

Pondera County Conservation District

406 North Main- Conrad MT 59425- Phone (406) 278-7611 ext. 101- Fax (406) 278-7997

The Pondera County Conservation District Board of Supervisors met on **Tuesday September 9th, 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 8:08 a.m.

Present: Heather Rice

Koltin Christiaens

Paul Jones

Eric Gunderson

Kaysie Steele

Heather McAdams-DNRC

Kesler Martin

Ramsey Offerdal Jr. (Phone Call)

Absent: Roger Paulsen

Sarah Zielke

Previous Minutes:

- Kesler Martin moved to accept the previous meeting minutes. Eric Gunderson seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Bills and Financial Statement:

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

Public Comment: Topics not on the agenda may be discussed, but if action is required, the topic must first be placed on the next meeting agenda.

NRCS: Koltin Christiaens shared that they still working on completing status reviews for the CSP contracts and that the deadline to have those complete is at the end of this week. Koltin shared that there is a new TIP coming to the Great Falls area to address pH soils on crop fields. Koltin shared that they are working to collaborate with Toole County to get an educational

workshop out for producers regarding this TIP opportunity. The TIP aims to help producers cover cost to lime their soils, encourage crop rotation, and more. The application to the program will require a basic soil test and right now they are looking at soils with a pH below 6. Koltin shared that they are still working on the RCCP with the Blackfeet Reservation which addresses irrigation concerns. Koltin shared that there will be a new RCCP with Pheasants Forever coming out that will encourage producers to change cropland back to grassland (for up to 10 years before it is allowed to be turned back into cropland) to aid in migratory bird habitats. Koltin lastly shared that there will be a riparian workshop coming to Conrad on 9/25 and 9/26 put on by the Rocky Mountain Front Ranchlands Group.

MSCA: No one present to report.

PCCRC: Heather Rice apologized that the MOU was not back yet from getting a second revision by their attorney, but hopefully by our next meeting. Heather mentioned that they think it would be wise to get a second request for proposals on the S-Pipeline Project to look at a different engineering firm. Heather mentioned that the price WWC Engineering would charge for this project would be close to \$400k when they could get it done around \$200k because of the relatively simple engineering design the project needs. Heather mentioned maybe partnering with NRCS engineering for the project needs. Heather shared an update about the Birch Creek Canal project and seeking the sole-source procurement route for the Rubicon gates they want to install. Due to guidelines for DNRC grants, it is not advised to do sole-source procurement but rather go through the competitive bidding process, even if Rubicon is the only manufacturer of the gates. Heather mentioned that fall irrigation will be turned on September 15th -October 1st.

MSU Extension: No one present to report.

Pondera Weeds District: No one present to report.

DNRC: Heather McAdams introduced herself as a hydrologist for DNRC. She stated that she works a lot with the tribal lands and works to help producers and partner agencies understand water compacts and the changing landscapes that we see today.

PCCD: Administrator

- Kaysie Steele submitted a written report.

Old Business:

- Permissive Mill Levy Hearing
- Update on DNRC RRG projects: MOU between PCCRC and PCCD status
- MACD 2025 Board Openings
- 310 Permit Ken Wheeler Updated CD Decisions Page

New Business:

- Paul Jones and Eric Gunderson thought it would be wise to have the administrator investigate the cost of Starlink or CenturyLink as a cheaper monthly cost for the district's internet services.

- Kaysie Steele shared the Area III Meeting Registration in Big Sandy, MT on Thursday September 25th from 8:30 am to 4 pm. Kaysie Steele mentioned that she will have to get the registration in the mail by next week and needs to know who all can attend. Kaysie shared that there will be the business meeting in the morning, followed by lunch, and then a tour of the Quinn Farm- an innovative farm in the area. The board mentioned they would let Kaysie know by Friday if they could attend and then they will stop in the following week to sign the registration check to be mailed out.
- Kaysie Steele shared the final product of Jim Simpson's Forest Products Story with the board.
- Kaysie Steele mentioned that the DNRC Project Grants MOU revision updates were not available to review yet but hope to have them by the next meeting to get finalized and submitted.

Executive Session: None

Correspondence:

- CDB September Report

Adjournment:

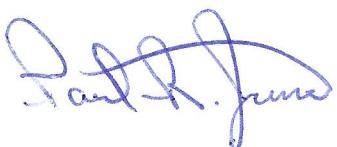
- Kesler Martin moved to adjourn the meeting. Eric Gunderson seconded the motion. The motion carried.
- Paul Jones adjourned the meeting at 8:45 a.m.

CALENDAR

- September 25th Area III Meeting Big Sandy, MT 8:30 am-4pm
- October 14th PCCD Board Meeting

Respectfully submitted,

Kaysie Steele, PCCD Administrator



CHAIRMAN PCCD

10.21.2025