

Beaverhead Conservation District

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 19th, 2024

Call to order

Jerry Meine called to order the regular meeting of the Beaverhead Conservation District at 6:05 pm on September 19, 2024 in the NRCS office. At 6:15 pm Byron Martinell took over running the meeting.

Roll call

The following persons were present: Byron Martinell, Rich Nordquist, Jerry Meine, Harris Wheat, Tom Miller, Billiette Brooks, Dori McNeill, Kelly Rowe, Matt Jaeger, Jess Fields, JS Turner, Scott Davis, Jason Rose, Bill Kempf, Marti Laknar, Ethan Kalinaowski, Sara Leffingwell, Garrett Vasa, Jack Bazemore, Chris Brozell

Absent: Carl Malesich, Meg Smith, Zach Owen,

Motion to excuse absences by Billiette, 2nd Jerry, Motion Carried

Approval of minutes from last meeting

Motion to approve the August minutes by Harris 2nd by Rich, motion carried.

Summary of Finances.

- *Motion to approve summary of finances for September by Jerry 2nd by Tom, motion carried.*

NRCS – Sara Leffingwell and Garrett Vasa were both in attendance, Garrett introduced himself and gave a brief career history.

Southwest Montana Sagebrush Partnership – Emma wasn't able to make it but sent along a report about cheat grass spraying contracts coming up and visiting sites from last year to look for increased cheatgrass.

Beaverhead County Extension – Jack Bazemore gave updates on the Estate Planning workshop and pesticide applicator credits workshop.

Range Committee – Meg was unable to attend and has not had time to share her ideas with Dori, Jess and Dori will meet to discuss the range committee before the next meeting.

Education and Outreach Coordinator – Marti Laknar introduced herself and the Bee Haven Gardens manager and discussed future goals for the position, The Bee haven gardens will be an amazing partner at Marti works on getting local produce into the schools. January 18th the bee haven gardens will be hosting a garden planning workshop.

Pheasants Forever and BLM – Ethan Kalinowski introduced himself and the projects he has been working on with soils and restoration work.

310 Business

Beaverhead – Matt Jaeger

- BCD 2418 Red Rock Springs Ranch, Bill Kempf, Kidd Creek Phase 3, 3 headgates and 11 sites.

Matt and Red Rock springs ranch worked together to work to create a water management plan saying that the ranch would manage the water during irrigation season and FWP would manage the water during the rest of the year. A supervisor asked what would happen if the ranch sold, Matt answer that the agreement would stay with the headgates not the land owner. Another supervisor asked when we might see a 310 application for the borrow ditch rehabilitation project, Scott and Jason discussed and decided on January 2025. Scott also needs to work on the Kidd Ln fish screen.

Chris Brozell decided to make a public comment about how this project was terrible for the fish, he was allowed to speak for 10 minutes and then asked to allow the meeting to continue. Brozell said that the new redds being created don't matter because we are not allowing the fish to enter the river. Chris said that the Red Rock was better rearing habitat for juvenile fish than the borrow ditch and Matt corrected that the borrow ditch was better for young of the year fish because of the vegetation, spring water, and lower density of adult fish there. Matt also noted that the water management agreement provides rearing fish the opportunity to return to the Red Rock as they mature. After the 10 minutes Brozell was asked to finish up his comments ~~to which he picked up his notebook and stormed out the door.~~

Motion to attach the water management plan to the 310 permit by Tom 2nd Harris, motion carried. Motion to Approve with modifications by Tom 2nd Jerry, Motion Carried.

- BCD 2422 Chad and Taylor Mussard, Beaverhead River, Irrigation Sump Maintenance Permit
Motion to Approve with modifications by Jerry 2nd Harris, Motion Carried.
- BCD 2423 Chad and Taylor Mussard, Beaverhead River, Irrigation Ditch Maintenance Permit
Motion to Approve with modifications by Tom 2nd Harris, Motion Carried.
- BCD 2425 R&D Ranch Complaint, Kidd Creek, Complaint about a rock weir
Matt called Dave Adams (R&D Ranch Manager) and Jason Rose on September 16th. Neither of them knows who did it but think it may be a downstream water user who is trying to push the water downstream to their water right. As far as which ranch is doing the work we are unsure as there are several downstream water users, Jim McBee used to do a rock weir like that when he was managing the Clark Canyon Ranch but he is not managing the ranch anymore. Tom inspected the site on August 19th, the rocks were gone and he sent pictures to Jess.
Motion to resolve the complaint due to insignificant evidence by Tom 2nd Jerry, motion carried.
- BCD 2426 Dragging Y Cattle, Dunlap Creek, Replace Failing Diversion
Table until a design is submitted
- BCD 2427 Mary Anne Nicholas, Rattlesnake Creek, Replace Bridge Abutments
Tom took photos of the cracked main beams and submitted them to the district.
Motion to Approve by Tom 2nd Rich, Motion Carried.
- BCD 2428 William (Bill) Totten, Clapham and Bassette Ditch, Violation, Diverting water into a newly constructed pond. Matt would like to go visit the site on October 15th. Water is jurisdiction if it flows into a jurisdictional waterway, Ask Hailey to clarify.

Big Hole - Jim Olsen

- BCD 2410 Mark Raffety, Big Hole River lower south side, headgate replacement and diversion
The land owner cannot remember if the contractor asked if he had a 310 permit or not, usually the contractor gets the 310 permit not the landowner.
Motion to Approve by Tom 2nd Rich, Motion Carried.
- BCD 2420 Erik Kalsta, Big Hole River, Emergency Diversion Repair
Jess is still working with Erik and Jim to try and find a time for a site visit.

- BCD 2424 Mark Raffety, Big Hole River upper south side, headgate replacement and diversion
Motion to Approve by Jerry 2nd Rich, Motion Carried.

Beaverhead Watershed Grants

- Zach gave an update on the letter of noncompliance from DNRC and all of our sponsored grants from the Big Hole, he is working with the Skye the county attorney to make sure everything looks correct. Zach was not ablt to attend the meeting because he was at the Montana Watershed Coordination Council Fall Tour. BCC hosted a public meeting in Lima and there was a lot of angry locals at the meeting that don't believe in more wilderness. There will be a Dillon meeting soon and we will try to publicize it a lot more. The winter cloud seeding meeting had a good turnout and lots of good comments about "stealing" water from other areas, but the clouds have so much water in them there is not a concern of taking water from other areas.
Motion to approve Watershed finances for September by Jerry 2nd by Rich, motion carried.
- Motion to hire the Big Hole Watershed committee to manage the elkhorn mill and mine project by Tom, 2nd Rich, Motion Carried.
- Motion to accept sole sources justification for contracting with Montana Bioagriculture Inc. for the elkhorn mine and mill project pending Zach's review by Jerry 2nd Rich, Motion Carried.

Administrator Report

- There have been 9 mussel boats so far, 3337 Inspections, 1200 High Risk Inspections

Old Business

New Business

- McCone CD Resolution: NACD encourages NRCS to return some hiring responsibilities back to individual states (Attached) Wait to vote until the resolution passes at the Area Meetings
- Gallatin CD Resolution: Support Reducing the Use of Neonicotinoids in Montana
Supervisors are concerned how this affects pour-on and ivermectin, we googled the chemicals and none of them are ones that people recognize.
Motion to let Byron decide whether to support or oppose the resolution debating on how the area 6 meeting discussion goes by Tom, 2nd Jerry, Motion carried.
- Richland CD Resolution: Managed Aquifer Recharge Potential in Montana (Attached) Wait to vote until the resolution passes at the Area Meetings
- Sheridan CD Resolution: MTDOT/BNSF Invasive Species Cooperation (Attached) Wait to vote until the resolution passes at the Area Meetings
- DNRC report- Catey Bauer (Attached)

Public Comment - No public in attendance
by the end of the meeting.

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 9 pm

Minutes submitted by: Jessica Fields

Upcoming Events

Next meeting date – October 17th 6 pm

Approved:


Byron Martinell, Chairman