



Pondera County Conservation District

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The Pondera County Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on **Tuesday March 11th, 2025, at 8:00 am** at the USDA Service Center in Conrad, Montana.

Call to Order: Chairman Paul Jones called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Present: Sarah Zielke

Koltin Christiaens-NRCS

Paul Jones

Ali Marschner- Pheasants Forever

Kaysie Steele

Kasydi Lucas- DNRC CDB

Roger Paulsen

Kesler Martin

Eric Gunderson

Absent: Ramsey Offerdal Jr.

Previous Minutes:

- Roger Paulsen moved to accept the previous meeting minutes. Sarah Zielke seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Bills and Financial Statement:

- Kaysie Steele presented the financial statement. Eric Gunderson moved to accept the financial report. Roger Paulsen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Public Comment:

NRCS: Koltin Christiaens introduced Ali Marschner as the Pheasants Forever Farm Bill Biologist in the Conrad and Choteau office. Koltin mentioned that they finished their CSP, RCPP, & EQIP rankings. NRCS currently has 4 tribal contracts to rank and plans to have those

completed in April. Koltin mentioned that he finished an FFA event last week with the local schools where he was a soil scientist, and students were able to ask him questions and learn about his job. Koltin mentioned that he will be gone during the PCCD Outdoor Classroom scheduled to be held on Friday, May 2nd but he does intend to have a co-worker fill in for the day to present to the students. Lastly, Koltin mentioned that he had a gentleman reach out from Conrad, seeking to have conservation signs put up along the walking path in town. Paul Jones asked for his contact information and said that the conservation district would follow up with him, seeing how the CD has donated funds to the walking path to put up said signs already.

MSCA: Roger Paulsen shared an update sent from Scott Brown. Roger shared that MSCA was unsuccessful in getting the grant to conduct the water sampling with the MT Renewables Injection Project near Lake Frances. Roger mentioned that Scott has been in contact with Corrine Rose, the County Sanitarian, on the news. Roger mentioned that Scott sent Corrine a cost list if any well owners near the sites want to have sampling done and pay for it themselves. Roger also shared for MSCA that RCPP is open for new projects if any producers have saline issues in the county.

PCCRC: Roger Paulsen reported on the Canal Company's behalf because Heather Rice, Canal Company Manager, was unable to make it in person. Roger mentioned that they were able to get the concrete poured for their current project. Roger mentioned the snowpack amount is still questionable, but they do believe it is better than last year at this time.

MSU Extension: No one present to report.

Pondera Weeds District: No one present to report.

DNRC CDB: Kasydi Lucas introduced herself as the Area III Specialist for the Conservation District Bureau with DNRC. She shared that things have been quiet for the CDB with some legislative work going on. She mentioned that the CDA grant is now open for FY2026 and that we can apply to help with MACD dues, and any other financial needs the district may have. Kasydi shared an update for the *Ambler v. Flathead CD* case pertaining to the home that was built along McDonald Creek in Glacier National Park in which no permits were obtained prior to building. Kasydi shared that a federal judge has issued an Order on *Ambler v. Flathead Conservation District*, determining that the National Park Service has exclusive jurisdiction over private inholdings in Glacier National Park and that the 310 Law does not apply to the Ambler property. Kasydi shared that Flathead CD has the option to appeal the decision and will likely evaluate this at their next meeting.

PCCD: Administrator

- Kaysie Steele submitted a written report.

Old Business:

- Seedling Nursery Order Placed on 1/16/2025
- Response letter received from the MT Seedling Nursery Manager regarding inventory level concerns

- Quarter 4 payroll taxes and year end taxes completed at the end of January
- Envirothon invitations and registrations sent out to local high schools
- Early preparations for PCCD 2025 Outdoor Classroom
- Young Ag Couples Conference summary
- Conclusion regarding unusual check received by Stockman Bank
- MCDEO 2025 Dues

New Business:

- Kaysie Steele presented the 2025 dues for Montana Association of Conservation Districts Employee Organizations. Roger Paulsen made a motion to pay \$30 dues for the EO. Sarah Zielke seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- Kaysie Steele inquired if the district could spend up to \$200 on materials needed for this year's Outdoor Classroom. Materials include edible soil cups ingredients, drawstring bags, notebooks, pencils for the students, and schedule/map of days events. Sarah Zielke made a motion to approve up to \$200 in funds for this year's Outdoor Classroom material. Eric Gunderson seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- Kaysie Steele shared that the seedling delivery to the district is expected to come sometime in April. She mentioned that at the time of pick up, producers will pay for their trees. Roger Paulsen mentioned if any help is needed during tree delivery to let the board know and those that are around can help. Roger Paulsen asked if any landscape fabric was needed to be picked up this year for producers. Kaysie Steele mentioned that they did not have anyone order landscape fabric this year. Kaysie Steele shared that they had around \$4-\$5k in tree orders this year.
- Kaysie Steele mentioned that she is currently working on the April Newsletter for the District and plans to have it out by the 1st of next month.
- Kaysie Steele shared some information regarding the current federal government workforce shrinkage and what that may mean for conservation districts housed in government facilities. Koltin Christiaens mentioned that the building did not renew their current years lease and the status of all employees continuing to work out of the Conrad USDA office is uncertain. The board mentioned that we will continue to work as is with the Administrator working primarily from home and we will readdress the situation as new information comes in.

Executive Session: None

Correspondence:

- Kaysie Steele shared the CDB March Report in the board's meeting binders.

Adjournment:

- Eric Gunderson moved to adjourn the meeting. Roger Paulsen seconded the motion. Motion carried.
- Paul Jones adjourned the meeting at 8:30 a.m.

CALENDAR

- April 8th PCCD Board Meeting
- Mid- April Seedling Delivery to the District
- May 2nd PCCD Outdoor Classroom
- May 13th PCCD Board Meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Kaysie Steele, PCCD Administrator

