



Petroleum County Conservation District
P.O. Box 118, Winnett, MT 59087-0118
406-429-6646 ext. 104
petroleumcd@macdnet.org
Local Common Sense Conservation
www.petroleumcd.org

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*

March 25, 2026

Call to order (regular meeting): Chair Laura Kiehl called the regular Petroleum County Conservation District meeting to order at 4:01pm. Those present were Laura Kiehl, Jay King, Ralph Corbett, Butch Arthur, Brenda Brady and Tye Lund. Others present in person were Lesley Rolls, PCCD Water Coordinator; Brent Smith, CEMIST; Reba Ahlgren, NRCS; Mackenzie Schreiner, PCCD incoming PCCD Fiscal Manager; Katie Lund, PCCD Fiscal Manager; and Trish Smith, PCCD Administrator. Virtual attendees were Desi King, Winnett ACES; Molly Masters, MRCDC Coordinator; Rodney Rowton was absent.

Annual Work Plan and Long Range Plan:

Updated Mission and Purpose Statements: The *Petroleum County Conservation District (PCCD)* refined its Mission and Purpose statements: Mission - Petroleum County Conservation District works hard to put common sense natural resource conservation on the ground and to help guide producers and landowners on a conservation path. Purpose - The Petroleum County Conservation District collaborates with partners to practice local, common-sense conservation to protect our land and preserve our heritage.

Annual Work Plan Revisions: Removed CMR Community Working Group from the plan. Removed the requirement to appoint a District Range Leader. Discussed sponsoring a student team for the Envirothon, a state-level natural resources competition. The BLM fuel mitigation project was removed from the plan in favor of a generalized "partner" clause, allows for more flexible collaboration with various agencies like FWP, NRCS, and BLM without needing to update the plan for every new partner. Update current post-fire recovery resources pamphlet or create a new one. Added a new deliverable to the grazing lands conservation section to promote healthy wildlife populations and management. Proposed a pollinator program, providing seeds and educational information to local children. Changed the deliverable to a general commitment to conduct or collaborate on adult education events – not a specific number. Added a new deliverable to promote healthy wildlife populations and management under the grazing lands conservation section. Added possible Petroleum County film project.

Approval of PCCD Minutes:

Butch Arthur moved to approve the February 25, 2026, meeting minutes as amended; Brenda Brady seconded. Motion passed.

Guest/Public Comment: None.

Partner Reports:

MRCDC: Molly reported that they had their MRCDC Quarterly meeting March 23 in Lewistown. Presentations on the Fox Hills Aquifer update and a 310 update. The Woody Invasives Working Group meeting was March 24 in Lewistown. They are working on a river tour this summer.

MWC: Report emailed.

MSGOT: No report.

MSU Extension: Trish read Cody's report. New office staff includes Teresa Young - MSU Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent and Katy Jones - Extension Office Administrative Assistant. Backyard Orchards event will be April 18th - this is a workshop that will cover fruit production in Montana and attendees will learn about grafting fruit trees and will even be able to take scions home for pears and apples. RSVP is required as space and supplies are limited. Garden Planning for Harvest event will be April 14. MSU Extension and Montana Farmers Union are working together to put on a workshop covering the topic of planning past the garden and how to use the produce you produce throughout the summer and fall.

DNRC: Veronica reported on the active project/planning grant cycle. They had 4 applications. The public comment period is currently open through the DNRC grant page. Trish will send on the link. Virtual grant hearings are tentatively scheduled for April 24, 2026, with final award determinations expected on May 8.

NRCS: Reba reported working on EQIP rankings; deadline is 3/27 with preapprovals being announced the next week. Will then be working on CSP applications; CSP ranking deadlines scheduled for Mid-April. Statewide NRCS staffing is down significantly, but Lewistown Work Unit is well staffed.

PCCD Water Program: Lesley reported that the Vogel Reservoir site visit was rescheduled for April 9. She will be submitting the DNRC quarterly report. Reached out to the MT Salinity Control group to get insight from them. Discussed a mini water symposium workshop. Working on 310 files with Trish next week. Working on a WaterSmart Grant; McDonald Creek project might be a potential candidate. The board approved travel for the Boots on the Ground networking event in Lewistown from March 31 to April 1, 2026. Discussed Lesley's meeting with NRCS. Laura discussed upcoming legislature that is pushing irrigation infrastructure help nationwide.

Winnett ACES: Desi reported that the coffee shop is open but the upstairs work has been stalled. Charsi working on healthcare assessment will be sent out to the community. Planning a 10 year celebration with a 55 Main grand opening Aug/Sept. Gari King is planning a Young Goddess gathering. Jen Solf is back to work and planning workshops. Kendall has started soil sampling with producers, and planning pasture walks. Compost is available at \$45/yard. Looking for producers that want cover crop. Conservation Program - working on outreach with ranchers already worked with. Pursuing the Cinnabar grant for fence modifications with the local FFA. Skylar supporting NRCS and getting red carded; training in April. Wrapping up the Rowton Bank project; reseeding and willows to be planted by Big Sky Watershed Core members in April. Developing projects with hemp. The IND Hemp Company is donating erosion and control blankets, and fiber blocks to help in transition zone of Rowton bank. Discussed the Montana Grasslands Partnership; meeting with them and discussing roles. Discussed Landscale meeting coming up, platform to help fundraise, working through what that looks like and how to tell story. World wildlife fund overseeing. Opportunity to look at a water grant to support Lesley's position. Brenda reported that

ACES met with the Black Foot Challenge; advise on fund raising. They have mentored ACES through the years. Land Committee is pursuing a ranch for grass bank projects.

CEMIST: Brent reported that the IAG workshop in Winnett was well attended with about 70 attendees and almost 20 applicators receiving CECs. CEMIST's quarterly meeting will be tomorrow at 10AM with a presentation from Bryce Maxell and the Montana Natural Heritage Program efforts and tools available to managers and producers. Brent will present to the R1 FS leadership team and staff regarding ongoing work with the EHS. The WIWG met and the State wide Woody Invasive Management plan is available on line or a printed copy in the PCCD office. The CEMIST AIS grant application was recommended for full funding and has been sent to the DNRC director for review and approval. The MT Biocontrol group will be in the Grass Range area this spring/summer for Leafy Spurge biocontrol collection. If you are interested in collecting or receiving some, please let Brent know.

BLM: No report.

Supervisor Reports:

Brenda Brady: Did not file at the courthouse and thinking about not renewing for another term.

Laura Kiehl: Headgates have been ordered for the Petrolia project. Has been accepted onto a national fire team so will miss some meetings and/or will attend virtually during the fire season.

Ralph Corbett: No report.

Jay King: No report.

Rodney Rowton: No report.

Butch Arthur: Discussed meeting locations for the PCCD meetings.

Tye Lund: 310 application discussion; requested a 310 application.

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

Old Business:

- A. Long Range Plan – Brenda Brady moved to approve the Long Range Plan as amended; Ralph Corbett seconded. Motion passed.

New Business:

- A. 310 Updates – Intermountain - Jay King moved to deem the 2026-2 Intermountain 310 application as NOT A PROJECT pending FWP recommendation; Ralph Corbett seconded. Motion passed.
- B. MRCD PCCD Representative – Since a board member did not step up for this, tabled for the next meeting.
- C. Annual Workplan Approval – Brenda Brady moved to approve the PCCD 2026 Annual Work Plan as amended; Jay King seconded. Motion passed.

- D. Fiscal Manager Position & Supplies – Introduced Mackenzie Schreiner. Ralph Corbett moved to approve Mackenzie to purchase (up to a \$1000) a laptop and miscellaneous supplies needed; Brenda Brady seconded. Motion passed. Kenzie stated that she will be gone May 8-13 and June 15-18, but will be available to work remotely if needed.
- E. Administrative Grant – Katie is working with Kenzie on this. Tabled until later.
- F. PCCD Budget – Special Budget Meeting was set for April 22, 4pm.
- G. MRCDC Budget approval - DNRC grant – Molly discussed the current and past MRCDC budgets and issues. Discussed options. Will table approval until the next PCCD meeting after the final budget is approved through the MRCDC Council.
- H. MRCDC sponsorship fee – Molly discussed last reimbursement complications and that MRCDC is not allowed to have a sponsorship fee to the PCCD anymore. Looking at options. Discussed what the YRCDC does. Tabled until later.
- I. MRCDC MOU Review/Edits – Discussed MOU and possible edits. Veronica discussed adding MRCDC to the PCCD FY27 CDA grant. Tabled until later.

Administrative:

- A. Grant & District Updates: Looked over Admin March report. Trish discussed upcoming events, tree orders, grant work and proposed that the PCCD starts pursuing a project film to tell the story of historical conservation in Petroleum County, as well as the town of Winnett history and current projects, modeled after a similar project in Carter County. Discussed different film company options and layout of the video. The board agreed to send Trish to a Meet and Greet reception in Helena April 6.

Katie discussed financials. The board agreed to keep Katie at the flat monthly contract rate for another month, and not hourly. Discussed credit cards instead of debit cards for employees. Jay King motioned to add Mackenzie Schreiner to the Garfield County Bank account for both PCCD and MRCDC as the Administrator; Butch Arthur seconded. Motion passed.

- A. **Petroleum CD:** Ralph Corbett moved to pay the PCCD unpaid bills; Tye Lund seconded. Motion passed.
- B. **Missouri River CD Council:** Ralph Corbett moved to pay the MRCDC unpaid bills; Tye Lund seconded. Motion passed.

Correspondence: None.

Governance Calendar: The Governance Calendar was reviewed for April.

Announcements:

- A. Next Special Board meeting: April 22, 2026, 4pm– PCCD Office.
- B. Next Regular Board meeting: April 29, 2026, 5pm– PCCD Office.

Approval of absences: Laura Kiehl called for a vote on approving Rodney Rowton's absence. Butch

Arthur made a motion to approve Rodney's absence; Jay King seconded. The absence of Rodney Rowton was approved due to unanimous approval.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm

Laura L Kiehl
Laura Kiehl, Chair

Brenda Brady
Brenda Brady, Board Secretary

Trish J. Smith
Trish J. Smith, District Administrator