

**LINCOLN CONSERVATION DISTRICT
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MEETING
Weyerhaeuser Office, Libby, Montana
November 8, 2017**

Attendance:

Board of Supervisors: Wayne Maahs, Chairperson; Don Crawford, Vice Chairperson; Mike Justus; Valene Goff; Darris Flanagan; Mark Romey

Absent:

Associate Supervisor(s):

Advisor(s): Brian Ressel, NRCS District Conservationist (via telephone); Samantha Tappenbeck, SWCDM

District Administrator: Becky Lihme

Guest(s):

Called to order: 4:00 p.m. by Chairperson Wayne Maahs

Public Comment:

New Business, Item f. DNRC Fire Mitigation EC Grant Funds

- Staff reviewed the sample letter and grant application received from DNRC.
- Mike Justus noted the funding is targeted for range use, riparian fencing, tree felling, grass seeding; the request must be for the public benefit.
- Wayne Maahs questioned if there was any private landowners in Libby affected by the fires qualifying for the funds.
- Mike Justus responded he received one call from a landowner up Bobtail Creek.
- Brian Ressel noted Glen Miller wants to turn his forested land into pasture using the grant funding for reseeding. He lost approximately 1,500 feet of fence.
- It was recommended to pursue the funding then follow through with how to proceed; use of an application or meet with the landowners.
- Wayne Maahs asked how far do we (LCD) want to go administratively.
- Mike Justus recommended we (LCD) "bundle" all the applications, then LCD submits the application. LCD purchases the seed and distribute to the landowners.
- Wayne Maahs asked if private landowners were affected by the Gibraltar Fire.
- Mike Justus responded the area known as Moose Meadows has private land. Mike asked if NRCS funds have been released.
- Brian Ressel responded yes; funding information has just been released. He recommended a mailing list be established; EQIP can follow with the same mailing list used by DNRC.
- Don Crawford noted \$200,000 is not very much statewide.
- Brian Ressel added to his knowledge the only other county interested in EQIP funding was the Seeley Lake area.
- Darris Flanagan added he knows of only one landowner with the Gibraltar fire.
- Don Crawford noted he would like to see seeding fertilizer funded under the grant.
- **Motion** by Don Crawford to proceed with the DNRC Fire Mitigation EC Grant Funds. **Second** by Mike Justus.

- Valene Goff asked if the deadline is feasible.

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- Mike Justus noted everyone is in the “same boat”.
- **Motion passed.**
- Wayne Maahs stated the Caribou Fire will take care of itself.
- Don Crawford recommended letters be sent to the landowners.
- Mark Romey commented the Montana Cadastral can be used to locate the landowners.
- Brian Ressel added he has a current listing of fifty (50) landowners with property ranging from 1 acre. Twenty five (25) of those are larger landowners.
- Mike Justus added the Moose and West Fork fires also have private landowners.
- Don Crawford asked Brian Ressel if he (NRCS) will be doing a similar program.
- Brian Ressel responded yes.
- Wayne Maahs asked Brian Ressel if he would be willing to complete an overlay of the Moose and West Fork fires for private landowners.
- Mike Justus added we (LCD) should require the minimum acreage to be 10 to qualify for the grant. Mike also asked about the cost of placing advertisements.
- Staff responded ad prices vary from \$90 to \$140. Classified ads are less expensive.
- Don Crawford stated the letters should be sufficient.
- Mike Justus recommended a flier be placed at the West Kootenai Store.
- **Motion** by Mike Justus to mail letters and an application to affected landowners; minimum ten (10) acres. The conservation district will collect the applications and submit as one application to DNRC. **Second** by Valene Goff.
- Don Crawford asked if we are excluding riparian fencing with the ten (10) acre minimum.
- Darris Flanagan asked if trees are eligible.
- Mike Justus responded “no”.
- Samantha Tappenbeck clarified “yes” they are.
- Mike Justus noted tree seedlings would not be effective for immediate erosion control. He added in-kind matching will strengthen the ranking for the conservation district.
- **Motion passed.**

NRCS Report – Brian Ressel

- Twenty five (25) acres of slash has been burnt in the Trego area.
- Al Cameron has a new pivot that is being used for grazing exclusively. The riparian fencing is being installed now.
- Brian has asked Amy Driggs if she would like to attend the Winter Grazing Seminar. She will get back to him. Other ranchers to ask are Jim Bushfield and Al Cameron.

Minutes:

- a. October 2017
 - **Motion** by Darris Flanagan to approve the minutes of October 2017 as presented; Don Crawford and Valene Goff absences are excused. **Second** by Mark Romey. **Motion passed.**

Financial Report:

- a. October 2017
 - Mike Justus reviewed the monthly financial report. **Motion** by Mike Justus to approve the October Financial Report as presented. **Second** by Darris Flanagan. **Motion passed.**
 - Mike Justus stated he is upset with the Montana legislature for the withdrawal of 310 Administrative Funding to conservation districts. Many conservation districts depend on those funds to operate. We, as conservation districts, are asked to implement the 310 Law but in turn will not be paid for that responsibility. Mike would like a letter be sent to the legislature expressing our concern. The legislature is now in a special session over the state budget.
 - **Motion** by Mike Justus to write a letter to the Lincoln County state representatives detailing the LCD position on the withdrawal of 310 funds. **Second** by Valene Goff.
 - Staff explained the 310 funding process and this year each district was initially limited to \$2,500, then the funding was cut to \$0.00.
 - Samantha Tappenbeck recommended the Board send a copy of the letter to Elena Evans.
 - **Motion passed;** no vote from Darris Flanagan.

MTFW&P Report – Mike Hensler

District Administrator’s Report

- Volunteer hours were recorded.
- Newspaper articles are in the Board Packets.
- We received the annual nomination form for Ag Couple of the Year Award.
- We received a letter from Greg Gianforte requesting priorities on the U.S. Farm Bill

Planning Board Report – Mark Romey

- Mark reported the Planning Board did not meet.
- A conservation easement is in the planning stages within the Grave Creek area and asked Darris Flanagan if he was familiar with it.
- Darris Flanagan responded no.

- Valene Goff asked what the conservation easements are for. She added she has worked on the development of conservation easements in the past.
- Mark did not know.
- Mike Justus noted Stimson Lumber has a conservation easement coming up.

GLID Report – Valene Goff

- Valene Goff reported the 223 grant is finishing up.

SWCDM - Samantha Tappenbeck

- Brian Ressel has two (2) applicants for the Ranching for Rivers program; Karl Kassler and Al Cameron.
- The Thompson River Basin WRP, sections 1 through 5 are completed and sections 6 through 7 are in draft form.
- The next stakeholder meeting will be held on November 28th.

310's

Li-11-01-17 – Ende, Trimble Creek

- Mike Justus reported mapping shows the creek to be intermittent however, it has flowed year around. Trimble Creek flows through two (2) properties. This project is a 24" culvert with a low gradient stream; rock armor nor a dissipater will be needed. The applicant is asking for a second temporary crossing using corduroy logs for logging.
- **Motion** by Mike Justus to approve Li-10-01-17 as presented with the addition of a second temporary crossing constructed of corduroy logs All disturbed areas shall be seeded with grass at the completion of the project. Temporary logs for the second crossing shall be removed immediately following work completion. **Second** by Darris Flanagan. **Motion passed.**

Li-11-02-17 – Kratzer, Trimble Creek

- Mike Justus reported on the project.
- **Motion** by Mike Justus to approve Li-11-02-17 as presented. All disturbed areas shall be seeded with grass at the completion of the project. Temporary logs for the second crossing shall be removed immediately following work completion.
- **Second** by Darris Flanagan. **Motion passed.**

Li-10-03-17 – Idaho Forest Group/Volk, Clay Creek

- Mike Justus reported this application is on the same creek and property as a previous 310 permit application. The project includes one temporary bridge and a permanent 24" culvert.
- **Motion** by Mike Justus to approve Li-11-03-17 as presented; waive fifteen (15) day wait period. **Second** by Darris Flanagan. **Motion passed.**

Tabled 310's

New Business:

- a. NACD Technical Assistance Grants
 - Samantha Tappenbeck reported on this program. NACD is offering \$9,000,000 in grant funding nationwide to conservation districts to place a staff person. The staff person would split their time between NRCS EQIP and the conservation district with 80% to NRCS and 20% to the district. \$50,000 is available for funding of the position. A 25% cash match is required; NACD will provide 5% of the match. Brian Ressel could use an assistant and this is a good program for him. The position is for one (1) year.
 - Wayne Maahs clarified \$50,000 to the conservation district.
 - Samantha reported the program was announced November 1st
 - Darris Flanagan asked if conservation districts could share the staff person.
 - Mike Justus also asked if the position could be seasonal. He added 20% of \$50,000 is \$10,000.
 - Samantha responded, no the position is for one (1) full year. LCD could share a person with Flathead CD. Angel Rosario is leaving and they could use the position.
 - Darris Flanagan asked who is the state partnership with.
 - Samantha responded the Montana NACD Office.
 - Darris Flanagan noted we are competing against a lot of conservation districts nationwide and asked this to be placed on the December agenda.
 - Samantha noted the first round of evaluations will be November 27th with the second on December 3rd.
- b. 310 Permit Application and Emergency Action Process Review
 - Staff provided the power point presentation done by Julie Ralston during a recent webinar. The Board can use this material for future reference.
- c. Annual Dinner
 - 4 Corners Restaurant was selected for the annual dinner.
- d. Outstanding Urban Forestry Nominations
 - No nominations were presented.
- e. Staff Time Off – December 26th through 28th
 - There were no objections to staff taking this annual leave.
- f. DNRC Fire Mitigation EC Grant Funds – Item moved.
- g. DNRC “Tools for Engaging Landowners Effectively” Workshop
 - Information was presented in the Board Packet.

Unfinished Business:

- a. Grant Update
 - i. Tobacco River – Kassler
 1. Phase I – DEQ 319 Grant
 - Invoice from River Design Group
 - **Motion** by Darris Flanagan to pay the invoice from River Design Group in the amount of \$11,589.31. **Second** by Valene Goff. **Motion passed.**
 2. Phase 2 – DNRC Reclamation Grant Application
 - ii. GLID
 - GLID staff will be finalizing the grant report soon.
 - iii. Mud Creek DEQ
 1. 319 Grant
 2. KRN / USF&WS Partners for Fish Wildlife Program Archeological Survey – Cindy Hemry has applied for the Independent Contractor Exemption.
 3. Watershed Management Grant
- b. Clark Fork WRP, Thompson River Drainage – Reported under SWCDM report.
- c. Welch, Callahan Creek – No report
- d. E-10-02-17, Weyerhauser, Wolf Creek
 - Wayne Maahs conducted an on-site of the project. He recommended the Board approve the action taken; no mitigation needed.
 - **Motion** by Wayne Maahs no mitigation will be needed. **Second** by Darris Flanagan. **Motion passed.**
- e. Winter Grazing Seminar, Donation/Landowner Sponsorship
 - **Motion** by Darris Flanagan to pay for the registration and hotel accommodations for up to three (3) attendees for the seminar. **Second** by Mark Romey. **Motion passed.**

Final Inspection Reports:

Li-07-02-17, Beaumont, Meadow Creek– Item closed.

Wayne Maahs reported the 310 on Brush Creek Li-09-04-17 can be closed.

On Sites Needed:

Open Mic and Other Business:

- Mark Romey asked what our (LCD) responsibility is regarding a home on Callahan Creek, Chase Cut-off.
- Wayne Maahs replied he did not believe we have any. No action was taken

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from an earlier 310 permit application; the application was denied. He doesn't know if LCD has any authority. Nothing is being done as this time. The county is taking a "wait and see" approach".

The next Conservation District Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 20, 2017 at 4:00 p.m. at the U.S. Forest Service Office, Eureka, Montana.

Meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wayne Maahs, Chairperson

Becky Lihme, District Administrator

Date: _____

