

*Montana Association of Conservation Districts
Employees Organization*



ANNUAL FALL BUSINESS MEETING

November 10, 1999

State Convention, Holiday Inn
Billings, Montana

The Annual Fall Business Meeting was held at the Holiday Inn on Wednesday, November 10, 1999 in Billings in conjunction with the annual MACD State Convention. President DeAnna Dreyer called the meeting to order at 11:00 with everyone introducing themselves.

In attendance were: Ted Dodge, NRCS Liaison, Helena

AREA I Pat Johnson, Valley County CD, Glasgow (Sec/Treas)
James Altenburg, Petroleum County CD, Winnett
Jodi Pierson, Garfield County CD, Jordan
Joni Sherman, Roosevelt County CD, Culbertson

AREA II DeAnna Dreyer, Custer County CD, Miles City (President)
Sandra Brown, Prairie County CD, Terry
Julie Goss, Richland County CD, Sidney
Barbara Int-Hout, Dawson County CD, Glendive
Evelyn Kondelik, McCone County CD, Circle
Renee Nelson, Wibaux CD, Wibaux

AREA III Julia Bitz, Chouteau County CD, Fort Benton
Diane Jones, Phillips County CD, Malta
Gloria Mason, Glacier County CD, Cut Bank
Marlene Moon, Liberty County CD, Chester
Shonny Nordlund, Fergus County CD, Lewistown
Shannon Sattleen, Blaine County CD, Chinook

AREA IV Barbara Berry, Stillwater CD, Columbus
Sandra Cooper, Carbon CD, Joliet
LaVerne Ivie, Yellowstone CD, Billings
Tami Kimball, Rosebud CD, Forsyth
Cheryl Miller, Upper Musselshell CD, Harlowton
Karen Morales, Treasure County CD, Hysham
Alice Sellars, Lower Musselshell CD, Roundup
Coral Wilson, Sweet Grass County CD, Big Timber

AREA V Jean Dunn, Green Mountain CD, Trout Creek
Chris Malgren, Lake County CD, Ronan
Vicki McGuire, Lincoln CD, Eureka
Julie Ralston, Bitterroot CD, Hamilton

AREA VI Amy Miller, Park CD, Livingston (Vice-President)
Donna Burns, Meagher County CD, White Sulphur Springs
Chris Evans, Lewis & Clark CD, Helena
Charlotte Lewis, Broadwater CD, Townsend

As you can see, each Area was well represented.

DeAnna asked if there needed to be any additions to the Agenda. There were none. The Montana Watercourse report will be given right away, as Pete and Drew had to be someplace else.

MONTANA WATERCOURSE – Pete Schade and Drew Overholser

The Montana Watercourse program provides conservation groups, watershed groups, and many types of citizen groups, as well as schools, education products that involve water quality monitoring. They provide volunteers with equipment, tools and training to be able to go out and monitor their streams and their local watersheds. The equipment and training they provide enables anyone without training to pick up and use it after a 2-day workshop. They will be able to collect data on physical parameters, chemical parameters and biological parameters. They do ask their volunteers for a time commitment to go out 2-3 times a year to sample. There is a pamphlet with guidelines for them to follow. Their main mission is #1 Public Education and #2 Collect Baseline Data on a lot of the streams that may be on the 303(d) list. A lot of streams are being taken off the list because there isn't sufficient and credible data for that listing. They try to provide the tools and equipment to collect the sufficient and credible data and to start to begin to gather data on the stream. If we, as a conservation district, want to set up a water-monitoring program with assistance from volunteers, then by all means come and talk to them. They have the equipment and the funds to help so they will provide assistance where needed.

Drew is the Wetlands Coordinator. He has sent out several public service announcements on wetlands protection. The main thrust of his position is to offer wetlands stewardship workshops. What is that? They are not really sure as they haven't had one yet and the workshops are based on local news. It is the type of workshop that is created from perhaps the conservation district, what their needs are, what the needs of the landowners are. They will customize their workshop to their needs. They are basing the workshops on the "Landowners Guide to Montana Wetlands" which just came out.

There is a booth set up and everyone was invited to stop over and talk to them.

MINUTES

Barb Berry made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 4, 1999 Spring Executive Board meeting. Marlene Moon seconded the motion, motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Everyone took a few minutes to look over the treasurer's report. Barb Berry made a motion to accept the treasurer's report dated 10/31/99. Tami Kimball seconded the motion, motion carried. DeAnna asked if we wanted the fiscal year end for MACDEO financial information to be the same as the districts' or from convention to convention. Donna Burns made a motion the fiscal year be from convention to convention (November 1st to October 31st). LaVerne Ivie seconded the motion, motion carried.

PROPOSED BUDGET

Pat had worked up a proposed budget based on last year (November 1st to October 31st). After everyone had looked over the budget Donna Burns suggested adding a grant figure for training. LaVerne Ivie had talked to Laurie Zeller about this on the last conference call. Laurie had suggested budgeting for the grant. It looks good to the 223 committee as it shows we are planning for the next year. Evelyn Kondelik made a motion to include \$5,000 in 223 grant funds for training. Cheryl Miller seconded the motion, motion carried. There was more discussion over this as to whether or not this amount would cover the expenses for the year for the training that was being planned. LaVerne Ivie made a motion to amend the \$5,000 to \$10,000. Gloria Mason seconded the motion, motion carried. It was thought that we could apply for two 223 grants during the year instead of just one.

LaVerne Ivie asked if the \$600 budgeted for convention scholarships was enough due to the overwhelming response of applicants. DeAnna reported that it was. The amount used this year was a little over \$597.00. There were 10 applicants and 4 were approved. Last year we were asking for applicants right up to the deadline. So, you just don't know what it is going to be like from year to year. This year could have been an exception. Marlene Moon felt that newness of the employee should not be considered due to the turnover of employees. She thought a new employee should have some idea of what her/his job is before attending a convention. She didn't feel a new employee would get much out of it. She felt that a lot of the older employees were overlooked. She felt that there should be some criteria set for selecting who would receive a scholarship. LaVerne Ivie, DeAnna Dryer and Amy Miller had gone over the applicants and selected who should receive a scholarship. Some of the criteria used was mill levy, newness of employee and distance to convention. LaVerne Ivie said they had considered the new employee suggestion that was just discussed. It was eventually decided to leave the budgeted amount for scholarships at \$600. Chris Evans made a motion the Executive Committee deal with the criteria for the scholarships. At their discretion, they could write it down or just agree on the criteria. Jodi Pierson seconded the motion, motion carried. Marlene Moon made a motion to approve the amended proposed budget. Jean Dunn seconded the motion, motion carried.

DeAnna asked for a volunteer to apply for the 223 grant. Jodi Pierson, Garfield County CD volunteered to do so.

TRAINING COMMITTEE

Donna Burns gave the training committee report. Everyone had received a copy of the draft MACDEO Training Plan. There had been a couple of committees working on this, along with conference calls and requested information from the Area Meetings. Donna felt that if the Employee Handbook were functional it would be the answer to a lot of the training needs. She also asked if anyone had any questions, comments, etc. on the proposed training plan. DeAnna commented that she had received a letter from Shirley Gammon granting the Facilitator Training that had been requested. It hasn't been decided yet as to whether or not it will be a one-day or two-day session. DeAnna will coordinate the facilitator training session. She also reported that Frank Mastandrea had brought binders and copies of everything they could dig up for the Employee Handbook. We just have to put it together and we thank Frank very greatly for doing this. Shonny Nordlund reported that MSU-Billings puts on a good computer training session. They come with 11 laptops so the class is limited. They charge \$90/hour but they come to you and furnish everything, books, etc. Their travel would have to be paid. Pat made a motion to accept the training plan. Joni Sherman, seconded the motion, motion carried. Donna thanked the committee that had worked on the training plan.

Donna reported that one of the items brought up during one of the conference calls was combining all of the educational things we do into one pamphlet. They didn't "want to reinvent the wheel". This was done in 95/96 during one of the Capacity Building meetings. It was the Education Committee that had put it together. Donna made 20 copies and brought them to the meeting. She did state that if you were not a new employee you should already have a copy of this. If you are unable to find it, she would be happy to make you a copy.

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Since Laurie Zeller was absent, Marlene Moon gave a report on the Employee Handbook. Marlene, Charlotte Lewis, Gayla Wortman and Laurie Zeller had worked on the handbook. One of the concerns they had in doing this was the cost involved. They really want to encourage the employees to add information that is unique to their District. The Employee Handbook can be a good training tool for new employees. Take it home, read it over and the committee that worked on the handbook is open to suggestions, comments, criticisms, etc. They are going to try and update it each year and it will be a standard item on the agenda. Marlene thanked everyone involved in putting the handbook together, especially Laurie Zeller who had put in a lot of time.

DeAnna suggested everyone stick around after the meeting to "stuff" the binders and take one with you. She will see that the people who aren't in attendance get a handbook.

HISTORIAN

Marlene Moon reported that Karen Lamey, Toole County CD administrator had resigned. She was our Historian. Karen has given Marlene the album she had started. We are going to need someone to take over her responsibility. Taking pictures at convention, training sessions, etc. You don't need to be in attendance at these sessions. You can have other people submit them to you. DeAnna asked if there were any volunteers willing to take over this responsibility. Chris Evans volunteered.

SCHOLARSHIP REPORT

DeAnna gave the scholarship report. Scholarships were awarded to Jodi Pierson, Garfield County CD, Julie Goss, Richland County CD, Barb Int-Hout, Dawson County CD, and Renee Nelson, Wibaux CD.

OLD BUSINESS

GRIEVANCE POLICY REVIEW

Everyone had received a copy of the draft of the Grievance Procedure. DeAnna asked Ted Dodge if had read it. Ted said he had and was waiting to see if we were going to adopt it today. This came about at the Spring Board Meeting. We were asked to develop a standard grievance procedure, as the employee training sessions aren't places to come and complain, etc. DeAnna asked if anyone had any comments, questions, suggestions, etc. or did we wanted to table it until later or comment/accept it now. If everyone is comfortable with it we can approve it today. If accepted it was recommended it be added to the Policy & Procedures section of the employee handbook. Pat made a motion to accept the Grievance Procedure as is and include it as part of the Policy & Procedures section of the employee handbook. Amy Miller seconded the motion, motion carried.

NORTHERN PLAINS REGIONAL ASSOCIATION

Originally MACDEO had belonged to the NPREA but had chosen to withdraw a few years ago. Julia Bitz & Marlene had looked into membership for businesses to the Districts. Julia reported that what you get out of the Regional Association is like any other association, you get out of it what you put into it. The Regional Association is getting more states involved and is getting more organized. Julia feels it is a good way to share what is in the region. Jean Dunn asked what would be required of us to rejoin. Do we get involved individually or do we have a representative get back to us? DeAnna said that someone is appointed. Sometimes it is the president sometimes a different individual. That person would then come back and report to MACDEO. LaVerne stated that one of the reasons for our withdrawal was that it was felt the organization was not really that professional. They have elected a new president and really scaled up their activities, etc. since our withdrawal. She felt it would be a good idea to rejoin. Marlene thought there was also a financial concern as to why we had withdrawn. She thought that we had decided to keep our dues in our own organization until we got our feet under us. A copy of a Code of Ethics was passed around. This was adopted on the national level. DeAnna felt that if we wanted to be treated as professionals, maybe a Code of Ethics would help us along. Pat suggested increasing the dues by \$5 if it was decided that we wanted to rejoin. This is the amount needed by each individual to join the national association. Barb Berry made a motion we rejoin NPREA and increase our dues by \$5 to cover the cost. She also recommended we come back in a year and see what we have gotten out of it. LaVerne Ivie seconded the motion, motion carried. LaVerne also suggested sending someone to the meeting. We not only need to join but we also need to become active in the organization. Shonny Nordlund volunteered to be our representative this year as she will already be in attendance.

NEW BUSINESSNAME BADGES

LaVerne Ivie reported that the original policy was to automatically give new employees a name badge. This had been changed at the Spring Board Meeting. It was decided a new employee would receive a free name badge on their one-year anniversary. If the employee wanted to purchase one before then for themselves, a supervisor, etc. they could do so by sending LaVerne an e-mail or dropping her a note with the information. The name badges are \$10. She will be submitting an order during convention so if you want to order one get it in to her. LaVerne made a motion to formally adopt the policy as part of the by-laws. Cheryl Miller seconded the motion, motion carried.

BREAK FOR LUNCH

MACDEO FUNDRAISING AT CONVENTION & RESPONSIBILITES OF HOST DISTRICT

Do we plan the fundraiser for the convention and have the host district comply with what was planned or does the host district make the decision? If the host district makes the decision, do we find new fundraising projects? It was voted on at the spring meeting to have a raffle item from Montana Silversmiths and a Mardi Gras dance. The host district decided afterwards they did not want to do the dance and the raffle item was changed to a bronze. Pat thought suggestions should be brought to the spring meeting to be voted on. LaVerne reported that she had taken the dance idea to her board and they had ordered her not to work on it. So, she took it to the area meeting to see if anyone else wanted to work on it. Nobody did; therefore, it was decided to not have a dance this year. LaVerne also said that historically for years and years it was up to the host district to decide on Wednesday nights' entertainment and the employees organization has sort of honed in on it and taken it over the last couple of years. She feels it should be the host district with the host area making the decision. She thinks it is much easier if the host district does it. DeAnna thought it might be a good idea if the host district/host area get a list of suggestions together as to what they are willing to do and what is available in their area and bring them to the spring board meeting or have MACDEO as a whole vote on what the fundraiser should be in order to keep MACDEO involved in it. If MACDEO does not stay involved in it and has to come up with a different fundraiser then, they will no longer cover the expenses for the Wednesday entertainment. Barbara Berry feels MACDEO and the host district/host area can work together and compromise on what the entertainment should be. LaVerne thought we should ask MACD if it is okay for us to have the first nights' activity forever. MACD has been really good about letting us do whatever we want within reason. Pat made a motion the host district come up with suggestions for convention entertainment and present them at the spring board meeting. The suggestions would be discussed and then voted on. This way the host district decides what they would like to do and MACDEO stays involved in it. MACDEO would not come up with any suggestions it would be left up to the host district/area that way the host would be doing something they want to do rather than what they were told they should do. Sandy Brown seconded the motion, motion carried. DeAnna will talk to MACD to see if they are comfortable with this decision.

LEVELS OF MACDEO MEMBERSHIP

The Montana Salinity Control Association had donated \$150 to MACDEO. They requested \$50 go towards the Wednesday night entertainment and asked if the balance would give MSCA a sustaining membership. The answer to this was no and can be found in the By-Laws under Article V – Membership. Dues for business organizations, corporations, and governmental entities will be \$100 per year. If an individual wanted to donate \$100 then they would be granted lifetime membership. DeAnna and Julia Bitz had talked to other states and none of them offered lifetime membership to business, organizations, etc. Gloria Mason asked if MSCA was considered as a conservation district or part of one. Marlene Moon and Gloria will check into the status of MSCA.

Triangle Conservation District

NEXT YEAR'S RAFFLE CHAIRMAN

DeAnna asked for a volunteer to be the raffle chairman for next year's convention. LaVerne has decided she wants to step down. She was given a big thank-you and a hearty handclap for her many years as chairman. Sandy Brown, Prairie County CD, volunteered.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

With the resignation of Diane Stephenson and Patty Winchell, a newsletter editor is needed. Amy Miller, Park CD, volunteered to take it over.

RAFFLE

Marlene Moon has agreed to take care of the raffle during convention. The bronze will be on display during convention and tickets are still available. Everyone is reminded to turn in their raffle money to her.

WORKSHOP

Sandy Brown reported that "Project 2000" would be presented at 2:30. This is a joint workshop between Custer County CD, Prairie County CD, Carter County CD, Little Beaver CD, Powder River CD, McCone County CD and Garfield County CD. The project was presented at the spring board meeting and was given funding for a digital camera, camcorder, state-of-the-art printer and projector. This equipment is going to be used basically for marketing conservation districts. It was decided at the spring board meeting that they would present a workshop at convention.

COMEDY NIGHT

DeAnna reported that there are still tickets available for tonight's comedy show. Jan Fontaine had told her that 82 tickets had been sold so far with registration. This is not quite enough to cover the expenses for the comedian which are around \$1,100.

OTHER BUSINESS

Ted Dodge reported he is available to help wherever needed and he is available to provide assistance for the training plan.

Donna Burns reminded us to give her the ownership maps that were brought for her to put on display. She also asked Marlene Moon for the entertainment list. Marlene had left it in her room but will give it to her. She also made a suggestion that this is something that can be updated every year. If you come up with an entertainer, etc. that you feel should be added to the list, just send her the information and she will update it.

DeAnna reminded everyone to stick around and help put together the employee handbooks if they had no place else to be at this time.

There being no further business, Sandy Brown made a motion we adjourn. Gloria Mason seconded the motion, motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 1:30.

Respectfully submitted,

Pat Johnson

Pat Johnson

Secretary/Treasurer