

MACD Education Committee Meeting  
January 20, 2021 10 am  
Via Zoom Conferencing

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

**Committee members in attendance:** Pam Liggett, Elisha Dempsey,

**Also in Attendance:** Laura Pavey-Connor, Robbie Savelkoul, Radley Watkins, Kay Webb, Laura Johnson, David Martin, Andrew Kretschmer, Eric Rannestad, Connor Mertz, Rebecca Boslough, Mary Hendrix, Samantha Tappenback, Heidi Fleury, Kim at Glacier CD, Becky Clements, Someone from Sheridan County, Sarah Bowman and Chris Evans.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Elisha Dempsey at 10:02 am. Pam and Elisha had both read the minutes but since the meeting didn't have a quorum of Committee Members, no action could be taken.

David Martin began the presentation section for the Conservation District outreach and marketing. The first section was an outreach discussion about how the CDs can get the word out about who they are and what they do. The effort has been broken into 2 parts with today's meeting focusing on the Basics of Marketing and a brief history of Montana CD outreach efforts. In February we'll look at how the Washington State CDs have done their outreach efforts. Dave introduced Laura Parvey-Connors from Meld Media.

Laura gave some background on herself and her time in marketing. She describes herself as a "Jill of all trades" with a background in marketing, websites etc. She breaks marketing into 3 sections. There are goals, there are systems and there are impacts.

Setting a goal: Setting a goal is not only about choosing the rewards you want to enjoy, but also the costs you are willing to pay. Once goals are set, a system needs to be developed. If you have a specific plan for how to get to your goal, you are 2 to 3 times more likely to stick to your goals. Measuring the impact of your actions is important for motivation. Keeping track of your progress is important. SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound). Marketing goals need to be broken down into small tangible goals. Moving into the system,

## MOVE QUICKLY TO YOUR SYSTEM

You do not rise to  
the level of your  
goals.

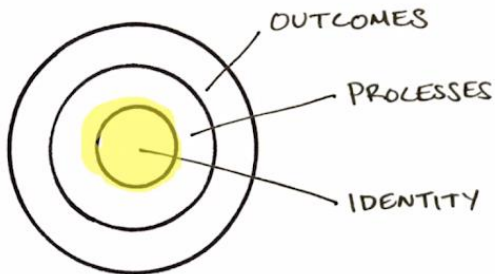
You fall to the level  
of your systems.

- James Clear

- WHY  
Your purpose.
- WHO  
Your ideal audience.
- DIFFERENCE  
How and why you are better.
- BENEFITS  
The story you want people to believe about the value you create.
- DISTRIBUTION  
How you reach people and get information into their hands.
- PLATFORM  
Where you tell your story.
- PROMOTION STRATEGY  
How you tell your story.
- CONVERSION STRATEGY  
How you deepen relationships with people.
- GROWTH STRATEGY  
The plan for attracting more people.
- REFERRAL STRATEGY  
The story you give people to tell.
- STRATEGY FOR INCREASING TRANSACTION VALUE  
How you delight people.
- RETENTION STRATEGY  
How you keep people coming back.

Clarify the identity--Why, Who, Difference and Benefits

## CLARIFY YOUR IDENTITY



- WHY  
Your purpose.
- WHO  
Your ideal audience.
- DIFFERENCE  
How and why you are better.
- BENEFITS  
The story you want people to believe about the value you create.

Vision & Mission

Why, Who, Difference, Benefits (to audience)



## VISION & MISSION

To encourage and promote voluntary conservation on private lands.

### WHY

Voluntary, locally-led and designed projects and educational activities that promote conservation. Stream Protection through the 310 Program.

### WHO

CDs historical main audience is agricultural.

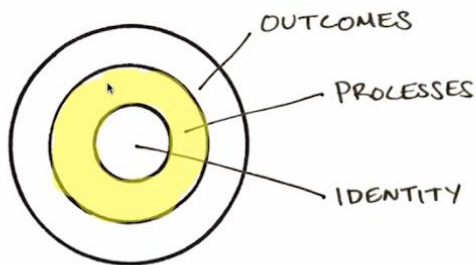
### DIFFERENCE

Conservation districts are units of local government designed to help citizens conserve their soil, water, and other renewable natural resources.

### BENEFITS

The story you want people to believe about your brand. This is about how it is relevant to them. Make this about the person, not about you.

## DEVELOP PROCESS/SYSTEM

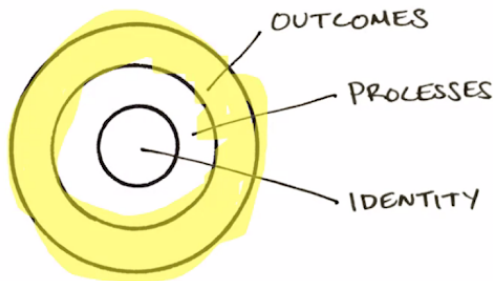


-  DISTRIBUTION  
How you reach people and get information into their hands.
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-  STRATEGY FOR INCREASING TRANSACTION VALUE  
How you delight people.
-  RETENTION STRATEGY  
How you keep people coming back.

Platform--Brochure, video, post, etc.

Promotional strategy will depend on what the platform is.

## MEASURE YOUR OUTCOME/IMPACT



What metric did you choose in your goal for measurement?  
What tools do you have in place to measure it?

Examples:  
Increase new visitors to our webpage.  
Increase social media fans.  
Increase social media likes.

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Goals are good for planning the process, systems are good for getting things done.

Radley Watkins asked how we as individual CDs develop our story, and if Laura has pointers on that. Laura said to go back to the 4 main identity questions. Depending on the effort and time available, you can look back at your long-term goals on a strategic or long-range plan to identify your goals and to align them with your plan. Focus groups are also a viable way to do that. Listening to the stories that people are telling helps identify the mission and vision of the group. Looking at the individual CDs and how they work together can also help with creating a plan. Radley said that the Missoula CD is looking at doing some re-branding that this will also help with.

Dave Martin talked a bit about the small budgets that CDs run on and asked if there is a quick way for an organization on a lean budget to do some measurements. Laura said that she works with a lot of nonprofit and other organizations that are limited in staff and tools. She says she's looked at a lot of tools that are free or very inexpensive. Time maximization is also important. Grassroots outreach to people who already know and promote you, is useful. Goals that are huge can often be broken into smaller, more manageable parts.

Dave Martin gave a retrospective on Montana CD outreach and marketing. His premise is that generally Conservation Districts aren't a well-known entity. How CDs present themselves means a lot. A few years ago, some CDs replaced some of their highway signs (entering/leaving). Dave met CDs first in 1993 and started working for DNRC in 1998. Every CD used to have posters that DNRC created from their photos and stories for legislative

sessions. One of the things that Dave saw at the sessions was that a person would start looking at the posters, and would then read every single one.

Display boards are more old school. The pop-up displays have become more affordable and mainstream in recent years. Event booths for fairs or other events are another option for outreach. At some point, around 2002, the conversation shifted into a more coordinated marketing effort. A contractor was hired to help define the message. Customized logos were created with the lazy C integrated. General or statewide and regional displays were created at one point.

Some CDs have advertisement on the equipment that they rent or loan out. One CD even did a really successful recycling project. But there was no recognition for the CD on the recycling trailer, so while it was a great project, there was no marketing for the CD from it.

Area trainings with Elevator speeches--Ray Ledgerwood from Washington State has been brought in for training in the past. A lot of the supervisors/staff realized that they were much better spokespersons or ambassadors for CDs than they thought.

Website upgrades--six or seven years ago, there was a push to do new websites and upgrades. MACD and DNRC were assisting CDs with putting together websites, but the effort pretty much stopped at that, without metrics or a larger outreach or branding effort.

Conservation events--Convention, Trent Loos came in to speak. CDs got all excited about doing a series of radio spots. One was done at convention, but it fizzled afterward. Amanda Radke is a national motivational speaker and she spoke at a convention. People were super excited, but there was little to no follow up. Conservation Charlie was a "mascot" for CDs for a long time but isn't as well-known as, say, Smokey Bear.

Dave talked about the competition--other conservation organizations--Sierra Club, Blackfoot Challenge, Ducks Unlimited, Montana Conservation Voters--and how they all discuss Conservation as being a part of their outreach. Where is our market in Conservation? What kind of conservation do we do?

Problems with CD outreach have been defined over the years as: Humility and shyness, preaching to the choir, living on our laurels(history), Overestimating CD recognition in the general public, has to be maintained over time (one big shot versus many small ones), marketing inconsistencies, are our partners communicating and cooperating?

How are we relevant NOW? Outreach that is well intentioned but is unsuccessful is a waste of time.

Displays for the whole state--the problems encountered: Resource issue, activity accomplished, and a budget. Visuals have to be high quality and tell a story with before and after. A repository must be readily available. Eric brought it up in regard to a project he's working on. 223 grants have gotten better at collecting this information in the last few years. Creation of a repository is critical.

What's next? February meeting--Washington State's approach, Laura Johnson with the Washington State Conservation Commission will present their 5 year outreach effort to promote their CDs.

Laura Johnson gave a brief overview about how Washington State is seeing some results from what they're doing. In February she'll talk about the challenge for CDs due to the diversity of the population that we work with, from traditional ag, to new ag, to urban, fire concerns etc. Determining our audience is important to help individual CDs target their outreach. We also need to brand ourselves at a state level for working with supervisors.

Scholarship update-MACD Board decision--Becca said that after the last Ed Committee meeting she did take the concern to the board. Instead of having \$1000 for scholarships, this year will be \$1500. The change was also made to the scholarship application. At this point, this is a one-time change. The money comes from interest from a DA Davidson investment account.

Updates on Online Education Efforts--Not much new for outreach events.

EO page updates--EO Website-changes have been started. Eric Rannestad from MACD says that structural updates are mainly complete. The MACD is looking at a rework of their site and in regard to a private page, they're looking at one private page that is password protected. Evans and others will continue to work on the content of the EO page.

EO training coming up (QuickBooks)--Evans and Fleury talked a bit about the QuickBooks training coming up. Elisha asked about QuickBooks/Quicken and if it would be easier for CDs. Evans said that there is a lot of QuickBooks expertise out there in the CD world and if CD administrators need assistance, they really should reach out to other Districts. Heidi Fleury said the training is tentatively scheduled for March 3-5 for 2 hours per day. Dave Martin said that with the old-style welcome wagon, they'd bring someone from a neighboring CD to help with QB/financial review and assistance. Evans asked about the Bostrom "specialty contacts list" that was discussed at the Zoom meeting on the CDB situation. Heidi Fleury said she's supposed to contact him about that. Mary Hendrix said that it's a good thing for Heidi to reach out to Mark about.

Supervisor Training-CDB--They are down to 3 people in the CDB and they're working on putting together a schedule for training. Elisha asked Mary to give an update on the once-a-

month webinars online. They're looking to NRCS to promote a TIPs training scheduled for February. She's working on putting together the new supervisor training. Elisha asked how we can help Mary move forward with those training efforts. Mary said the other thing she wanted to let CDs know about is that the Admin grant applications will be coming out soon. Long Range, there'll be a 310 workshop, and Randall Hopkins will put together a water reservations zoom meeting. With the legislative session things are a bit on the back burner. Mary said there was a request for records retention training follow up. Evans said she'd be willing to run one if people are interested. Mary Hendrix said she'd look for the power point that was done for the August training in 2020.

Legislative update--Becca talked a bit about the Weekly Leadership meeting, the Friday "check in". They have opened that up to all the CDs. It's a standing meeting on Fridays at 1 pm. During the session it's gotten pretty busy. People are welcome to join in on the conversation.

Evans said that there are no new requests for education funding at this time.

Becca gave a brief session related update. The bill about supervisor elections died in committee. It apparently got caught up in some other controversy. The Clerk and Recorder's Association were "informational" witnesses and were concerned about changing election laws. Elisha asked, from the individual county standpoint, what's next? Hearings for the DNRC budget are scheduled for February 1-3. Public comment is scheduled for the final day. They will be meeting with the new director for the DNRC to discuss concerns about the funding for CDs. Elisha asked if they're sending out emails about needs for letters, calls or testimony from the CDs. Becca says they haven't sent out anything about that hearing yet, Tiberi will likely provide insight on it. There are a lot of bills in their bill tracker looking at bills that could affect CDs. But they're closely tracking only a handful at the moment. There is a potential fix for the loss of the Coal Tax money that the CDB funnels to CDs, from general fund money that hasn't yet been approved. Elisha asked if there's anything on the webpage that CDs can look at. Becca said the bulk of that is in those legislative reports that come out from Tiberi. Right now, Tiberi's bigger report comes out once a month, and the LAHC emails are coming out weekly.

The next meeting is tentatively set for February 24, 2021 at 10 am via Zoom. Martin will find out if that date and time work for Laura Johnson.

Adjourned at 12:10