



## **PHILLIPS CONSERVATION DISTRICT 2016 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 Bob Breipohl, Vice-Chairman Matt Simonson, Treasurer Gary Knudsen, Bill French, Paul Mortenson, Pat Anderson, Merrilyn Black; Associate Supervisor Hal DeBoer and Administrator Jenifer Anderson. 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.

Phillips CD houses the **SWCDMI/SGI Range Conservationist** position, Kelsey Molloy.

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

The District **website** can be viewed at [www.phillipsconservationdistrict.com](http://www.phillipsconservationdistrict.com). Phillips Conservation District is also on Facebook.

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.

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 six Malta High FFA students attend Range Days in Harlowton**.

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

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 administered the DNRC Capacity Grant that funded 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 **passed ordinance #2016-1**, a land use ordinance for the protection of soil and water from all bison/buffalo grazing in Phillips Conservation District.

District Administrator, Jenifer Anderson and SWCDMI SGI Range Conservationist, Kelsey Molloy, attended a **Transboundary Grasslands** Workshop in Elkwater, Alberta. The workshop was sponsored by the Alberta Prairie Conservation Forum and focused on conservation efforts being made on both sides of the Canadian/Montana border.

District Administrator assisted with the **Montana Envirothon** competition in Lewistown. The Envirothon is a competitive, problem-solving, natural resource event for high school students to challenge them about the environment

Malta Vo-Ag/FFA Students constructed **aluminum wildlife escape ramps** available for sale to local landowners. This project was funded through a Phillips Conservation District DNRC 223 grant.

PCD purchased a **TDS/Salinity Water Meter** for testing livestock water quality. They are planning a livestock water quality/range monitoring workshop in November.

PCD/MRWA representatives attended the **Transboundary Water, Weeds and Stewardship Tour**, sponsored by the Milk River Watershed Council Canada. The tour focused on weed management, invasive species and water conservation in the Milk River Watershed in Montana and Alberta. The group toured the aging St. Mary's Diversion facilities.

Phillips Conservation District, along with the Malta NRCS field office, sponsored a **cover crop/soil health tour**.

PCD made a cash donation towards the **Rancher's Stewardship Alliance** for their Phillips County celebration.

PCD Administrator attended **the River Rendezvous** in Fort Benton, sponsored by the Missouri River Conservation District Council (MRCDC). PCD continues to be involved in the MRCDC.

Representatives of Phillips Conservation District attended the 2015 **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 1<sup>st</sup>. Please feel free to stop by the office in the USDA building for further information or assistance.