

Rocky Mountain Front Ranchlands Group

Steering Committee Meeting Minutes

Dec. 15, 2023 / 7 PM / Buffalo Joe's Dupuyer, Montana

ATTENDEES

Trina Bradley, Mark Hitchcock, Jim Hodgskiss, Kathy Robinson, Peter Bradley, Ian Kane, Cole Mannix, Colleen Gustafson, Darryl Gernaat, Julie Gernaat, Greta Gernaat, Hertha Lund, John Grande, Ruben Kleinsasser, Mike Hofer, Ben J. Hofer, Skippy Sims

AGENDA

Kathy called the meeting to order and read the minutes from the Sept. 13, 2023 meeting. Jim moved to approve the minutes as read; Mark seconded. Motion passed.

Trina gave the financial report. RMFRG currently has a balance of \$9,724.06.

Jim moved to approve the financial report; Kathy seconded. Motion passed.

Trina gave a report on her ED activities in 2023. That report is attached.

Charter memberships are due Dec. 31, 2023.

In 2023, Montana Stockgrowers Association offered a free affiliate membership to RMFRG. The affiliate membership is \$500. Jim moved to renew the membership for 2024; Mark seconded. Motion passed.

Steve Skelton and Wendy Connelly both resigned from the steering committee.

Mark moved to add Colleen Gustafson to the steering committee; Kathy seconded.

Motion passed. Mark moved to add Mike Hofer to the steering committee; Kathy seconded. Motion passed.

Trina presented her 2024 contract to the board. Nothing has changed. Kathy moved to approve; Jim seconded. Motion passed.

Trina reported RMFRG received another \$5000 grant from Page Foundation in Idaho. These funds will be used for capacity for the Group.

Trina reported that she will be attending the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee IEO Summit in Idaho in January 2024.

Trina reported that she was accepted into the Farm Bureau ACE (Advocate. Communicate. Educate.) Leadership Program. The year-long program begins in January 2024. More information can be found at www.mfbf.org/programs/ace-program.

John Grande, MSGA President, gave a report on the annual MSGA convention in Billings. Ian Lane, MSGA Membership Representative, gave an update on how people can become members. Membership information can be found on their website at www.mtbeef.org.

Skippy Sims, USDA Wildlife Services, gave an update on the season to date. He said it has been a relatively quiet summer. Grizzly bear investigations were down 18% this year, and wolf investigations were down 32%. Coyote damage, on the other hand, was up 34%.

Door prizes for the annual meeting were donated by First Bank of Montana and Montana Stockgrowers Association. Winners were: Mike Hofer, Peter Bradley, Colleen Gustafson, Ruben Kleinsasser, Julie Gernaat, and Hertha Lund. During the September meeting it was decided to hold a raffle to raise funds for RMFRG. The raffle brought in a total of \$2900, and a \$500 prize was awarded to Velvet Dellwo of Bynum.

The steering committee will make decisions about reorganization in January 2024.

The March steering committee meeting was discussed. It was decided to hold the meeting at Buffalo Joe's March 13, 2024.

Jim moved to adjourn the meeting, and Mark seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Executive Director Year End Report

January:

Livestock Loss Board Meeting (zoom)

Montana Conflict Reduction Consortium meeting (zoom)

February:

MFBF Calling on the Capitol

West-Wide Conflict Reduction Consortium meeting (zoom)

Met with FWP leadership in Helena

Testified in support of SB 295 (GB Permits) in Senate hearing

Met with People and Carnivores to discuss possible collaboration

Attended a grant writing workshop (zoom)

Attended a Western Collaborative Conservation Network meeting (zoom)

Participated in Public Lands Council Wildlife Committee meeting (zoom)

Collaborated with Western Landowners Alliance on National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant application (zoom)

Collaborated with WLA on Conflict on Working Lands-Conservation Innovation Grant (COW-CIG) work (zoom)

Testified in Senate hearing for Livestock Loss Board candidates

March:

Attended a grant writing workshop (zoom)

MTCRC meeting (zoom)

Consulted Idaho Conservation in watershed group planning (zoom)

RMFRG hosted Livestock Guardian Dog workshops in Augusta and Browning

WLA meeting (zoom)

Testified in support of SB 295 in House hearing

Attended a Western Collaborative Conservation Network meeting (zoom)

RMFRG Steering Committee Meeting

April:

Participated in WLA Working Wild Challenge Practitioners Call (zoom)

West-Wide CRC meeting (zoom)

Attended FWP hosted wolf meeting (zoom)

MTCRC meeting (zoom)

May:

Participated in a round table event with Rep. Matt Rosendale in Choteau

Participated in WLA Working Wild Challenge Practitioners Call (zoom)

Attended Yellowstone Grizzly Bear meeting (zoom)

Met with producers about hiring a range rider for the 2023 season

Attended NCDE Grizzly Bear meeting in Helena

June:

West-Wide CRC meeting (zoom)

Attended FWP Commission meeting (zoom)

Met with planning committee for Conflict Reduction Workshop (zoom)

Attended and presented at Conflict Reduction Workshop in Missoula

Attended Marias River Livestock Association Midyear meeting in Shelby

MTCRC meeting (zoom)

July:

Participated in PLC Wildlife Committee meeting (zoom)
Participated in WLA Working Wild Challenge Practitioners Call (zoom)
West-Wide CRC meeting (zoom)

August:

Participated in WLA Working Wild Challenge Practitioners Call (zoom)
West-Wide CRC meeting (zoom)
Met with FWP leadership in Helena
Attended LLB Meeting in Big Timber
Attended FWP Commission meeting (zoom)

September:

MTCRC meeting (zoom)
RMFRG Steering Committee Meeting
Attended Front Range Farm Bureau meeting in Dupuyer
Participated in WLA Working Wild Challenge Practitioners Call (zoom)
Attended a Western Collaborative Conservation Network meeting (zoom)
Met with FWP leadership in Helena

October:

Participated in WLA Working Wild Challenge Practitioners Call (zoom)
Attended Private Lands Partners Conference in Missoula
West-Wide CRC meeting (zoom)
Attended North Cascades GB meeting (zoom)
Met with FWP leadership (zoom)
MTCRC meeting (zoom)

November:

Attended Marias River Livestock Association Rib Tickler
Attended producer meeting with Rep. Ryan Zinke (zoom)
Attended Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem GB meeting (zoom)
Featured speaker at Paradise Valley Working Lands Group meeting at Chico
Attended and commented on GB Proposed Rules and ARM FWP Commission (zoom)
Met with Ali - GB Tech in Choteau - about grain bin door project
Attended NCDE GB meeting in Polson

December:

Attended LLB meeting in Billings
Attended MSGA Convention in Billings
Attended Paradise Valley Working Lands Group agency meet and greet in Emigrant
Attended IGBC meeting in Bozeman
Attended MTFWP Commission meeting in Helena (zoom)
Attended CRC meeting (zoom)