

**BITTERROOT CONSERVATION DISTRICT
(BCD)
1709 NORTH FIRST STREET
HAMILTON, MONTANA 59840
MINUTES
January 30, 2018**

Board of Supervisors' regular scheduled meeting Tuesday, January 30, 2018, called to order at 7:00 p.m., by Howard Eldredge, Chairman.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Howard Eldredge, Jeff Mark, Kent Myers, Bob Nelson, Paul Rosenberg.

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Chad Sutherlin.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Heather Barber (Bitter Root Water Forum, BRWF), Dan Huls and Bob Popham (Corvallis Canal Water Company, CCWC), Julie Ralston (BCD Admin), Brian Wilkinson (Ravalli County Floodplain), Aissa Wise (Big Sky Watershed Corps Member and BRWF).

MINUTES:

Nelson moved to approve the 9th of January 2018 minutes as written. Myers seconded, motion carried

BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD:

- The BCD Board discussed the government shut down and access to its office during a shut down. The BCD Board agreed that in the event of another shutdown Ralston will remove the equipment necessary to work from home. Rosenberg offered his home as a meeting place if the building is closed during a regular scheduled BCD meeting. Brian Wilkinson stated he would check with the county to see if its small conference room would be available for the BCD to use in order to hold its regular scheduled meetings.
- Mark moved to have the BCD fill out one survey for the Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD). Nelson seconded, motion carried.

COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORTS:

- Howard Eldredge reported: 1) The 310 State Committee meeting was one of the best meetings he has attended. Topics discussed were: a) The new 310 state data base program. b) Updating the joint application to reflect the required information needed by other permitting agencies. c) With the loss of 310 reimbursements from the state to CDs it was discussed that CDs do have the legal authority and may want to start charging a 310-application fee. The CDs in attendance were in general agreement that charging a fee wasn't something they would prefer to do. However, the joint application will be updated letting applicants know they must contact their local CD concerning 310 application fees. d) Discussed processing violations, emergencies, and the potential use of drones.

Rosenberg stated he attended the state 310 meeting by webinar and was very impressed with BCD's participation. The next State 310 Committee meeting will be scheduled after updates and amendments have been made to the Joint Application Form 270.

Eldredge went on to report: 2) The Ravalli County Planning Board met and elected new officers.

- Kent Myers reported: 1) The Open Lands Board met on the 18th of January and determined that its two new proposed projects will not be ready for review until sometime in February. 2) When the government determines what will be written into the new Farm Bill, the Bitterroot Land Trust has five potential new projects that they hope to be working on. 3) The Bitterroot Land Trust has purchased 76 acres from the Christmann Corporation. The property is located on the east side of the river one mile south of Hamilton City's Riverside Park.
- Bob Nelson reported he attended and operated the BCD watershed trailer for the Bitterroot Stockgrowers Ag Expo January 12-13, 9:00 a.m.-7:00p.m., on Friday and 9:00a.m. -3:00p.m., on Saturday. Many youth and adults were present and asked great questions. The Bitterroot Stockgrowers would like the trailer back again next year. Nelson asked for volunteers to take shifts at next year's event.
- Ralston reported the Western Montana 2018 Grazing and Agriculture Conference was well attended with over 120 people checking in on the first day. Most of the attendees were from western Montana with several producers from the Bitterroot Valley. The panel sessions were very interesting covering a variety of topics such as Dr. Fred Provenza, Ph.D., talk on "How palates link herbivores with landscapes." Ralston encouraged the BCD Board to attend next year's event.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT:

- The BCD Board reviewed an e-mail from Matt Whithed, NRCS District Conservationist, concerning five Ravalli County producers who are seeking a group project to convert an open ditch conveyance of irrigation water to a piped conveyance. The BCD Board was in agreement that this project reflects the Ravalli Local Working Group's (LWG) recommended resource concern and priority for irrigation efficiency.

GRANT INFORMATION:

- Reviewed the application deadline date of Thursday, March 15, 2018, for the Aquatic Invasive Species Grants.
- Heather Barber, Bitter Root Water Forum, asked the BCD Board if it would be interested in applying for a Montana Land Information Act Grant (MLIA) to help assist with mapping approximately nine miles of the Corvallis Canal in an effort to locate water use, educate the community on development, and minimize potential flooding concerns. The BCD Board asked what the Daly Ditch Irrigation District was doing to address the same issues? Barber stated, Daly Ditches has decided to order its own equipment and is currently working with Ravalli County personnel to map all of its ditch systems. Bob Popham, with the Corvallis Canal Company stated, "Daly Ditches has the financial ability to accomplish this task on its own. Unfortunately, the Corvallis Canal does not have the finances to complete such an important task." There were several grant application concerns discussed:

1) Who would be responsible in sustaining the project? 2) Who would own the equipment and software purchased and where would the equipment be housed? 3) What is the benefit to the general public? 4) What are the responsibilities of the BCD and that of the contractors/partners? It was suggested that Barber meet with Ralston, Rosenberg, and Myers, prior to the next BCD meeting to discuss the questions of concern and work out the details of the grant application.

NOTICES:

Reviewed:

- Aissa Wise, Big Sky Watershed Corps Member, introduced herself stating she was raised in the state of Washington and attended the University of Montana Western where she earned her degree in Environmental Science and Geology. She has worked in the Kalispell area and will now work with the Bitter Root Water Forum (BRWF) through November 2018. She is excited to work in the Bitterroot and has already started several educational outreach projects such as the BRWF International Fly Fishing Film Festival and Reel N' Brew set for Sunday the 18th of February at the Hamilton Pharaohplex Theater and Bitterroot Brewery.
- Notice for a proposed 2-lot minor subdivision of lot 1 6A, Property One LLC.
- Notice for Ravalli County Extension's Agriculture and Horticulture Workshops.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. 310 Application BT042-2017 Winston Wanstrath/Tin Cup Creek-remove gravel bar for flood protection. Nelson tabled.
2. 310 Application BT051-2017 Michael Yalon/Bitterroot River-bank stabilization. Tabled
3. 310 Application BT067-2017 Double Fork Ranch/Bitterroot River-stream bank restoration and channel alteration. Eldredge tabled.

OTHER OLD BUSINESS:

- It was determined by the BCD Board to send a certified letter to Bitterroot Springs Ranch inquiring about work being done in the Mitchell Slough without a 310 permit.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 310 Application BT001-2018 Michael Canning/Bitterroot River-repair and maintain an existing bio-engineered stabilization project. Mark tabled for an inspection on the 13th of February.
2. Emergency 310 BT002-2018 Ravalli Electric Cooperative Levi Dunn/Bitterroot River-moved power pole and line. Tabled. Nelson stated there should also be another emergency submitted for a power pole on the Trinity Ranch near Conner.
3. 310 Application BT003-2018 Maureen Powell/Skalkaho Creek-remove fallen trees, re-shape existing soil, remove debris, and place small logs north of existing root-wads. Rosenberg inspected the site and turned in his field inspection report. Rosenberg moved to approve with the modification and a 15-day waiver. Mark seconded, motion carried.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS:

- 310 Application BT004-2018 Philip Barrett/Bitterroot River-bio engineered stream bank restoration. The proposed project is near Darby and there is an onsite inspection scheduled for February 13.

PUBLIC OPEN MIC:

- Barber thanked the BCD for considering the MLIA grant application.
- Wilkinson stated his concerns: 1) The county Lidar has points along the canal (Corvallis Canal) and certified surveyed maps that could already be used. 2) and questioned if a government agency can apply for grant funds to service canal needs.

DISTRICT BUSINESS:

1. Rosenberg gave the Treasurer's December 2017/2018 budget report, and explained county checks 105909-105913 along with county checks 5248-5249. Myers moved to approve the December budget report and checks 105909-105913 and checks 5248-5249. Mark seconded, motion carried.
2. Mark and Myers will be at the BCD office on the 22nd of February to perform the district operations review.
3. Reviewed Montana State Fund Payroll and Premium Recap.
4. Reviewed the BCD's Trail West Bank Interest Income.
5. Received the BCD February Calendar.
6. Discussed CD contested elections.

INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE:

Available for review:

1. Clark Fork and Kootenai River Basins Council.
2. Cascade and Lewis Clark Newsletters.
3. Corvallis FFA Monthly Report.
4. MACD/SWCDM Conservationist & Report.
5. NRCS Sage Grouse Initiative.
6. Office Depot.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

The next BCD Board meeting will be held Tuesday, February 13, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.

Howard Eldredge
Howard Eldredge, Chairman

Julie Ralston
Julie Ralston, District Administrator

Date: **02/13/2018**