**RANGELAND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**MONDAY AUGUST 29TH, 2022**

**9:30 AM**

**Crystal Inn Conference Room**

[3701 31st St SW, Great Falls, MT 59404](https://www.google.com/maps/@47.4709759,-111.3613623,16.22z)

**PRESENT**

***Members:***

*Chair Diane Ahlgren*

*Vice Chair John Hollenback*

*Member Jim Anderson*

*Member Ron Devlin*

*Member Leah Lewis*

***Staff:***

*Stacey Barta, State Rangeland Resources Program Coordinator, Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)*

***Guests:***

*Katie Decker, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Montana-Dakotas*

*Kevin Derzapf, Natural Resources Conservation Service-USDA (NRCS)*

*Rick Northrup, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP)*

***Public:***

*None.*

**Call to Order**

Chair Diane Ahlgren called the meeting to order at 9:30 am.

**Welcome and Introductions**

Members, guests, and public present introduced themselves.

**Approval of May 31st, 2022- Action Item**

**Jim Anderson moved to adopt the May 31st, 2022, Meeting Minutes with noted changes as Final**

**Second: John Hollenback.**

**Discussion: none.**

**Vote:** **unanimously approved.**

**Coordinator Updates**

**LCA Award Tour**

June 29th-30th in Townsend. The tour was very good, and the Flynn family did a great job. Attendance was slim.

**Working Lands Internship Program**

The four interns ended their internships in July, overall, the program went well without much for incidents.

Stacey attended mid-year for Stockgrowers, MAES meeting in Lewistown, soil health workshops, State Technical Advisory – Great Falls, EQC, Ag tour flooding, USFS meeting at Wall Creek and national PLC in Cody.

John gave a brief update, not much going on in his area, still working on Spotted Dog

Leah- grass was good, water was sparse, and the weeds are thriving.

Ron- good forage year, pretty green and tall, hoppers moved in, and the flooding was the worst he had ever seen.

Jim- bad hoppers, not water, limited irrigation, springs dry and lots of cattle leaving the country.

Diane- pretty good, hoppers for 3rd year in a row, lots of cattle also left.

**Advisory Members Updates**

**Katie Decker, BLM –**

Water on allotments seems to be issue, lack there of

Closely watching the drought monitor conditions

Her detail ends, and the new state range specialist will take over

Grazing rule regulation revision is out, encourage cooperating agency status for those interested

**Kevin Derzapf, NRCS –**

He has been busy helping with CRP, grazing plans

Attended Montana Range Days- great event

**Rick Northrup, FWP**

EA is completed for the conservation habitat program- not a lot of comments

Program intent is to keep green side up with a lease and rangeland intact at a large scale.

**Old Business**

RILP financials

Budget updates

**New Business**

Legislative sponsor for Rangelands Month

**June Range Month legislation- action item**

Jim Anderson has been working with Senator Mike Land on making June Rangelands month. This would likely be a bipartisan carried bill early on in the session. Ron made a motion in support of legislation creating June as rangeland month and supporting Jim in moving such a bill forward, John 2nd, MC unanimously.

Winter meeting dates Stacey suggested the RRC come up with tentative meeting dates, 1 to happen near the Rangelands in the Rotunda on 3-23-23, and another one soon after the holidays.

Rotunda day 3-23-23 this year during ag week.

Budget items-

Projects- Stacey mentioned having project framework shovel ready in the case funding presents that may be a fit for a project, we have something to submit in a short turnaround.

Modified staff- Stacey explained about losing Emily to Sage Grouse and the position to MISC as well as what a modified position means. Mark is working with Stacey and HR on a new position description for a permanent part time position. Hopefully we can get someone on board by November.

Monitoring MOU renewal- The agency monitoring MOU expires in May, Stacey gave the history and purpose of the MOU. Jeff Mosley is the one who likely most often sees the MOU being put into action. The RRC suggests that Stacey visit with Jeff and get more information on how and if the MOU has actually been used or helpful before pursuing its renewal.

**Public Comment-** no public comment

**ADJOURN**

**Leah Motioned to adjourn**

**Second: Jim Anderson**

**Discussion: none.**

**Vote: unanimously approved.**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:07 p.m.