



LEWIS & CLARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT

790 Colleen Street • Helena, Montana 59601 • 449-5000 ext. 112

7/19/18

Local Work Group

Hosted by Lewis & Clark Conservation District

10:30 a.m. 790 Colleen Street, Helena MT 59601

Bailey Rapp

Chris Evans

John George

Diane Fitzgerald

Steve Granzow

Jeff Ryan

The meeting convened at 10:35 a.m.

John passed out a synopsis of last year's contracting needs and requests. There has been increased traffic for forestry projects. Last year was a big fire year and that drives the forestry requests.

Newest concerns are the flooding issues, especially those in the northern part of the county. There is concern about assigning something very specific for the priority resource concern, because it leaves too many landowners out of the running for projects.

Last year's #1 resource concern was: improve plant health in Lewis and Clark County by implementing NRCS conservation management practices

#2 was Improve and protect grazing, forest and cropland to promote plant health, vigor and production in Lewis and Clark County.

There was some confusion about our priority concern from last year at the area office level which we had to clarify after the fact. We clarified that statement to read: #1 Improve plant health in Lewis and Clark County by implementing NRCS conservation practices on grazing, forest and crop land to promote plant health, vigor and production in Lewis and Clark County.

There were questions about the language and clarification from John about how the rankings work. Anything that is in #2 automatically moves to medium priority and will almost certainly not get funded.

Plant health and vigor has worked extremely well for the office in the past, over all the land uses. Diane and Darcy also indicated that the priority resource concern also helped in the statewide fund pools. John said that one problem with it is that it culls streambank projects.

There was discussion about why the LWG changed this several years ago as a priority resource concern when the state moved to area funding pools instead of county funding pools. This priority resource concern casts a wider net over landowners in the county and makes the money go further. Jeff said that

ultimately there might be projects that it would be nice to tap into the funding for stream projects in the riparian fencing and grazing and stockwater arena.

John said a new State Conservationist has been brought on, Tom Watson. It's unknown what spin the new state con will put on things. Keri has talked a lot over the years about limiting us to one land use. Priority resource concern: #1 Improve plant health in Lewis and Clark County by implementing NRCS conservation practices on grazing, forest and cropland to promote plant health, vigor and production in Lewis and Clark County.

Meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.