

MILE HIGH CONSERVATION DISTRICT

MINUTES

January 25, 2016

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER

BUTTE, MT

Supervisors Present:

Jack Kambich – Chair, John Moodry – Sec/Teas., Pete Dallaserra – Supervisor, Don Ueland – Supervisor, Cam Balentine - Supervisor

Others:

Kris Hugulet – District Administrator, Ted Dodge – WRC, Nancy Sweeney – NRCS, Noorjahan Parwana – BGP, Jason Lindstrom – DFW&P, Kellee Anderson – Extension Agent

Minutes:

Minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed and a motion to approve was made by Pete. Don seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Financial Report:

The Board reviewed the financial report and recent bills. John went through the current invoices and grant reimbursements. Pete made a motion to accept the financial report. Don seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Business:

Election of Officers:

Cam made a motion to retain the officers as they are. Don seconded the motion and the motion carried. Jack will remain the Chair, John will be the Sec/Treas. and Doug will remain Vice-Chair.

Supervisors Up for Re-election:

Jack and Pete are up for re-election. Both have their paperwork from the County and both have agreed to fill it out and return it by the March 14<sup>th</sup> deadline.

Board Appointment:

John stated that he has submitted a request for assistance to fill the vacancy on the Board to the Chief Executive. This request was then forwarded on to the County Attorney's Office. A decision was made to have any person interested in the vacant position file the necessary paperwork with the County and run for the position through the ballot process.

310's:

Noorjahan submitted a request for extension on the permits for the applications that she submitted in Browns Gulch. Please see attached letter. A motion was made by John to approve the extension request. Pete seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Grant Updates:

The conifer encroachment grant has been received and reviewed by DNRC. At this time, the grant has been cut from \$22,000 to \$6,000. Ted stated that he will need to review the information that came back from DNRC and decide if he can submit an alternative project.

Ted stated that they are in the process of working on a watershed planning grant for Blacktail Creek and Basin Creek.

WRC Update:

Ted updated the board on the status of the projects that they are currently working on. On Blacktail Creek they are trying to get control of some of the subcontracts to ensure that things are moving forward. A Capacity Grant was submitted for \$10,000 to work with drought issues such as flow triggers and encroachment issues. This grant application will be submitted to the WRC next week.

New Business:

The dates for the outdoor classroom event have been set for May 2<sup>nd</sup> setup and May 3<sup>rd</sup> event. John is working on securing a new location for the event.

Reports:

NRCS Update:

Nancy submitted a written report for the Board's consideration. Please see attached.

Extension:

No report was submitted at this time.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kris Hugulet, District Administrator

**MILE HIGH CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
NRCS REPORT**

**January 25, 2016**

**NON-COST SHARE ASSISTANCE REQUESTS**

The following are assistance requests to be completed: None

**ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP)**

Existing Contracts: Current status and activities

**Currently have 5 active contracts in this District and 29 overall.**

- Status Reviews: continuing to work on getting these done.
- Cancellations: None
- Have had a few contracts that deleted out their last practices due to selling their property or the practice being unfeasible to complete, i.e. thinning practices contracted on too steep of ground etc...
- Application/Implementation: continue processing payments as they come in (ongoing process).

**FY 2016 Applications:**

- We currently have a total of 20 JVCD applications.

- 4 – Grazing
- 1 – Hi Tunnel
- 4 – Ten-Mile Forestry
- 1 – On Farm Energy
- 9 – Irrigation\
- 1 – Cancelled

- **We Have 5 MHCD EQIP applications - all forestry applications in Browns Gulch**
- David is currently working on the 2015 approved Ten-Mile applications and certifying practices completed in active contracts

**FY 2017 Applications:**

- Signup deadline for the 2017 program year is June 1, 2016.

**New EQIP Special Initiative: Drought Resilience Program – For the Upper Missouri Headwaters Area which includes Jefferson, Deer Lodge, Silver Bow, Broadwater, Madison, Beaverhead and Gallatin Counties: See Handout**

- **Application deadline – February 19<sup>th</sup> 2016**

**Other Special Initiatives:**

- **On Farm Energy**
- **Hi-Tunnel**
- **Organic Farming**
- **Honey Bee Pollinator**
- **Application Deadline – February 19, 2016**

**WETLAND RESERVE PROGRAM (WRP)**

No Active Contracts:

Kalsta Ranch Co. – Completed

**CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)**

Active Contracts: 8

**CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CStP)**

Active Contracts: 5 all in Jefferson County

All 2015 payments but have been made.

**2016 Program Year**

- 2 CSP Applications in Jefferson County
- 1 CSP application in Granite County
- 0 CSP applications in Silver Bow County

**PERSONNEL**

Glen and Ted are working on a cooperative agreement position that would work in Silver Bow, Powell and Deer Lodge Counties:

Fred Staedler – an Retired DNRC Forester got hired for the cooperative position

**OTHER**

**2016 Budget:**

EQIP – MT State Allocation: \$9,846,610

- We have not been given a budget for the Missoula Area
- Drought Resilience - \$1.1 million for Jefferson, Madison, Deer Lodge, Gallatin
- Ten-Mile - \$380,000
- CSP – Based on Acres – do not have this yet

**Farm Bill highlights:**

- AGI limit set at \$900,000 for both conservation and commodity program payments & benefits.
- Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) – consolidation of the Wetland Reserve program, Farm & Ranch Land Protection Program and the Grassland Reserve Program.
- EQIP payment limitation - \$450,000 (period 2014 – 2018).
- WHIP eliminated & incorporated into EQIP.

**Training/ Meetings: (all in Missoula)**

Nancy Sweeney and David Farrand attended:

- Missoula Area Meeting
- Appeals Training
- Program Training

January 25, 2016

To: Supervisors, Mile High Conservation District

Re: Extension, Joint applications, Browns Gulch, Wood Property & Heaven's Valley

Greetings Friends,

On August 28, 2015, the Mile High Conservation District approved the joint applications for two projects:

1. The Wood project is a riparian fencing project that also includes a water gap/hardened crossing.
2. The Heaven's Valley project is a passive stream restoration project that will be achieved by blocking livestock access to streambanks by means of felling and placing logs appropriately. This project will also include placing beaver mimicry structures along the riparian corridor.

The Watershed Restoration Coalition (WRC), which is overseeing these projects is requesting an extension of the applications, which had a sunset date at the end of 2015.

The reason for the delay in implementing the projects are:

1. Contracting for these projects was required to be run through the NRDP. To date neither contract has been received by the contractors. (Please note: WRC met with the NRDP several months ago to address this hold-up; the NRDP conceded that the WRC can now contract directly, which should speed up the process significantly);
2. At the time the Joint Application permits were submitted and secured, 404 permits were not required for the types of projects under consideration. Subsequently, we were informed the Corps of Engineers now requires a 404 permits for biomimicry projects such as the one on Heaven's Valley and watergaps, which is part of the Wood project.

Thank you for your consideration on this request for an extension.

Sincerely,



Noorjahan Parwana  
Watershed Restoration Coalition project manager