

MACD Education Committee  
October 14, 2020 10 am  
Via Zoom conferencing

**Committee Members:** Elisha Dempsey, Melissa Downing, Tony Barone, Rick Van Dyken, Bill Naegeli, Bob Petermann, Pam Liggett, Greg Jergeson

Board members present: Elisha Dempsey, Bob Petermann

Others present: Mary Hendrix, Heidi Fleury, Andrew Kretschmer, Karl Christians, Rebecca Boslough and Chris Evans

The meeting convened at 10:05 am

Resolutions: There was discussion about the upcoming legislative session and how the Education Committee could potentially help with that effort. Rebecca Boslough from MACD was present and updated the group on what the current activities are. Jeff Tiberi is working on updated talking points for CDs and there is a brochure from the last session that is being updated with DNRC numbers. The brochure is an MACD document that can be handed out to legislators. Elisha Dempsey asked how the Education Committee could help. Boslough said that she can send the brochure draft out for review. Dempsey asked if anyone has worked on a reprint and lamination of the wallet card. Karl Christians will look into whether DNRC will work on that. Boslough said that they could create a landing page on the MACD site that would have updates on legislative activities and ideas for CDs to utilize. Tiberi is currently also working on a document to explain how the bills submitted to the legislature work. This could be added to the policy blog page with any resources on policy. The web page could have the legislative ad hoc committee notes as well as the card information that was previously discussed. MACD has been discussing a website review.

Priorities for the Education Committee

There was discussion about the priorities as defined by the survey done at the Area Meetings in 2019. Heidi Fleury said that she has been struggling with outreach and education in the time of COVID and wanted to know if there were resources that we could pull together for CDs on how to do online education. We could reach out to the NACD outreach and education people and see if they have tips and/or resources for us. We could compile some of the available resources on how to do trainings online and send those out to the CDs. Mary Hendrix, Chris Evans and Heidi Fleury can work on that together. Flathead CD has been doing a lot of those and would also be a great resource to talk to. If we can incorporate physical or tactile components into online training it would be especially helpful. Apparently, we could likely buy photoshop or

other software licenses to be reimbursed since they relate to a change in how we do business during COVID.

There is a potential for CDs to get webcams through the Reimbursement Program for COVID. These would work well for socially distanced meetings and programs. Short videos about CD projects/activities would also be a very helpful area to increase capabilities, the hang ups are generally that CDs don't know how to use the technology they have, or don't have the technology to use. We need a good "how to" guide in how to put these videos together. Heidi Fleury's AmeriCorps person could probably put together some tips or a guide on this. She asked if MACD's new communications person would possibly be able to assist with this and Boslough said that yes, they could.

We should also be working on a way to make the MACD website a location for people to find direct links to the Conservation District websites.

David Martin has yet to get in touch with the Montana Weed Control Association on collaborative training efforts with Weed Districts. We need to do outreach to the CDs to remind them to work with their local Weed Districts and Extension offices on those efforts.

There was a question from Dempsey on the status of Shannon Stober's (Verve Xchange) presenting during the convention. Apparently, Shannon isn't keen on the idea of doing virtual trainings, so has opted out on that. There was further discussion on where we are with that leadership training. The last thing being worked on was a Mission Statement and a Vision and the organization has gotten off track on that. David Martin said that having to re-create the wheel all the time and pay for more of the same training we've already had isn't a good use of Conservation District dues money. The pandemic will drive the need for virtual activity and we need to keep moving forward on that training. Perhaps MACD could ask her to give them a way to keep talking about all of this, homework or background, virtually, a sort of modified training. There was discussion about how trainings that are "one and done" aren't really ever done. With staff and supervisor turnover, there will always be a need for this kind of training.

For the near future, those present discussed priorities for the committee meetings. Looking at the survey results, the group chose the following for priorities:

### Training

1. Employees
  - a. CDB is doing monthly webinars
  - b. The EO is working on ongoing training/education for employ
2. Supervisors
  - a. Leadership training-how do we restart this effort?

- b. DNRC is working on 310 training and some supervisor training for CD Supervisors and staff

Supporting Conservation Education to the Public through individual CDs

1. Rolling River Trailer
  - a. Creation of a waterproof User's Guide and an online guide  
Who: Emma Kelsick, SRWG Big Sky Watershed Corps member, and Trailer Sponsors  
Status-Completed
  - b. Lease review and revision as necessary of the MACD to Sponsor leases and the Sponsor to Sub-Lessees. This will ensure that operations and liability are clear to all involved  
Who: Trailer Committee, Emma Kelsick, BSWC member of SRWG  
Status-In Progress
2. Telling the CD Stories to Public/Legislators  
Creating videos for upload to website, YouTube, etc.
3. Collaboration with the Montana Weed Control Association to see how CDs could best coordinate upcoming education efforts
4. Coordination with local MSU Extension offices to collaborate on training and education efforts
5. Creating webinars/online education in place of in-person events

Outreach (Promotion/PR)

1. Creating videos for upload to Websites, YouTube etc.
2. Subcommittee (Fleury, Hendrix, Evans) will research further resources for creating content and accessing already created content

Education Resolutions – Deal with Education Related Resolutions as necessary

1. Former year Resolutions  
See attached
2. Current Resolutions

MACD Scholarships – Assess scholarship applications and make recommendations to MACD Board

The next meeting will be November 4 at 10 am via phone call on the MACD Conference Line as per request by Bob Petermann.

Resolution 09-11: Cooperation with Montana Association of Realtors

From Ruby Valley Conservation District

MACD work with the Montana Association of Realtors to include a disclosure outlining the 310 law and riparian protection in the model Buy/Sell Agreement.

Committee Status: Elisha said that realtors have a section on noxious weed disclosure and wondered how best to move forward with this idea. Evans will contact Jason Garber and see if the 310 committee would be willing to take this on. Jergeson said that it would be good to keep pursuing it. So many people buy on lakes and rivers and that it's in the best interest of landowners to know this information. The committee could request input from other CDs who have had some success with this. Evans can reach out to the CDs to see what their programs have been.

Resolution 10-09: Aquatic Invasive Species

From Lake County Conservation District

MACD petition the Montana Legislature to promulgate, pass and fund legislation that requires mandatory watercraft inspections for all watercraft that are traveling into Montana and all watercraft within Montana that are traveling from waterway to waterway.

Committee Status: Need to have links to updated activities added to this resolution – ask MACD to add those links.

Resolution 12-07: Encourage NRCS to Provide Technical Support for Montana Range Days

From Ruby Valley Conservation District

NRCS State Conservationist and staff are encouraged to continue their technical support to all natural resource outreach and educational events to the fullest extent possible;

MACD Board of Directors should work with the NRCS State Conservationist and staff to ensure that adequate support is available for NRCS to continue to assist with Montana Range Days and all other natural resource educational activities and outreach events.

Committee Status: Elisha can take this to the Board as some kind of Policy between NRCS and MACD/CDs.

Resolution 13-11: Montana Conservation Practices Month

Madison Conservation District

Montana CDs and Watershed Groups work to establish August as Montana Conservation Promotion Month starting August 2014. Participants will work with Montana Association of Conservation Districts and Montana Watershed Coordination Council to develop marketing materials (press release, logo, etc) and promote their own

local event. Participants agree to organize and host a tour of a successful project or program in their area during the year.

Committee Status: With Covid going on, this could be difficult right now. Dempsey said we should be at fairs, have press releases etc. Evans indicated that the EO may be taking the PR effort on in a more organized way.

#### Resolution 14-03: Recognition of Local Ecological Knowledge in Natural Resource Management

Garfield Conservation District

Montana Association of Conservation Districts should support the development of a Local Ecological Knowledge (LEK) program in Conservation Districts and promote the value of local ecological knowledge to agencies and the importance of local support for conservation activities and management of public lands.

Committee Status: Need to talk to the CD that wrote this and see what their goals were. Christians said that the idea with this was to develop at the state level and really open up better communication with state and federal land managers within the state. Martin said that the idea is pretty broad and would need some fleshing out. This should be taken forward to MACD to create a subcommittee to further work on this. Christians said that it could just be a process that someone at MACD could utilize to compile notes/history/information to put into a formal comment. Jergeson said that he thinks that as a service to the operators on the land and the agencies that deal with them, we should facilitate discussion between them. We need to make sure that when we help landowners react to a proposal, we need to be sure that they understand what is factually in the proposal. Martin said that this goes back to how the Montana Association of Conservation Districts promotes local Conservation Districts. If we can formalize this, we can really advertise CDs as the holders of long-term local knowledge.

#### Resolution 16-05: Pollinator Outreach

From Lake County CD

NACD and MACD should continue their support of Pollinator projects, through:

- Educational and outreach materials with specific emphasis on the relationship between pollinators and agriculture;
  - Funding for habitat establishment, monitoring, and restoration;
  - Development of ideas and templates for pollinator projects;
- MACD should encourage collaboration with other agencies and organizations to further develop local and regional plans for pollinator habitat enhancement; and MACD encourages individual Conservation Districts to include pollinator projects in their annual goal setting.

Committee Status: Pollinators are on the Convention Agenda. All of the pollinator information could be available by link. MACD could put the materials on the conservation menu.

#### 18-02 Promoting Workshops on Invasive Weeds

From Big Horn CD

MACD should help facilitate informational workshops with County Weed Boards as requested by CDs regarding invasive grass species in order to educate the public on how to identify and differentiate these species from other grasses on their ag lands and provide education on control methods.

Committee Status: Martin will talk to the MWCA about their direction on this and how we can work collaboratively with them on the issues of invasive grasses. Dempsey had reached out to their local weed people. Add this one to next meeting agenda at the end too. Christians said MSU has had a number of workshops on this issue. The Weed Control Association collaboration makes a lot of sense to increase outreach to Districts. Rachael Frost is on that board and could be a good contact as well.