

# CHARLES M. RUSSELL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMMUNITY WORKING GROUP MEETING

10:00 am — 3:00 pm, Thursday, April 14th, 2016

Winnett Methodist Church

Winnett, MT

- 10:00 Welcome & Grounding Question – Bill Milton
- 10:10 Self-Introductions and Answers to Grounding Question – All Participants
- 10:30 Report from the CMR Sage Grouse Committee on MACD Session and Conservation Menu
- 11:00 Small Group Breakouts to prioritize the projects proposed at the February meeting:
1. *Take the following list of projects (on the back of the agenda) and evaluate them for 2016 based on their:*
    - a. *Completeness – are additional projects needed?*
    - b. *Feasibility – is this something the group can accomplish?*
    - c. *Priority – rank the projects in order of priority for group effort in 2016*
- 12:00 Lunch Break – Lunch available for **\$10.00**
- 1:00 Noreen Walsh – Regional Director of the US Fish and Wildlife Service; Regional context of US FWS mission, focus, and projects.
- 1:45 Report from Small Groups, then the full group addresses these tasks:
- A. *Prioritize projects submitted by the small groups. Identify a single project for the group to focus on in 2016.*
  - B. *Identify steps to implement the top project and how future CMR CWG meetings can be structured to provide progress on these steps. (This will translate into a strategic plan for the group for 2016)*
- 2:45 Set date for next meeting; what worked well, etc.
- 3:00 Adjourn

## **CMR CWG Potential Projects – Lewistown, February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

*The first 5 projects were proposed by at least 2 of the breakout groups at the meeting.*

1. Weed management through the creation of 6-county task force that identifies concerns and matches to available resources. (2 groups)
2. Tourism and promotion of the use of the CMR and surrounding landscape. (2 groups)
3. Increase opportunities to bring young people back to local communities and get more young ranchers on the landscape (2 groups)
4. Incentive-based programs for wildlife such as BFF, be a vehicle to educate folks about these opportunities, and explore ways to put it into practice on the landscape. (2 groups)
5. Bison on the CMR or surrounding area: have a facilitator lead conversation about bison and under what circumstances bison would be accepted in eastern MT. (2 groups)

*The next 5 projects were proposed by a single breakout group at the meeting.*

6. Have the CMR CWG take part in the development of an HMP for an area on the CMR. Be involved in every step of the process and learning about management through the lens of the regulations and laws the refuge must operate under.
7. Conduct a study on the economics of the region by following a day in the life of a dollar in the 6-county.
8. Develop a contact list of all the agencies, NGOs, and other stakeholders operating in the 6-county region.
9. Hold a constructive dialogue on the future of public and private lands managed as a balanced landscape with multiple uses such as oil and gas production, grazing, etc.
10. Promote monitoring of sage grouse habitat and determine a metric that indicates impacts of management activities.