**Montana Grass Conservation Commission**

**Zoom Meeting Minutes for July 18, 2024, 1:00 pm**

**Call to order, Chairman Richard Stuker**

**Directors Present:** Richard Stuker, Craig French, Audra Ortega, Sigrid Pugrud, Absent, Travis Brown.

**Others Present:** Stacey Barta – DNRC, Ellie Brighton - MASGD, Amanda Kaster – DNRC Director.

**Minutes from Previous Zoom Meeting dated June 28, 2024.**

The Minutes from June 28, 2024, Zoom Meeting were reviewed and approved.

Sigrid Pugrud made a motion to approve the minutes of June 28, 2024, Zoom Meeting, Audra Ortega 2nd motion, motion passed.

There was no public comment.

**Three Transfers from the Indian Butte Coop State Grazing District from Kirk Donsbach.**

The Montana Grass Conservation Commission reviewed 3 base property transfers from Kirk Donsbach, Indian Butte Coop State Grazing District.

Audra Ortega made a motion to approve all three submitted transfers by Indian Butte Coop State Grazing District – Kirk Donsbach as submitted, Sigrid Pugrud 2nd the motion, motion passed.

There was no public comment.

**Wayne Creek Coop State Grazing District By-Law Review.**

The Wayne Creek Coop State Grazing District sent a copy of their current by-laws to the Montana Grass Conservation Commission for review. After reviewing the current by-laws for the Wayne Creek Coop State Grazing District there were no suggestions or recommendations for changes for the Wayne Creek by-laws.

Craig French made a motion to approve the Wayne Creek by-laws as presented, Sigrid Pugrud 2nd the motion, motion passed.

A future action item for the Montana Grass Conservation Commission will be to have Montana Grass Conservation Attorney Quentin Rhoades draft an informational guide to changes in membership and voting in a State Grazing District. This will be sent to all State Grazing Districts for potential by-law amendments.

There was no public comment.

**Mapping Project for Montana’s State Grazing District’s.**

Chairman Richard Stuker gave an update on the mapping project of Montana’s State Grazing District boundaries in conjunction with the state library. Chairman Stuker went on to explain that the state library obtained information on the LU lands and will be able to delineate them on the maps from other lands.

No public comment.

**Other Projects, (informational)**

Chairman Richard Stuker explained the next proposed project is to document the history and purpose for which federal Grazing Districts were established and highlight federal, state, and local laws and policies that govern the administrations of grazing lands.

DNRC Director Amanda Kaster said there needs to be more discussion on this project and examine its goals and objectives.

No public comment.

**Montana Grass Conservation Commission Executive Secretary Report.**

Montana Grass Conservation Commission secretary Sandra K. Brown reported on her activities.

* Finished new handbook and directory, sent out to all State Grazing Districts, their chairman, Montana Grass Conservation Commission Board of Directors, and State Grazing District Board Chairman.
* Reviewed by-laws for Wayne Creek and sent to Montana Grass Conservation Commission for review.
* Several conference calls with the Buffalo Creek Coop State Grazing District on issues in their district.
* Conference call with new secretaries in the Weede and C&B Coop State Grazing District’s. helped them get up and running.
* Drafted letter to all State Grazing Districts asking for maps of their districts for the mapping project.
* Reviewed base property transfers from the Indian Butte Coop State Grazing District.
* Conference calls with Montana Grass Conservation attorney on drafting opinions that are pending in the State Grazing Districts.
* No public comment.

**Update on the 3 Memorandums of Understanding with the Bureau of Land Management, Grazing, Solar, and the Sage Grouse.**

Commissioner Audra Ortega had no report to give at this time. At the next regular meeting she will give a report and will continue to work with DNRC Director Kaster.

DNRC Director Amanda Kaster updated the group on what has progressed at the state level with the MOU’s. They are being closely tracked and there has been a slowdown in the progression of the MOU’S.

No public comment.

**Reorganization of the Montana Grass Conservation Board.**

The reorganization of the Montana Grass Conservation Commission had their reorganization of the board with the following results.

Chairman – Audra Ortega moved to nominate Richard Stuker as Chairman of the Montana Grass Conservation Commission, Craig French 2nd the motion, motion passed.

Vice Chairman – Audra Ortega moved to nominate Craig French as the Vice Chairman of the Montana Grass Conservation Commission, Richard Stuker moved that nominations cease and a unanimous ballet be cast for Craig French as Vice chairman, Sig Pugrud 2nd the motion passed.

There was no public comment.

**Public Comment or any other business that comes before the Montana Grass Conservation Commission.**

No public comment.

Richard Stuker – Chairman

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