

Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge
Community Working Group Meeting

10:00 am — 3:00 pm, February 23rd
Malta Business Center
46 S 1st St E, Malta, MT

10:00 Welcome & Grounding Question – Bill Milton

10:10 Self-Introductions and Answers to Grounding Question – All Participants

10:30 CMR CWG Committee reports

11:00 **Community Resilience in a Changing Economy: Strategies and Ideas**

Julia Haggerty, Assistant Professor of Geography, Department of Earth Sciences will share a

brief summary of research on how communities and landowners are negotiating the shifting landscape of farming and ranching in Montana and beyond. Her goal is to encourage the group to consider ways that communities can work together to monitor and build community resilience.

Accomplishments of CMR CWG to Date:

1. CMR Water Compact
2. Improved communication between surrounding communities and CMR NWR
3. Field tours
4. Rangeland Monitoring Roundup
5. Sage Grouse Committee and Conservation Menu
6. USFWS Regional Director visit to Montana.
7. Montana Saltcedar Team

12:00 Lunch Break – Lunch available for **\$10.00**

1:00 Small group breakout: *Please answer the following questions in your group:*

1. *What do you see as the top 3 impediments to young people returning to the community (please stay specific to the 6-county region as much as possible)*
2. *Identify 1 specific task the CMR CWG could do to help with the issue of returning young people to the communities? What resources would be needed to accomplish that 1 task?*

1:30 Small group Report

2:00 Funding discussion for the CMR CWG

2:30 Set date and topic for next meeting;

Potential topics for future discussion:

National Wildlife Federation's tourism research project – Jeremy Sage, U of M

Legislative update for April meeting – various groups

Montana State Parks Commission's Strategic Action Plan

MT FWP Overall Management Plan and process for setting wildlife quotas

Sean Fields (PPJV Science Coordinator)

Discussion on role of grazing in HMPs

Paleontological presentation – Curator of the Museum of the Rockies

2:45 Closing remarks; what worked well, what needs improvement

3:00 Adjourn

CMR NWR Community Working Group:

MISSION:

A partnership of diverse interests working to ensure the vitality of both the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge and the surrounding communities.

PURPOSE:

To convene a balanced group of stakeholders to discuss natural resource management of the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, recognize conflicts among user groups and agencies, identify and work collaboratively toward solutions, and provide a discussion forum for increased understanding, cooperation, and partnership among user groups, agencies and other interested parties.

CMR NWR Community Working Group Three-part Goal for the Landscape

Describe the quality of life you would like to see be predominant in the region in 5 to 10 years.

"We want this region to maintain a diversified economy within which a prosperous agriculture industry is sustained and local communities are prosperous with stable populations. We desire an atmosphere where agencies, local government, NGOs, and citizens work together to create positive outcomes for the community and citizens: focusing on common ground, mutual respect, and community-based decision making, where people are committed to the working group and access to public land is ensured for both the public and producers."

What kind of production will be needed to sustain this quality of life?

"A diversity of unique goods and services to support economic and social values will need to be produced from a working landscape that maintains its scenic value, healthy soils, and ecological integrity. We must also identify and implement best management practices that integrate local ecological knowledge, succession planning in all entities, local working groups to address challenges, incentives to practice conservation, steady tax base to support infrastructure and responsible, well-educated citizens."

What does the landscape need to look like to obtain your production?

"We desire a landscape that provides habitat for diverse and healthy wildlife populations, where further conversion of native prairie is discouraged, and where the needs of natural resource dependent industries are balanced with conservation. In short, healthy agriculture lands cooperatively managed for the benefit of the resource, wildlife, industry, and community."

CMR NWR Community Working Group Website:

<http://www.cmrcwg.org>