduled for November 18 from 1pm – 2pm. MRCDC quarterly meeting will follow from 2:30pm to 5pm. Greg Jergersen was nominated as the MRWA Chair at the last meeting; Jeff Pattison as the Vice Chair.

River Rendezvous – Molly stated that final MACD reporting for the SSA grant must be completed by the end of this week. At the quarterly will begin discussing where to go next year.

PARTNER REPORTS:

MACD – Molly stated that MACD hired their new Executive Director, and their Convention is in Billings November 18-20.

DNRC – Veronica's DNRC report is in the packet. They will be attending MACD Convention during the grant hearings and will also be putting on listening sessions for CD questions. Molly did submit comments to DNRC for the DNRC's proposed administrative rules changes but hasn't heard anything back yet.

NRCS – No report.

CEMIST – Brent reported on the AIS Summit that will be in Helena October 29-30. There is a Zoom link available. Discussed the Citizen Science initiative. CEMIST is partnering with MISC and the Montana Heritage Program to develop this effort. Leveraging smartphone technology and apps to help public ID grasses, insects, fish and wildlife. Discussed the Phillips County feral pig issue. The Department of Livestock responded to reports of feral or potentially feral pigs. Their initial assessment suggested 5-6 animals. First trap deployment on October 16th caught over 60 pigs. Estimate 60-80 additional pigs remain to capture. Caught pigs donated to food pantry.

REACH REPORTS

Lower Reach – Robbie stated that the Corps cancelled in person fall water meetings, so there will be a virtual meeting Oct 30 at 1pm.

Reservoir Reach – Laura reported work continues on the Petrolia Reservoir, with a new volume gauge recently installed. Water levels can now be monitored online. Financing is the next step for the rehabilitation project. Trish reported that their new Water Coordinator, Lesley Rolls, is settling in. She will be meeting up with her tomorrow to show here the salinity monitoring process on the Musselshell River, and then helping her with completing her DNRC WMG grant reporting. PCCD held an Applicators class in October with 20 attendees; offered 3 applicators credits. They will be putting on an Invasive grasses workshop in February or March, in collaboration with CEMIST and Winnett ACES.

Middle Reach – No report.

Upper Reach – John announced a work session scheduled for Monday to discuss a proposed data center for Great Falls. A 500-acre facility would be located north of Malstrom Air Force Base, between the base and the river. Primary concern is high electricity demand potentially exceeding Western Energy's capacity for Montana. High Plains CD just hired a new Resource Technician Jake Atkinson. He will start November 10.

Individual CD Reports (voluntary/as needed) – None.

COORDINATOR UPDATE – Molly stated that they have in their budget for travel and 1 night hotel room to attend the MRCDC Quarterly meeting in Billings next month. There will be the Zoom option also. Working on the annual report the next couple weeks to be ready for convention, after grant reporting this week. Molly asked if any agenda items needed for quarterly meeting. Dallas stated they can be brought up during the public comment section.

October

28-30: MRRIC MRRP Fall Science Meeting
31: Happy Halloween
TBD: CMR CWG planning committee

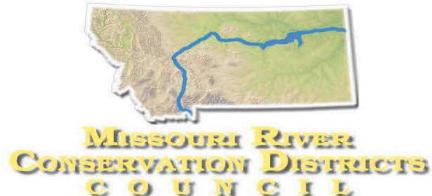
November

2: Daylight Savings time end
4: Election Day
11: Veterans Day
18: MRCDC Quarterly meeting
18: MRWA Meeting
18-20: MACD Convention
18-20: MRRIC Plenary meeting
26: CEMIST Meeting
26: PCCD Meeting
27: Thanksgiving, closed.

December

11: R4R committee meeting

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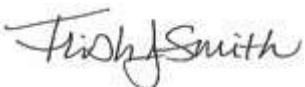
15: MACD Board meeting
16: Molly out
19: MRRIC Plenary meeting
25: Christmas, closed
TBD: MRCDC Exec. Committee
TBD: PCCD & CEMIST

Other

With no further business, Dallas Diehl called for a motion to adjourn. John Chase moved to adjourn the meeting; Laura Kiehl seconded. Motion passed. The meeting was adjourned at 1:53pm.

Approved on: December 16, 2025

Submitted by:



Trish Smith, MRCDC Secretary



Dallas Diehl, Vice Chairman