



# Lewis and Clark Conservation District

790 Colleen Street, Helena MT 59601 406.389.3895 <https://lewisandclarkcd.org>

## REGULAR MEETING Minutes

July 13, 2023

8:30 am

Dearborn Community Center, Wolf Creek Montana

**8:30am**-The meeting was called to order by chair Jeff Ryan at 8:34 am. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Stan Frasier, John Baucus, Skyler Van Dyken and Karl Christians. Jeanette Nordahl joined the meeting at 8:42 am. Also in attendance were Emily (Sun River Watershed Group), Kasydi Lucas, Andrew Kretschmer, Joe Kremer-Herman, and Chris Evans.

**Introductions**—Introductions were made.

**Minutes** —Motion by Ryan to approve minutes as sent, second by Van Dyken; motion carried.

**Financial Statement**—motion by Ryan to approve the financial statement (corrected) and to pay the outstanding bills, second by Frasier; motion carried.

**Supervisor absences**-Sarah Howe-Cobb excused.

**Correspondence**-Big Hole Watershed Committee newsletter and DEQ paperwork on mine reclamation.

**Public Comment** – There was none.

### Reports

**NRCS**-Andrew Kretschmer was present to make the NRCS report on current projects and deadlines. NRCS hosted the Pathways and Conservation Planning in June; their Pathways student and Joe Kremer-Herman were able to attend. Homeland Security will be doing a check on the building. Karl Christians asked about signing conservation plans and contract documents. Evans said that the CD hasn't been allowed to review those plans for a very long time. Karl believes that Districts should still have the option to sign off on those, after viewing the contract documents.

**DNRC**-The CDB report was in the packet, but Kasydi Lucas gave a brief rundown on CDB activities. She asked if our CD would be interested in hosting a funding forum to discuss funding direction for the new funding. Next grant round opens September 1<sup>st</sup>. There will be some changes to the guidelines to those grant programs. The CDB is working on trying to figure out how to get some of the new funding to Districts that have too much mill levy to qualify for CDA grants. Jeff asked when some of the new funding will start trickling into the budget. The interest will start coming in this year, so there might be another round of CDA grants, but most likely it will be next year. They're hoping to have the CDA cap go from \$40,000 to \$60,000. They have separated the project and planning grants. They have been discussing incorporating the Education Grants, travel, training, and a few other things into the CDA grant program and allow all districts to apply for those grants.

**SRWG**-Emily handed out some documents from the Sun River Watershed Group. They had the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Weed Whacker Rodeo in July, gave out some great prizes. Bashin' Trash is coming up as is the Low Tech Process Based Restoration workshop that they are hoping will get good

attendance. They'll have a need for volunteers to help actually do the installation on a couple of Beaver Dam Analogs.

**MRCDC**—Molly had sent a report, but Karl Christians gave some additional information. Their emphasis at the River Rendezvous was on salt cedar. The group had a demonstration of a new tool that injects a waxy pellet into the plant that's filled with herbicide. The tool is relatively low-cost. There is no Montana approved biological control for salt cedar yet. The bug that is south of Montana does a good job killing salt cedar. They had a good turnout for the event. The next day, the CMR Community Working Group gave a presentation on their grazing project. It was good education and the presentation went well. Veronica Grigaltchik gave part of the presentation and did a great job addressing range habitat in relation to the bird population, and how the range management can affect the bird population. Their data showed that in no-graze situation, the trend of the health of the range went down. With proper management, the trend of the health of the range improved. It's been a good rain year for that part of the state.

The group put comments together for the BLM proposed use changes. They are concerned about the direction that BLM is going. They also reviewed the Montana Drought Plan. Statewide, the reservoirs have filled in with sediment over time. Cleaning out reservoirs should be a priority for water storage for agriculture in the state. Karl said he'd like to see an initiative to do a clean out on reservoirs.

Karl got voted in as chair of the MRCDC. Jeff Ryan asked how they'd clean out reservoirs. Karl said that the last few years were perfect since most of the smaller ones were dry, and they were able to clean them out.

**WQPD**—Jeff Ryan said he attended their last meeting. They were supposed to have a presentation from the Prickly Pear Creek Water Commissioner. The Commissioner didn't attend though.

**LHWG-no report**

**Helena CORE group**—The group didn't meet in July.

**MACD**—Evans said that Area Meetings are coming up, ours in the 28<sup>th</sup> of September and is hosted by Jefferson Valley CD, which means that we are the hosts next year. The MACD convention planning is progressing. It will be in Billings in November.

**Supervisor Reports**

**Jeff Ryan**—He and Joe visited the Jewett soil lift site. They have about 40% leaf out right now, hopefully it will improve over the course of the summer. Jeff said he took a look at the Black Sandy site which went in at the same time and it's grown up like a jungle. The willow used on the Jewett site varied in size with some quite large (came from the Sevenmile site where they'd mowed down the willow). Keeping the willow harvest the way we've done it with diameter around an inch is probably the way to go in the future. Cutting by hand is more selective. There is a black canker fungus that also hits willows pretty hard. Joe said he has a list of willows in Montana from NRCS that we can use to start diversifying a bit.

**Jeanette Nordahl**—quiet, range day planning for September 21<sup>st</sup>.

**Stan Frasier**—Weeds have grown well

**Skyler Van Dyken**—haying is mostly done. Gene Meyers discussion

**Karl Christians**—pretty quiet in the East Helena Area. Alfalfa winter kill. Cheat grass in the subdivision areas is really bad.

**John Baucus**—John said they had some alfalfa kill this year too. It ended up not being quite as bad as they'd thought initially. Weeds are coming on as strong as the grass. Springs have recharged and it's been a great year with moisture. Things are changing fast with the warmer, dryer weather.

**Staff Reports**

**Joe Kremer-Herman**—He's working on taking over the 310 process, and is doing a lot of new photos for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, doing retakes of the old photos. He attended the Weed Whacker Rodeo. July 25<sup>th</sup> he has the wetland walk. He'll be doing water sampling with the SRWG in

August. He will be doing some site visits for 310 permits/complaints. He'll be attending and helping with the SRWG Low Tech Process based project. He'll be doing Wetland Delineation Training in September.

Chris Evans-There was a written report in the board packet, but highlights were the MACD Spring Board meeting and the EO meeting, and upcoming trip to the NACD summer meeting in North Dakota

**Old Business**

There was no old business

**New Business**

Quarterly report-Evans shared the quarterly report information out to the board with comments about the increased social media and website traffic.

Gilly app discussion-Baucus had high praise for the Gilly app. He's used it on 2 applications and other than some glitchiness in the login section on his phone, and with the signature portion, he said that from the applicant's perspective, it's really great. Evans indicated that it hasn't been so great on the admin side with some problems with printing that now seem to be worked out, and the office isn't yet receive anything with signatures. She will pass the feedback on to the app designers.

**310 Permit Applications**

CP-01-23 Bostrom-Tabled. It is unclear who might have done the work as it was purchased recently.

CP-05-23 Skeffington Family Trust-inspection pending

LC-12-23 Bowley-Stan motioned to approve with modifications stated on the team report, waiving the 15-day waiting period; second by Nordahl; motion carried.

LC-13-23 LF Ranch- motion by Ryan, second by Frasier that this is in the CD's jurisdiction; motion carried. Motion by Christians to deny since we don't approve instream ponds, but to propose the idea to do an off-stream water source with a solar pump for a tank for water supply; second by Frasier, motion carried. Basically, the board thought the idea has merit, but there was concern about the size of the structure (dam) proposed and the liability that would be in the event of a breach into Ford Creek.

LC-14-23 Valley Sand and Gravel-Discussion about the proposal from the applicant and Adam Strainer's comments in response. Karl gave some background on the project. Motion by Ryan, second by Frasier to approve the application with Adam Strainer's recommendation, motion carried.

LC-15-23 PPLT motion by Frasier, second by Nordahl to approve as proposed, waiving the 15 day waiting period.

LC-16-23 Riverside Construction/Sieben-Jeff Ryan gave a bit of background on this project. Both tributaries have culverts but they plan to replace them with bigger culverts with the expected load increase. Motion by Ryan to approve as a 10-year maintenance permit to cover the installation, use, reclamation and removal, waiving the 15-day waiting period. Second by Frasier; motion carried. John Baucus abstained from voting.

LC-17-23 Winters no inspection yet; tabled until the August meeting.

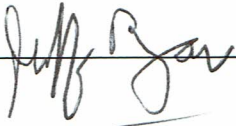
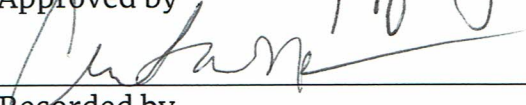
LC-18-23 Baucus-Jeff Ryan gave the inspection report. The photos taken show an artificially widened area due to use as a ford. The agreement on site was that a 20% embedded 60" culvert should suffice. Motion by Ryan to approve with modifications, waiving the 15-day waiting period, second by Frasier; motion carried. John Baucus abstained from the vote.

**Other Business**

**Parking Lot**

Update on 3 Bar X Conservation Center-Pending

Next meeting—August 10, 2023 at 9:30 am, Lambkins Restaurant, Lincoln, Montana, to be followed from 11 to noon by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Local Work Group Meeting.  
Adjourned at 10:42 am

Approved by		Date	8/10/23
Recorded by		Date	8/10/2023