



PHILLIPS CONSERVATION DISTRICT 2015 ANNUAL REPORT

The Phillips Conservation District works to protect and conserve soil, water, farmland, rangelands, woodland, wildlife, energy and other renewable resources on private lands. The District is governed by a group of appointed and elected Supervisors who represent the residents of Phillips County.

Supervisors for the Phillips Conservation District include Chairman Matt Simonson, Vice-Chairman Bob Breipohl, Treasurer Gary Knudsen, Bill French, Paul Mortenson, Pat Anderson, Merrilyn Black and Associate Supervisors Hal DeBoer. Meetings are held the second Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. in the USDA Building and are open to the public.

Conservation Districts administer the 310 law, which requires a 310 permit for any activity that physically alters or modifies the bed or banks of a perennially flowing stream. Applications are available at the District office or on-line, and there is no charge for the permit.

The Conservation District works closely with **the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)**. Shilo Messerly is the NRCS District Conservationist.

The Phillips CD is a member of the **Milk River Watershed Alliance (MRWA)**, and serves as the employing agency and grant administrator.

The District **website** can be viewed at www.phillipsconservationdistrict.com.

District Supervisors were involved in the **Local Working Group** process to determine local priorities for EQIP funds.

Evergreen seedlings were distributed to students countywide by the District Supervisors and Administrator.

The District **donated lilac bushes to the Phillips County Fair Board** to plant at the Dodson Fair grounds.

PCD provided awards for winners in the **Zortman Weed Pull**.

The District displayed an **informational booth at Phillips County Ag Days in March**. A Phillips County landowner map was given out as a door prize.

Phillips Conservation District displayed an **informational booth at The Phillips County Fair**. A Milk River Watershed Alliance display of activities including recent tours, the annual meeting, etc., was displayed.

The District **sponsored eight Malta High FFA students and one elementary student to attend Range Days in Havre**.

PCD Administrator attended the **Statewide Annual Training** for Administrators in Great Falls.

The District participated in DNRC's "**From the Ground Up: Women in Ag**" Oral History project. Corky French, lifelong Phillips County Rancher and wife of PCD Supervisor, Bill French, was chosen as the interviewee.

Phillips Conservation District Supervisors and Administrator **actively participate in the Charles M. Russell Community Working Group**. The group formed to enhance and preserve the ecological, economic and social well-being of the 6 Counties surrounding the Refuge. Participants in the group include agency representatives, landowners, grazing permittees, county commissioners, conservation districts, interest groups and engaged citizens. The group meets bi-monthly, rotating through the 6 counties. **PCD administers the DNRC Capacity Grant that funds the CMR-WG.**

The District participated in the **DNRC Baseline Groundwater Sampling Project**. The purpose of the monitoring program is to establish baseline groundwater quality and availability in advance of oil and gas activity.

Phillips Conservation District submitted a letter to MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks **opposing wild, free roaming buffalo** to be reintroduced to Montana, by asking that Alternative #1: No Action, of the draft bison EIS, be the only alternative considered by the state on bison management.

The District hosted a **Ranch Management Workshop called "Making a Profit in the Cattle Business for the Long Haul"**, featuring NRCS State Forester/former Area Rangeland Management Specialist.

PCD, along with Phillips County Extension **hosted a shelterbelt tour**. The tour focused on new shelterbelt planting, shelterbelt renovations and proper pesticide spraying, where pesticide applications points were given to those eligible.

Representatives of Phillips Conservation District attended the **Montana Association of Conservation District Annual Convention** in Missoula.

The Phillips Conservation District **publishes periodic news articles** in the Phillips County News.

The District continues to **offer for sale** conservation trees and shrubs, fabric mulch and other planting products, and Phillips County landowner maps. Tree orders will be accepted until April 1st. Please feel free to stop by the office in the USDA building for further information or assistance.