Petroleum County Conservation District
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Local Common Sense Conservation
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Laura Kiehl – *Chairman*, **Rodney Rowton,** *Vice-Chairman*
Brenda Brady –*Treasurer & Secretary*, **Ralph Corbett** – *Urban Supervisor,* **Jay King** – *Rural Supervisor,*
Butch Arthur – *Urban Supervisor,* **Tye Lund** – *Rural Supervisor*

May 27, 2026

Call to order (regular meeting): Chair Laura Kiehl called the regular Petroleum County Conservation District meeting to order at 5:03pm. Those present were Laura Kiehl, Rodney Rowton, Jay King (virtual), Butch Arthur, Brenda Brady and Tye Lund. Others present in person were Lesley Rolls, PCCD Water Coordinator; Brent Smith, CEMIST; Kenzie Schreiner, PCCD Fiscal Manager; and Trish Smith, PCCD Administrator. Other virtual attendees were Ashlee Atchison, MTSC; Molly Masters, MRCDC Coordinator; Veronica Wolff, DNRC; and Desi King, Winnett ACES. Ralph Corbett was absent.

Approval of PCCD Minutes:
Tye Lund moved to approve the April 29, 2026, meeting minutes; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

Guest/Public Comment: Ashlee Atchison introduced herself as the new director of the MT Salinity Control and discussed their mission. Their program focuses on identifying recharge areas to lower water tables. They utilize salt-tolerant species. Next steps for the CD are to obtain leg descriptions for concern areas to conduct groundwater testing and site reviews. Discussed potential funding sources for salinity projects.

Partner Reports:
MRCDC: Molly reported on the next MRCDC Quarterly meeting scheduled for June 11 at High Plains CD in Great Falls. The Woody Invasive Working Group river tour will be July 16, and the River Rendezvous is planned for September 1-2 in Sidney.

MWC: No update.

MSGOT: No update.

MSU Extension: No update.

DNRC: Veronica had a short kick off meeting in regards to the two project grant that PCCD was awarded. She went over the Flatwillow and CEMIST Grant award documents/contracts and what is expected for deliverables, reporting and the final report. Discussed the DNRC General Policy Compliance and the possible DNRC Policy meeting dates.

NRCS: No update.

PCCD Water Program: Lesley provided updates on projects and upcoming grants. She visited with the new McDonald Creek land owner; meeting her and Clint Smith with FWP tomorrow. The Water efficiency grant is due Aug 1. Hoping to bring water users together and go from there. She will sent out a report on the meeting Friday.

Winnett ACES: Desi discussed all the current and future activities everyone is working on. Finished up laying the hemp on the Rowton Bank project May 11. Three projects were approved at the last conservation land owners meeting. Skylar is working with NRCS/contracting. Desi is prepping for bird monitoring season, scheduled through July 5. Jen is working on fall event planning, a Body Condition Scoring workshop, and the 10-year 55 Main Celebration. Kendall is busy with Pasture Walks, soil health monitoring and testing and getting prepped for Mongolia. June 3 is the Conservation Committee Meeting and Pasture Walk/Conifer mini tour. Lunch will be provided.

CEMIST: Brent stated that his report is in the meeting packet.

BLM: No report.

Supervisor Reports:
Brenda Brady: MACD requested that Brenda present during Spring Board in June (Helena).

Laura Kiehl: No update.

Ralph Corbett: No update.

Jay King: No update.

Rodney Rowton: He has seen a lot of grass hoppers and weevil in alfalfa.

Butch Arthur: No update.

Tye Lund: No update.

Governance Calendar (Current Month): Governance calendar reviewed for May.

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Old Business:

A. MRCDC PCCD Representatives – Brenda stated she will finish the 2026 term as the MRCDC PCCD Representative for Laura. Tye Lund moved to appoint Brenda Brady as the PCCD Representative for MRCDC; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

B. Admin grant – Looked over documents.

C. PCCD Budget – Already covered at the April meeting.

D. MRCDC MOA Approval – Brenda Brady moved to approve the final version of the MRCDC MOA; Tye Lund seconded. Motion passed.

E. DNRC General Policy Compliance – Discussed prior.

New Business:

A. 310 Updates – Adopt 310 Model Rules – Tabled.

B. PCCD Admin evaluation summary – Brenda moved to offer the PCCD Administrator a 4% cost-of-living increase, affective July 1, pending the CDA grant. Butch Arthur seconded. Rodney Rowton abstained. Motion passed.

C. 3rd Quarter Work Plan – No longer needed.

D. PCCD Admin, CEMIST, MRCDC Coordinator telework policy- Brenda Brady moved to approve the MRCDC Coordinator telework policy as presented with changes; Tye Lund seconded. Motion passed. Tabling the CEMIST and PCCD Admin telework policy.

E. CEMIST/PCCD MOU- Brenda Brady moved to accept the updated MOU between PCCD and CEMIST; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

F. MWC discussion- Laura reported that the PCCD and MWC Boards had a meeting last week. The consensus is that they want to keep MWC going. The MWC board accepted the resignation of the Musselshell Watershed Coalition coordinator. Looked over a DNRC guide for going forward. Looked at a DNRC guide for going forward and options. An interim hiring notice will be advertised for 5 days through the 1st week of June. Brenda Brady moved to accept Allison Martin's resignation; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed. Briefly looked over the NRCS grant agreement and possible CEMIST funds left. Trish will email Lesley the MWC Strategic Plan.

G. MWC PCCD Admin/Water Program Coord. Contract renewal – Butch Arthur moved to approve the MWC PCCD Contract renewal; Brenda Brady seconded. Motion passed. Kenzie will look into how much funding is left.

H. 406 Grazing Academy applicants – No applicants.

I. TA2024 Extension Request – Tye Lund moved to apply for a TA2024 extension request; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

J. Consent Agenda – Will be dissed later; might use to cover the DNRC new policy.

Administrative:

A. Grant & District Updates: Everyone looked over the May Admin report. Discussed No-Till drill status and what to do with it. Will ask Petroleum County about putting it next to our CD storage unit. Laura will call Hoge Repair to discuss how moving forward.

Financial:

A. Audit – Kenzie stated that the auditor will be meeting up with Katie and Kenzie in June. Will be visiting with the bank to get the Credit Cards in Kenzie's name.

B. **Petroleum CD:** Tye Lund moved to pay the PCCD unpaid bills; Rodney Rowton seconded. Motion passed.

C. **Missouri River CD Council:** Brenda Brady moved to pay the MRCDC unpaid bills; Butch Arthur seconded. Motion passed.

Correspondence: Looked at BLM correspondence in regards to their notice of final decision on grazing permits held by American Prairie.

Governance Calendar: The Governance Calendar was reviewed for June.

Announcements:

A. Next Regular Board meeting: June 24, 2026, 5pm – PCCD office

Approval of absences: Brenda Brady moved to approve Ralph Corbett's absence; Rodney Rowton seconded. All approved. Motion passed.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:53pm

Laura Kiehl
Laura Kiehl, Chair

Trish J. Smith
Trish J. Smith, District Administrator

Brenda Brady
Brenda Brady, Board Secretary