

**BITTERROOT CONSERVATION DISTRICT
(BCD)
1709 NORTH FIRST STREET
HAMILTON, MONTANA 59840
MINUTES
November 28, 2017**

Board of Supervisors' regular scheduled meeting Tuesday, November 28, 2017, called to order at 7:00 p.m., by Howard Eldredge, Chairman.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

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

OTHERS PRESENT:

Heather Barber (Bitter Root Water Forum, BRWF), Chris Clancy (MT Fish Wildlife and Parks, FWP), Molly Davidson, PE (Morrison Maierle, Inc.), Julie Ralston (BCD Admin), Rob Roberts & Christine Brissette (Trout Unlimited), Brian Wilkinson (Ravalli County Floodplain), Matt Whithed (Natural Resource Conservation Service, NRCS), Graham Worley-Hood (University of Montana).

BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD (out of order):

- Trout Unlimited (TU) and Morrison Maierle gave oral presentations and turned in written draft reports concerning the mitigation survey requirements set by the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service on the Supply Diversion Project. TU's draft report addressed its survey done on a subset of irrigation ditches within the head waters of the Bitterroot River with potential influences to bull trout entrainment and designated bull trout critical habitat. Morrison Maierle's report addressed its survey done to determine if an inverted siphon on the Woodside Ditch system, near the intersection of the Bitterroot River and Blodgett Creek, would be feasible in reducing entrainment issues (the written draft reports are on file at the BCD office). There was a brief discussion on the elevation of the proposed siphon on the Woodside Ditch system. Myers requested a break down of TU's scoring sheet using the criteria concerning high priority irrigation fish entrainment areas. He also had a few other items that he would like clarified in the final reports. Myers will e-mail his comments to TU and Morrison Maierle.
Davidson stated the final TU report and Morrison Maierle's report will be collated into one mitigation report and sent to the Army Corps of Engineers in order to close out the BCD 595 grant. She believed the mitigation survey requirements have been met for the Supply Diversion project. However, she will contact the US Army Corps of Engineers to confirm.
There was a brief discussion on the survey reports and the potential for several on the ground projects that could be implemented to improve fisheries and critical habitat within the Bitterroot watershed. Additional information will be required if on the ground action is taken.

MINUTES:

Mark moved to approve the 7th of November 2017 minutes as written. Myers seconded, motion carried

Continued BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD:

- Reviewed Greg Gianforte request for top three priorities in agriculture, food, forest, and rural infrastructure programs.
- Rosenberg moved to sponsor the Lake Conservation District's 2018 Western Montana Grazing and Agriculture Conference, at last year's funded amount. Mark seconded, motion carried.
- Nelson moved to approve the value cost of the watershed trailer as quoted by PayneWest Insurance. Myers seconded, Rosenberg asked if there was a raise in the premium? The answer was, "not at this time." Motion carried.
- Reviewed a request for a watershed trailer presentation at the 2018 Ravalli County AG Conference. Mark agreed to assist Nelson with the presentation and Ralston will confirm the presentation date.

COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORTS:

- Eldredge gave a report on the Montana Association of Conservation District's (MACD) State Convention. Topics of interest: 1) Funding and budget cuts both at the state and national level. The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) lost its 310 permit reimbursement funds in order to keep funding for CD admin grants. Leonard Jordan, Acting Chief for the Natural Resource and Conservation Service, gave a report on national NRCS funding cuts and the lifting of a hiring freeze in field offices across the nation. NRCS is currently down 1200 employees nationwide. One third of NRCS's nationwide Conservation Easement program is implemented in Montana. The Acting Chief gave kudos to Montana. 2) Hugh Hammond Bennette "The Story of America's Private Lands Conservation Movement" presentation. 3) The Breakout Sessions were well attended and Ralston represented the BCD well. 4) The MACD business meeting went well. However, only 36 out of 58 CDs attended. The Bylaw changes for MACD have been revised to reduce the power of the executive committee and place it back on the districts. There was only one resolution presented concerning the protection of our natural resources from terrestrial and aquatic invasive species. The Bylaws and the Resolution passed. Gallatin and Lewis and Clark CDs still had several issues with MACD and the Bylaws. Payment of MACD dues remains a large concern and is something that MACD and CDs need to work out. MACD personnel have limited their travel to help with loss in revenues. 5) MACD has asked that CDs stay in contact with their local state representatives in an effort to keep CDs on Montana's Legislative mind. 6) The Big Sky Watershed Corps presentations were excellent. It was amazing to hear about the wonderful on the ground conservation projects being done all over the state through these temporary Big Sky Watershed Corps Members.
- Eldredge did not attend the last Ravalli County Planning Board meeting as he was at the MACD State Convention. The county subdivisions being proposed for approval are Albertson's 3-lot subdivision located in Hamilton and Farm View Estate's 36 lot subdivision located in Corvallis.
- Myers reported, the Ravalli County Open Lands Board will meet in January to review two new applications: 1) Griffin Ranch. 2) Hancock Burnt Fork Ranch.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION SERVICE (NRCS) REPORT:

Whithed turned in a written report (the report is on file at the BCD office).

GRANT INFORMATION:

- Eldredge signed a letter to the US Army Corps of Engineers requesting reimbursement for invoice #9 (595 grant Supply Diversion mitigation).

NOTICES:

Reviewed:

- The Association of Montana Floodplain Managers Conference March 6-8-2018, Great Falls, MT.
- Shonney Nordlund request for Ralston and Eldredges to Judge the 2018 National Envirothon Competition in Pocatello ID. Further information forth coming.
- CenturyLink notices of a company merger with Level 3(Global Fiber Network).
- City of Hamilton Subdivision notice for the expansion of Albertsons.
- Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks notice on chronic wasting disease near Red Lodge Montana.
- Montana State Fund notices for employees working North Dakota and BCD State Fund Policy.
- NRCS notice for water quality projects.
- Rosebud Conservation District 2016 No Till Drill for Sale.
- State Soil Health Workshop Schedule.
- Teller Wildlife Refuge notice of a new Executive Director.
- Area V meeting in Ronan MT on the 19th of December.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. 310 Application BT024-2017 Clifton Weinberg/East Fork Bitterroot River- modification request for removal of stumps and no bank stabilization. Nelson moved to approve with the modification that only the stumps will be removed. Myers seconded, motion carried.
2. 310 Application BT042-2017 Winston Wanstrath/Tin Cup Creek-remove gravel bar for flood protection. Nelson tabled for another inspection.
3. 310 Application BT049-2017 Don Polanski/North Burnt Fork-bank stabilization. Sutherlin moved to accept as a project. Mark seconded, motion carried.
4. 310 Application BT051-2017 Michael Yalon/Bitterroot River-bank stabilization. Sutherlin tabled.
6. 310 Application BT057-2017 Jim Poole/Bitterroot River-install stand alone decks. Sutherlin reviewed the site and moved as not a project within the BCD's jurisdiction. Nelson seconded, motion carried.

OTHER OLD BUSINESS:

- Reviewed a notice of project completion 310 permit BT008-2017 Bob Tabke/One Horse Creek-replace existing irrigation structure.
- Reviewed a letter requesting to withdraw 310 permit BT050-2017 Richard Sourbrine/South Bear Creek-stream bank restoration. Included in the request was the withdrawal of his BCD cost-share proposal.

- Reviewed a notice of project completion 310 permit BT052-2017 Dave Redkey/Sleeping Child Creek-repair existing irrigation structure.
- Reviewed a notice of project completion 310 permit BT054-2017 Corvallis Canal/Bitterroot River-temporary coffer dam and headgate replacement.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. 310 Application BT062-2017 Tom Allsop/Kootenai Creek-flood protection, stream bank stabilization and stream channel alteration. Sutherlin tabled for an inspection.
2. 310 Application BT063-2017 South Summerdale Irrigation James Swanson/Soft Rock Creek-replace a failed irrigation pipeline. Eldredge reviewed the site. Mark moved to accept as a project with 15-day waiver with the suggestion of a pipe sleeve. Rosenberg seconded, motion carried.
3. 310 Application BT064-2017 Steve Reiter/West Fork Bitterroot River-maintain existing rip-rap project and clean out existing pond. Nelson tabled for an inspection.
4. 310 Application BT065-2017 Kent Curtiss Construction, Jeffery Fey/Barley Creek-culvert crossing. Mark tabled for an inspection.

OTHER NEW BUSINESS:

PUBLIC OPEN MIC:

- Heather Barber, BRWF reported: 1) Requested a time slot on the next BCD agenda for a Big Sky Watershed Corps Member report. 2) There will be an MSU Climate Assessment Presentation on Wednesday the 6th of December, 6:00 p.m., at the Bedford Building. Barber will provide the BCD with additional information. 3) The BRWF Holiday party is scheduled for the 12th of December. Everyone is welcome to attend.
- Wilkinson stated he believes paver blocks on the Poole project would be a better design. He will visit with Poole concerning this issue.

DISTRICT BUSINESS:

1. Nelson moved to approve the Treasurer's budget report and county checks 105876-105884. Sutherlin seconded, motion carried.
2. Reviewed mileage reports.
3. Board Members received a copy of the December calendar.
4. Ralston leave request was granted for Friday 1st of December and Monday 4th of December.

INCOMING CORRESPONDENCE:

Available for review:

1. Bitterroot Water Forum Newsletter
2. Century Link
3. Conservation District Newsletters

4. NACD eResource
5. Spectrum
6. State Fund
7. Soil Water Conservation Districts Montana Newsletter
8. United States Department of Commerce
9. USDA Inside Agroforestry

Mark moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. Nelson seconded, motion carried for adjournment.

The next BCD Board meeting will be held Tuesday, December 12, 2017, at 7:00 p.m.

Howard Eldredge

Howard Eldredge, Chairman

Julie Ralston

Julie Ralston, District Administrator

Date: 12/12/2017