



Flathead Conservation District  
133 Interstate Lane, Kalispell, MT 59901  
www.flatheadcd.org 406-752-4220

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### **CALL TO ORDER & ATTENDANCE**

Chair Ronald Buentemeier called the March 25, 2019, Business meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. in the conference room.

### **Board members present:**

Ronald Buentemeier, Chair; Pete Woll, Vice Chair; Dean Sirucek, Secretary/Treasurer; John Ellis, Supervisor; Verdell Jackson, Supervisor; Lori Curtis, Supervisor, being a quorum of the Board.

Also, in attendance were Donna Pridmore, Associate Supervisor; Valerie Kurth, Hailey Graf and Ginger Kauffman, FCD staff; Sean Johnson, NRCS.

### **MINUTES**

Dean Sirucek motioned “to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2019, 310-Stream Permit meeting as presented.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Email: Flathead County Finance Office *District Board Financial Training Sessions*, Thursday, May 30, 3:00 P.M. and 6:00 P.M., 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, South Campus Building, 40 11<sup>th</sup> Street West, Kalispell. Training will include how to read the County trial balance reports, internal control measures, budget process, and process timeline.
2. Email: Custer County Conservation District newsletter *Conservation Update*  
Contact 406-232-7905 Ext. 3242 [carol.watts@mt.nacdnet.net](mailto:carol.watts@mt.nacdnet.net)
3. Email: MT DNRC Reclamation & Development Grants (RDG) Program is accepting grant applications for grants to protect the natural resources of Montana from severe and unacceptable damage from aquatic invasive species. Applications due March 28, 2019. Contact Heidi Anderson Fohnagy 406-444-6691 [hfohnagy@mt.gov](mailto:hfohnagy@mt.gov)
4. Email: NRCS published a Federal Register Notice on March 11, 2019. NRCS is inviting public review and comment on its National Conservation Practice Standards and associated documents. There is a 45-day comment period. The review is for the conservation practice standards, including engineering design specifications that were in effect on December 19, 2018. FR notice NRCS-2019-0003. Review of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service National Conservation Practice Standards will be placed on public inspection March 8th prior to publication on March 11th. Contact Gerald (Jerry) Shows,  
Assistant State Conservationist – Programs FA, 406-587-6967, 406-600-2276
5. Email: Whitefish Planning Board Meeting, Tuesday, March 19, 6:00 P.M., Whitefish City Council Chambers. <http://www.cityofwhitefish.org/>



6. Email: National Association of Conservation Districts publications  
*Conservation Clips, eResource*,  
<http://www.nacdnet.org>
7. Email: Gallatin Conservation District is hiring for the position of District Administrator. Applications due Thursday, March 5<sup>th</sup>. Application information [www.gallatincd.org](http://www.gallatincd.org)  
Contact Mary Hendrix, 406-282-4350 [admin@gallatincd.org](mailto:admin@gallatincd.org)
8. Email: Montana Watershed Coordination Council March 15, 2019, issue of  
*Watershed News* <https://mtwatersheds.org/app/>
9. Email: MFWP Aquatic Invasive Species newsletter - The first watercraft inspection stations of 2019 will open this month in Kalispell, Ravalli and Browning. Watercraft inspection stations are Montana's first line of defense to prevent the movement of aquatic invasive species. The Fish, Wildlife & Parks Region 1 office in Kalispell will offer boat inspections seven days a week starting March 13. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes plan to open the Ravalli watercraft inspection station on Highway 200 on March 15. The Blackfoot Nation expects to open a station in Browning later this month.
10. Email: Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) *District Dispatch* from Dan McGowan. The Insurance Ad-hoc committee held a teleconference with Summit Insurance, and Summit is very close to determining the parameters of the program. A dry run presentation will be given at the Area III meeting on April 21<sup>st</sup> which will help to provide important feedback for the committee and to build their recommendation. The Ad-hoc committee will then meet with Summit to go over program specifics and administrative requirements. The goal is to have a presentation and recommendation ready for the MACD Board spring meeting. Once the Board approves the initiative, Area Meetings will be scheduled for presentation to the conservation districts to identify participant involvement. To receive District Dispatch, contact [kate@macdnet.org](mailto:kate@macdnet.org)
11. Email: Lewis & Clark Conservation District spring newsletter *The Explorer*  
[lccd@mt.net](mailto:lccd@mt.net) 406-449-5000 Ext. 112
12. Email: National Association of Conservation Districts publication  
*eResource, Forestry Notes* <http://www.nacdnet.org>
13. Email: The *From the Ground Up, Montana Women* interview can be heard on  
<http://www.homegroundradio.org/episodes>. March is Women's History Month. The interview honored Montana's Ag Women and their role in history. To order a copy of the book contact: Glacier County Conservation District 406-873-5752 Ext 4  
or Stillwater Conservation District 406-322-5359 Ext 101
14. Email: Hill County Conservation District newsletter *Welcome to our Hill*  
<http://conservation.hillcounty.us> Contact [kathleen.whitaker@mt.nacdnet.net](mailto:kathleen.whitaker@mt.nacdnet.net)  
406-265-6792 Ext. 3334
15. Email: Sweet Grass Conservation District is accepting applications for water project funding. Applications due to Sweet Grass Conservation District May 1, 2019.  
Contact [Guelda.halverson@mt.nacdnet.net](mailto:Guelda.halverson@mt.nacdnet.net) 406 932-5160 x101



## **FINANCIAL**

The following bill was reviewed:

1. VISA \$282.21

Lori Curtis motioned “to approve the bill as presented.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one was present to comment on items not listed on the agenda.

## **310**

**Griffith**, FL2019012, Flathead River, bank stabilization: Pete Woll reported he and Kenny Breidinger did an onsite inspection. The project is for maintenance of riprap that was placed 10-12 years ago and has slumped in some sections. Both Pete and Kenny agreed that, as a modification to the permit, the landowner could also remove approximately twelve tires that have floated in or are stuck in the mud in front of the riprap.

Pete Woll motioned “to approve the application with modifications. The modification is for the removal of the tires in the water.” Dean Sirucek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

**Supervisor Position:** Pete Woll stated at the last meeting the board had discussed appointing Lori Curtis to the open supervisor position.

Pete Woll motioned “to appoint Lori Curtis to fill the open supervisor position.” Dean Sirucek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

John Ellis asked for clarification on moving Lori into the supervisor position and noted that she is currently an Appointed Supervisor from Whitefish until the end of this year. Pete replied Mark Siderius’ term ended 12/31/2018, so Lori can fill the open supervisor position and then Whitefish could appoint a second supervisor. John asked if there is someone from Whitefish that could fill the Appointed Supervisor position. Lori replied that she has spoken with the City of Whitefish about possible candidates. Pete noted that the appointed supervisor did not necessarily have to come from Whitefish, and we could look at other areas, such as Columbia Falls. John asked why Columbia Falls had not appointed someone in the past and asked if it was in the conservation district. Ronald clarified that it is in the district except for the original city boundaries from 1945. Dean Sirucek asked about the term of the vacant supervisor position and wondered who ran in the last election. Pete replied the term is for 4 years (1/1/2019 - 12/31/2022). Three Supervisors terms ended 12/31/2018 (Ronald Buentemeier, Verdell Jackson, Mark Siderius). Ronald Buentemeier and Verdell Jackson both ran last year; however, no one ran for the third position and it has remained vacant until now. (MCA 13-1-502 (5)(i)(ii))



**Camp Sponsorship Request:** Hailey Graf explained that the district received a request to sponsor eight girls from local Girl Scout Sister troop #1941 to the Melita Island Scout Camp this summer. The troop was unable to participate in the normal fundraising activities, so they are looking at other funding options. Holly McKenzie has been working with the troop, and they have received sponsorship from several other groups. The troop is requesting a portion of the registration fees from Flathead CD - \$560 out of \$2760.00 total cost for 8 girls. The request noted that the girls would earn forestry and soil conservation badges, as well as learn the principles of minimum impact and skills in natural resources and conservation. John Ellis asked if the district has sponsored something like this before. Supervisors replied that this is different from the previous Natural Resource Camps sponsorship requests the district has approved.

Pete Woll motioned “to approve sponsorship for the eight girls to the Melita Island Scout camp in the amount of \$560.” Lori Curtis seconded. Motion carried with one no vote.

**HB223 Grant – Pollinator Garden:** Hailey Graf provided an update about the demonstration garden. The district received a grant from the Montana Native Plant Society for \$1500. She also submitted a grant application to Bayer for \$5,000, which is pending. She is working with Casey Lewis, City of Kalispell, to draft an application to the Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana (SWCDM) mini-grant program for \$2000 for the rain garden part of the garden and non-point source pollution outreach.

Hailey would like to submit a grant application to the DNRC HB 223 program for the garden. The application is due April 25<sup>th</sup>. Valerie clarified that HB 223 grants are specifically for conservation districts.

Lori Curtis motioned “to support the Flathead CD applying for the HB223 grant for the Pollinator Garden.” Verdell Jackson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Family Forestry Expo (FFE):** Valerie Kurth reported the district has received a donation request from FFE and noted that last year Flathead CD donated \$9000. The 30<sup>th</sup> FFE will be held May 6-8, and there are over 1300 students signed up. Pete Woll asked about the status of FFE funds and the FCD budget. Hailey Graf responded that she thought they were ok right now, but they always really appreciate the contribution from Flathead CD. Valerie noted that the Expo donation usually comes from the Education Programs line of the budget, but the exact amount is not specified in the budget. Lori Curtis asked if FFE planned to do anything special with funds this year. Hailey replied that FFE is updating the classroom workbooks. Valerie added that the district typically has a Cooperative Agreement with FFE and asked that the motion include approval of it if funding is approved.

Lori Curtis motioned “to support FFE in the amount of \$10,000.00 and approve the Cooperative Agreement.” Pete Woll seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Logo:** Valerie Kurth reported that the Logo committee, Ronald Buentemeier, Lori Curtis, Verdell Jackson, and herself, met at the end of February to discuss three possible options for moving forward on the logo. The committee decided to use a local company because it would be more personal. After reviewing project estimates and proposals, the committee is



recommending the Snow Ghost logo and branding package proposal in the amount of \$1500. Lori and Valerie added that Snow Ghost has a good reputation and has been in the Flathead since 2007.

Valerie stated the committee also discussed the importance of the full board being part of the process and offering their input. The committee developed an input form and board members were asked to review and submit the questionnaire to Valerie before the April 8<sup>th</sup> board meeting.

Pete Woll motioned “to approve the Snow Ghost branding package contract in the amount of \$1500.” Lori Curtis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

**Cost-Share Program Revisions:** Valerie Kurth presented proposed revisions to the cost-share program, including the timeline, application, and guidelines, and proposed that staff would be relied upon to conduct onsite visits and seek technical expertise when needed. Dean Sirucek and Pete Woll both voiced confidence in staff’s ability to administer the program. Discussion followed regarding multi-year projects, weed control, contract length and feasibility, and how it will fit with NRCS programs. Valerie asked the board to review the materials and application and contact her with any recommendations. She also asked the board to approve the revised timeline, which would allow staff to update materials and information on the district website.

Lori Curtis motioned “to approve the proposed cost-share timeline revisions, and for the board to review the application and provide comments by the April business meeting.” Dean Sirucek seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Sean Johnson, NRCS, asked how the board felt about landowners applying for both NRCS and FCD cost-share funding for the same project. Several supervisors stated that they would discourage it under most circumstances.

**Vehicle Purchase:** Valerie Kurth provided supervisors with correspondence from the Flathead County Finance Office stating that the CIP funds can be spent this year or can be held for future years. No special documentation needs to be submitted to the county if the Board decides to wait. She provided copies of a Request for Proposals (RFP) from 2014 showing what was specified for the vehicle. Valerie noted that Hailey Graf recently took the district vehicle in for an oil change at the dealership and the technician said everything was in very good condition except for a possible stage 3 engine oil leak. Pete Woll stated he had researched it and that a stage 3 leak is nothing to worry about. Supervisors agreed that it was not necessary to purchase a new vehicle at this time.

Dean Sirucek motioned “to delay any purchase of a vehicle for at least one fiscal year.” Pete Woll seconded. Motion carried unanimously.



**End of Month Budget Report (February 2019):** The February 2019 End of Month Budget Report was reviewed with the Board.

Pete Woll motioned “to approve the February 2019 End of Month Budget Report.” Lori Curtis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

## **REPORTS**

**Flathead CD Staff:** Valerie Kurth & Hailey Graf reported

### ***District Office and Outreach***

1. Advertisements: Flathead Beacon – 310 law ad & Spring 310 ad with QR code. Mountain Trader – 310 Law ad.
2. Hailey and Valerie attended the Montana Lakes Conference March 13-15. Presentations topics included lake ecology, management challenges, current and future impacts, septic leachate, legislative updates, and citizen science water quality monitoring. Valerie moderated one of the sessions.
3. Valerie and Hailey attended the River 2 Lake Initiative quarterly meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup>.
4. Hailey attended the Flathead CORE meeting on March 20<sup>th</sup>.
5. Hailey, Valerie, and Ginger Kauffman are helping with the 2019 MACD Convention planning. The first monthly conference call was held in March.
6. Valerie is working with Amber Burch, Beaverhead County, on a memorandum of agreement and employment letter for the dyer’s woad monitoring project.
7. Valerie continues to monitor legislative activities and coordinate communication among MACD, DNRC, and FCD.

### ***On-the-Ground Projects***

Cow Creek – Valerie worked with Samantha Tappenbeck to draft the final design, which was approved by DEQ. We also received approvals for the landowner agreement template and monitoring plan. Valerie started working on the joint application for both project sites.

### ***Landowner Programs***

Seedling Program – Valerie and Hailey have processed thirteen seedling orders and helped numerous people select appropriate conservation seedlings. Delivery is anticipated in early May.

Cost-Share Program – Valerie developed a proposal to revise the cost-share program. The main changes are the program timeline and application. The contract periods will be longer to allow landowners more time to complete their projects, and the application will be more detailed. The changes will hopefully facilitate better planning by both the applicant and FCD staff.

### ***Education and Outreach***

Free the Seeds – Hailey hosted a booth at this lively event on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Despite the arctic temperatures, around 800 people attended. Hailey had numerous great discussions with landowners about the native grass seed mixes, FCD programs, erosion and weed management, and resources for more help.



Demonstration Garden – The MT Native Plant Society approved our grant request for \$1,500 and the Flathead Chapter offered to help host workshops and education programs at the garden, once it's completed. Hailey also submitted the grant application for the Bayer Feed-a-Bee Initiative on March 15.

Small Acreage Landowner Seminar – The seminar series concluded on March 13<sup>th</sup>. March presentations included: tree management/pests/wildfire risk reduction; habitat and wildlife; and noxious weeds.

Website/social media - Blog post topics for March included: a guest post about knapweed management by Flathead County Weed Dept, Farm Link Montana, tips for keeping deer out of gardens. Over the last 30 days, the website had 776 users and 1,623 page views. The Facebook page reached 53,100 users and received 99 new page followers. One particular post resulted in 231 clicks to the webpage and from there, people viewed website information about pollinators, landowner assistance programs, scholarships, the board & staff, our contact information, and downloaded stream permit applications.

**Natural Resources & Conservation Service (NRCS):** Sean Johnson reported:

- Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)
  - The focus plan for the North Fork was not approved.
  - The focus plan for Pinkham Creek area was approved, and Sean is working with Brian Ressel in Eureka on revisions to that plan.
  - A county-wide long-range plan is to be developed and submitted by September 30<sup>th</sup>.
  - 2020 Targeted Implementation Plan/s (TIPS) must be submitted by December 31<sup>st</sup> (long-range plan must be approved).
- Attended and manned a booth at the Montana Lakes Conference
- Jessie Ressel will be leaving NRCS to work with the Forest Service in Eureka at the end of this month. The open position will be filled eventually.
- Local Working Group (LWG)
  - Will be expanding to include other agencies and partners
  - Will focus on current issues in the county
  - Meeting is tentatively planned for the end of May
  - Historically the LWG was held during conservation district meetings. This will now become a stand-alone annual meeting with NRCS as the lead since it pertains to NRCS programs.
- SNOTEL Survey

**Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD):** Pete Woll reported MACD continues to monitor legislative issues. The DNRC budget, which includes funding for conservation district projects, will be heard in the Senate Finance and Claims committee this week. MACD is reviewing and revising the resolution process, which will be presented at the June MACD Board meeting. 56% of dues from conservation districts have been received to date, and MACD continues to work with conservation districts regarding dues and mil levys.



**Flathead County Planning Board (FCPB):** Dean Sirucek reported two zone changes received positive recommendations from the planning board. Testimony was heard regarding a proposed subdivision on 68 acres with 68 residential lots north of Bigfork. The Bigfork Planning Board initially supported it, but now does not because it no longer includes affordable housing. The subdivision is within the Bigfork Water and Sewer District. Agricultural zoning was also discussed, and this will continue over the next few months during the update to the growth policy.

**Whitefish City Planning Board (WCPB):** John Ellis reported the Park Knoll neighborhood was rezoned to be back into the City of Whitefish. A two-story building will be built behind Bonsai Brewery. WCPB previously approved a 12-unit subdivision between Colorado Avenue and the new commercial building, and the City Council is requiring the developer to build a sidewalk on Denver Avenue. WCPB began the public hearing process regarding new affordable housing/inclusionary zoning. The hearing closed and the vote will be at next month's meeting. There will also be a public hearing and vote on the code amendments.

**Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (UC3):** Lori Curtis stated the next meeting will be held May 15<sup>th</sup> with location to be determined. She will start providing regular reports to MACD. Lori noted that she has testified several times before the legislature. A bill sponsored by Mike Cuffe adding several regional areas to UC3 was submitted. If approved, UC3 would go from 9 to 13 voting members.

**Haskill Basin Watershed Council (HBWC):** The next meeting will be held April 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Flathead Basin Commission (FBC):** Dean Sirucek reported funding for FBC from the state was discussed and it will likely remain the same as past years. Samantha Tappenbeck with SWCDM spoke about her proposal for reducing non-source septic pollution. Constanza von der Pahlen with Flathead Lakers talked about Ashley Creek landowner outreach. Mike Koopal, with Whitefish Lake Institute spoke about the wastewater/stormwater proposal for Flathead County, and a working group will be formed to finalize the proposal. The next meeting will be held June 26<sup>th</sup> with location to be determined.

**Clark Fork & Kootenai River Basins Council (CFKRBC):** Verdell Jackson reported SB47 has passed out of the Senate and is now in the House where amendments may be made. He contributed to a presentation about the Council at the Montana Lakes Conference.





**MATTERS OF THE BOARD/STAFF**

**College Scholarships:** Hailey Graf reported 17 college scholarships were received. Supervisors were provided with copies to review before the next business meeting. Supervisors may contact Hailey with any questions.

**MACD Convention Survey:** Valerie Kurth asked supervisors to review and fill out the convention survey for breakout sessions and tours. This will be discussed at the April business meeting. The survey is due May 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Board Positions/Supervisor Areas:** The board briefly discussed board positions and supervisor areas.

The next 310-Stream Permit meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 8, 2019, 7:00 P.M. in the conference room of the USDA building at 133 Interstate Lane, Kalispell, MT.

Adjournment: Dean Sirucek motioned “to adjourn.” Lori Curtis seconded. Motion carried unanimously. As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:05 P.M.

Submitted By:

Ginger Kauffman  
Administrator

Valerie Kurth, Ph. D.  
Resource Conservationist

Minutes approved by FCD Board motion made on:

4/8/2019	Ronald Buentemeier	Chair
(Date)	(Signature)	(Title – Chair etc.)

