



LEWIS & CLARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT

790 Colleen Street • Helena, Montana 59601 • 406-449-5000 ext. 5

Regular Meeting Minutes

May 12, 2022, 1 pm

USDA Service Center Conference Room, 790 Colleen St. Helena MT 59601 and via
Zoom Conferencing

Call to order- Meeting called to order by chair Jeff Ryan at 12:59PM.

In attendance in the room: Jeanette Nordahl, Karl Christians, Jeff Ryan, John Baucus, Chris Evans, Jessica Ramirez, Connor Mertz, Becky Ayre, Tracy Wendt, Jason Garber, Stephanie Criswell.

In attendance via Zoom: Stan Frasier, Daniel Beutler, Sarah Howe-Cobb, Jessica Wilkerson.

Meeting minutes – Motion by Ryan to approve, second by Baucus; motion carried.

Financial report and outstanding bills-As of end of April, just under \$300,000 in combined accounts. Everything is looking normal so far. Motion by Nordahl to approve financial report and pay all outstanding bills, second by Baucus seconds; motion carried.

Correspondence –Postcard from MACD for June 14th Kleffner Ranch Dinner (presentation by Spokane CD). MT Biological Weed Control Project sent an invoice for donation. MACD District Dispatch.

Public Comment – no comments.

Partner Reports

NRCS (Ayre) – The tour on forestry thinning projects in the Wolf Creek area went really well, they have received 4 applications as a result. NRCS has rescheduled their all-employee meeting for September. NRCS is looking to write an article about the willow lift project on Lake Helena for their partner newsletter. Becky wanted to know who with the CD she should put them in touch with. Jeff Ryan said that since Connor did the bulk of the CD related work on that project, they should talk to him.

DNRC CDB (Criswell) – Written report in the packet. The Resource Conservation Advisory Council sunsets on July 1st and the group's future isn't certain. They reviewed 20 applications, and CDB is working on drafting up contracts for those. With the changes to the Council, there may be opportunities for different/increased council membership in the future. The Reclamation and Development Grants program has grants available. There were 10 project proposals to allocate year-end monies,

currently projects are being ranked. LCCD is under contract to help provide funding for EO development. They are in the process of reviewing MACDs communication contract.

Garber – 310 training next Thursday, May 19th. He also wanted to have an SMZ LAW discussion. CD legal counsel, Caitlin Overland, worked with DNRC to put out a legal memo that both laws can apply simultaneously in forestry projects in stream zones. **SRWG** (Wendt) – Written report with board packet. The group was awarded a Watershed Management Grant to help cover Jessica’s expenses and future tasks of SRWG, including web-based map showing project sites. Tracy is working with Upper Sun Management group to expand resources offered to landowners. She was a judge for Envirothon. Tracy is working on an RDG application. The next SRWG board meeting is going to be held in Augusta—they are trying to engage more of the watershed, particularly ag community. Tracy requested a backpack sprayer from LCCD for Weed Whacker Rodeo. Chris Evans will contact Murdochs in Helena to see if they will donate one again this year.

MRCDC (Christians) – the MRCDC is on the agenda for the Water Policy Interim Committee meeting to testify about test flows. They are keeping an eye on Montana I-191.

WQPD (Ryan) – Apparently the refinery just west of office has an underground pollutant plume and the users of that plant are banding together to do a massive cleanup.

LHWG (Mertz) – LHWG is helping to co-host the Rain Barrel workshop with LCCD. They are working with Citizens Conservation Council to host water efficiency workshops. They sponsored an Earth Day road clean-up. The Lake Helena Watershed Festival will be Saturday August 27th.

Weed District – no report.

HWCI/MCC (Holzgen) – no report.

Extension – no report.

MACD (Ryan) – Dues request. Evans thinks it’s time to pay. Ryan threw out the idea of MACD offsetting some of the dues requested due to time donated (mostly by Evans) to MACD work. There was some discussion about that time being volunteered, not requested by MACD. The organization has resolved almost everything that LCCD has had issues about over the past 5-10 years. Other CDs may not donate as much of their time, but that has been voluntary on our District’s part. Motion by Ryan to pay the dues in full, according to what we actually received in 2021, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

Supervisor Reports

Ryan – he met with Northwest Energy, engineer with BLM at White Sandy to discuss bank restoration project and they also took a look at Lake Helena project.

Baucus – busy time calving and lambing. One of the worst grass starts out at Sieben as long as John can remember. With the dry fall/winter, and the dry and cold spring so far, things aren’t looking too good.

Christians – He recently spent time at the Farm Bureau sponsored AG Day w/ E. Helena 4th graders

Nordahl –the had a hard freeze yesterday morning.

Frasier – seeing a lot of LCCD in the media between the Lake Helena project, the Pollinator project and other things going on.

Staff Reports – see attached

Old Business – reviewed updated Personnel Policy. Motion by Nordahl to approve as amended, second by Baucus. Evans question: DNRC provided updated mileage expense form – does the board want to use it instead of the form that we've been using. There was also a hire letter that they provided and a credit card policy. She prefers the format of the hire letter that the MRCDC uses. Motion carried to use the new mileage sheet or not, and the credit card policy.

Legislative Event- November 30th at L&C Brewery. They donated the fee that they'd usually charge to use the room (Power Room), and will have a food vendor on-site mid-summer most likely that we can work with.

310 Permits

CP-03-22: the inspection team went to check out report that there was excavator work being done in irrigation pond, what they found was Brekke putting in two concrete blocks to run water down irrigation ditch temporary diversion. Ryan concludes it wasn't a violation. Motion by Ryan that the activity was not a violation, second by Christians. Garber says that one option is a maintenance permit. Ryan thought of it but there was so little disturbance it wasn't warranted. Motion carried.

LC-04-22: Beutler consulted via phone (did not discuss plans) with Shawn Higley at WWC Engineering, and made some modifications to the design. These changes are reflected in updated plan sent the morning of 5/12/22 (not reflected in meeting packet). Due to the amount of moisture currently at project site, they are not planning on construction until the fall. Ryan expressed concerns with the overflow design, culvert overflow design is uncommon. Board is used to seeing typical fortified spillway design. Discussion on the geotextile membrane used, Ryan wanted specifics on thickness. Beutler had not sourced material to date. Ryan would like to see updated plans on what was discussed, with measurements. Christians concurs. Application tabled pending more information from the applicant.

LC-09-22: 6' bridge to span Park Creek. The only recommended modification by the team was adding some angular riprap along bridge abutments. Motion by Ryan to approve with modifications, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

LC-10-22: The applicant would like to remove existing diversion structure and replace diversion slightly downstream. During inspection, landowner agreed to remove historic diversion structure directly across stream as well. Motion by Ryan to approve with modifications, second by Baucus. Nordahl asked what 'temporary' means. Ryan

said that the applicant will use removable blocks that will only be put in place during the irrigation season. Motion carried.

LC-12-22: Jessica Wilkerson was in attendance on Zoom. The Spring Creek Landowners Corporation would like to table their application until they can meet internally for further discussion. At site inspection, there was discussion on HOA working with FWP and CD to obtain bridge materials through several avenues (FWP/MDOT stringer recovery program, ASARCO project site bridge salvage, modifying existing bridge). Wilkerson brought up the presence of culverts downstream. Winter access and emergency vehicle access is top priority. Wilkerson asked about the possibility of installing a temporary culvert with the long-term intention of installing a bridge. Ryan said that at the inspection, rough bank full of 4ft was measured, necessitating a culvert size of at least 8ft (preferably bottomless). Wilkerson noted that even with bridge materials provided, expenses of install would likely exceed their current budget for the project. Baucus asks how many lots are above the project site. Wilkerson guessed approximately 40-50 residents live above. Christians also brought up the possibility of relocating road location so stream crossing is located downstream at a less aggressive s-turn position. Application is currently withdrawn.

Other Business

Future plans – Ryan wrote letter to Ray Vulk about the potential of acquiring property for District headquarters out on Lake Helena.
Evans appraisal – A’s on everything.

Adjournment- Ryan adjourns at 3:38 PM.

Chair Jeff Ryan Date 6/9/22

Recorder Connor Mertz (Resource Tech) Date 5/12/22