



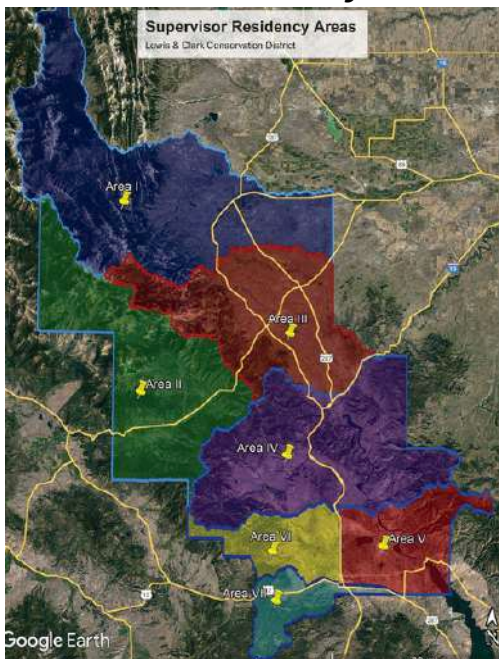
The Explorer

Volume 64, Issue 3

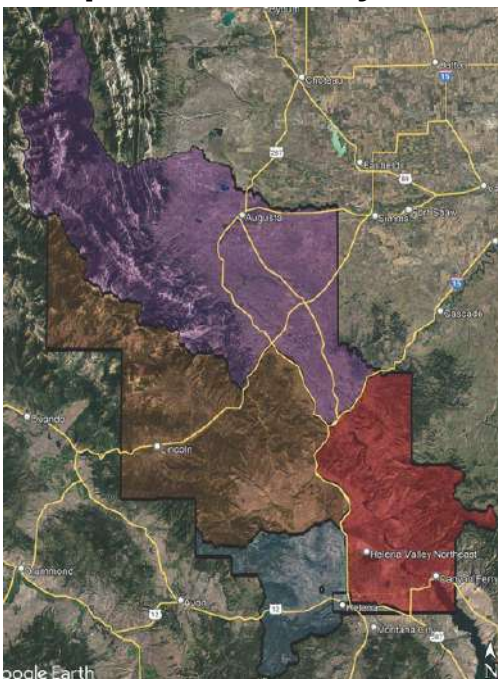
Summer 2025



Current Residency Areas



Proposed Residency Areas



Proposed Boundary Changes for the Conservation District

The Lewis and Clark Conservation District is proposing a change in how Supervisors are elected in the district.

Due to ongoing challenges in filling supervisor positions, the District is considering a shift from 7 residency areas to 4 residency areas, along with 3 additional “at-large” supervisor positions that could be filled by individuals from anywhere in the county (outside the 1948 municipal boundaries).

This change is aimed at increasing flexibility and improving the ability to fill vacant positions.

Key Details:

- Current structure: 7 residency-based supervisor positions
- Proposed structure: 4 residency-based + 3 at-large positions
- Reason: Difficulty in filling certain area seats, particularly Dearborn (Area 3)
- Supervisor role: Elected, unpaid (reimbursable expenses), helps direct the district mission within state law limitations

How to Get Involved:

- View the [draft resolution](#) for changes
- Review the [supervisor position description and application](#)
- Attend upcoming board meetings to ask questions or share feedback. See our [calendar page](#) for dates and times.

Stream Permitting in Lewis & Clark County

A reminder for landowners and managers in Lewis & Clark County, applying for a permit to do any work that may affect the stream bed or the banks of any perennial stream in the county, as well as the shores of Canyon Ferry, Hauser and Holter Reservoirs **is mandatory.**

There is no fee for the 310 permit with Lewis & Clark Conservation District. We work closely with landowners to make sure that their project is the best project possible.

Projects include, but aren't limited to, culverts, bridges, boat ramps, docks, bank stabilization etc. If a project might impact, directly or indirectly, the bank or shore, a permit will be required.

We work with the Gilly App's [online permitting application](#), or you can fill out the [pdf version](#).

You can also scan the code below with your smart phone and go right to the Gilly App.

For more information, email joe@lewisandclarkcd.org or call Joe at 406-594-9823.



Our contact information has changed. You can reach Chris Evans at 406-502-8591 or by email at chris@lewisandclarkcd.org, and Joe Kremer-Herman at 406-594-9823 or by email at joe@lewisandclarkcd.org.

A Couple of Surveys

Wildfire Risk Assessment Survey-

The Montana Department of Military Affairs (DMA), in partnership with Chloeta, is conducting a Community Wildfire Risk Assessment Survey as part of a broader effort to strengthen resilience around Fort Harrison and Limestone Hills Training Area. This work supports the development of a comprehensive Wildfire Risk Assessment Plan aimed at protecting both military infrastructure and surrounding communities from wildfire threats.

Through this short survey, we are gathering public input to better understand how residents perceive wildfire risks, what preparedness measures are in place, and what resources are needed most. Your feedback will help guide regional mitigation strategies and support long-term planning that reduces the risk of wildfire impacts.

You can take the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CommunityWildfireRiskAssessment> or use your smart phone to take the survey by scanning the first QR code below.

Community Vulnerability Assessment Survey-

The Montana Department of Military Affairs (DMA), in partnership with Chloeta, is conducting a Community Vulnerability Assessment Survey to better understand the risks facing communities near Fort Harrison and the Limestone Hills Training Area. This effort supports a broader initiative to improve resilience by identifying key challenges related to infrastructure, emergency preparedness, communication, and community resources.

Through this brief survey, we're collecting input on how residents experience and respond to various hazards, what resources are available, and where gaps exist. Your feedback will help shape targeted strategies that strengthen regional preparedness and support long-term resilience planning.

You can take the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/VulnerabilityResiliencePlanningCommunitySurvey> or scan the second QR code below with your smart phone to go to the survey.



**Wildfire Risk
Assessment**



**Community
Vulnerability
Assessment**



SUMMER WALK SERIES

Free educational walks
Tuesdays and Thursdays
in June, July and August.

HELENA C.O.R.E.
2025

JUNE 6:00PM

- 17 A WALK IN THE FIRE WISE GARDEN- TRI-COUNTY FIRE SAFE
- 19 BIRD WALK- MONTANA AUDUBON
- 24 BLACKFOOT CHALLENGE- BEING BEAR SMART
- 26 GEOLOGY WALK- MONTANA DISCOVERY FOUNDATION



THESE WALKS ARE
BROUGHT TO YOU
FOR FREE BY
HELENA C.O.R.E:
COMMUNITY OF
RESOURCE
EDUCATORS

JULY 6:00PM

- 1 A HISTORY OF FORESTRY AND FIRES - HELENA PARKS AND REC
- 3 READING THE LANDSCAPE- FOREST SERVICE
- 8 WETLANDS AND EROSION- LEWIS AND CLARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT
- 10 HISTORY & ARTIFACTS OF THE HELENA VALLEY- PRICKLY PEAR LAND TRUST
- 15 REDISCOVER REEDER'S ALLEY- FOUNDATION FOR MONTANA HISTORY
- 17 HIKING IN BEAR COUNTRY- MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
- 22 MACROINVERTEBRATES -WATER QUALITY PROTECTION DISTRICT
- 24 FIRE ECOLOGY AND FIRE LOOKOUT HISTORY- MONTANA DISCOVERY FOUNDATION
- 29 A WALK IN THE FIRE WISE GARDEN- TRI-COUNTY FIRE SAFE
- 31 NATURE JOURNALING- RESILIENT HELENA

AUG 6:00PM

- 5 MAC PASS WILDFLOWER HIKE- FOREST SERVICE
- 7 WATER WISE GARDEN TOUR- RESILIENT HELENA
- 12 ARTS OF HELENA- HOLTER MUSEUM OF ART
- 14 FOREST INVENTORY & MANAGEMENT- NATURAL RESOURCE CONSERVATION SERVICE
- 19 CHINA ROW CEMETERY- MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
- 21 PRAIRIES TO MOUNTAINS- MONTANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VISIT THE LINK OR SCAN THE
CODE BELOW FOR LOCATIONS,
MORE INFORMATION AND TO
REGISTER.

tinyurl.com/SUMMERWALK25



SCAN ME

Farm Service Agency in Helena Montana

Due to a retirement and the last employee in the Helena FSA office taking the deferred resignation, the Helena Farm Service Agency is only staffed on Mondays and Thursdays for the time being and should be open from 8 am to 4:30 pm. If you need to reach them, call 406-449-5000 ext. 2.

Upcoming CD Meetings

- July 10, 2025 Helena Service Ct. Conference room 10 am
- August 14, 2025 Lincoln, location TBD, at 9:30 am
- September 11, 2025 Helena Service Ct. Conference Room 1 pm.

District Report-Chris Evans, District Administrator & Explorer Editor

The 2nd quarter of 2025 sped by with all things education related ramping up. We concluded our very popular pollinator initiative for this year with 140 seed applications. We plan to apply for another grant in the fall cycle to run another initiative in 2026. We will be sending out a request for photos and reports from past applicants very soon!

Our Resource Specialist, Joe Kremer-Herman has been really busy with the Rolling Rivers Trailer, going all over the county, and even outside the county for special events like the Old Salt Festival. He spent time at the Lincoln School too, before school let out!

District Admin, Chris Evans, has been working on the proposed boundary change, made necessary by the difficulty in getting board members in the Dearborn and Lincoln areas. In addition, she has been continuing work with the Montana Conservation District Employee Organization as their current president. She will end her term at the end of 2025. She has served for many years as one of the directors for this area for the organization.

The 3rd quarter will see continued education efforts and planning for the fall round of grant applications and fall meetings. Chris and, possibly, Joe will attend the Statewide Employee Training in August to learn and to also provide some training to CD employees across Montana.

From FWP-New law increases the costs of private pond licenses

Landowners looking to build a private pond or renew their pond license will see an increase in fees after new legislation was signed by Gov. Greg Gianforte.

House Bill 74, raises the cost of the application fee from \$10 to \$600, the renewal fee from \$10 to \$250 and requires a transfer fee of \$250.

The new licenses are good for 10 years, and the term of the license remains if the license is transferred. For instance, if someone is three years into a license cycle and decides to transfer it, the new owner would have seven years remaining on the license.

Since 1945, when FWP started administering private pond licenses, the application fee has been \$10. This fee didn't cover the costs incurred by FWP for environmental assessments and program administration. The new fees will partially offset these expenses, which average \$1,700 per license over a 10-year period.

The new law also affects people who sell fish, eggs or fry. People selling these items must be licensed by FWP and, with the new law, are now required to provide a \$2,500 corporate surety bond, maintain detailed records of species and quantities sold or purchased and submit an annual report with a \$250 renewal fee to FWP by Jan. 31.

HB 74 was the result of recommendations from an interim legislative study committee, which looked to cover the costs that FWP incurs to inspect the ponds and remove fish in the case of an illegal introduction.

From SRWG



The Sun River Watershed Group works to restore and protect the resources of the Sun River watershed and its resources. SRWG has held several events this summer, with a couple more volunteer days coming up.

On National Get Outdoors Day, SRWG hosted a free event called Outdoor Day Journaling with help from local author Amy Grisak. The group trekked out to Nilan Reservoir and took time to observe nature while drawing and jotting down notes about anything, or everything, that caught their eye. Amy Grisak led the group in discussions about what nature journaling means to her, and her work, as well as providing helpful insight into the different ways nature journals can be used. It is rare that a person can take time to just sit and enjoy what they are seeing and hearing around them.



Our goal was to give people the time, space, and opportunity to do just that. We hope all enjoyed their day!

On July 12, SRWG will host the 27th annual Weed Whacker Rodeo in Sun Canyon. SRWG is looking for more volunteers to help control weeds in the canyon, reducing their spread through wildlife habitat and rangelands downstream. The day begins at 8:30 am at the Beaver Creek campground with FWP's Bear Aware information and practice spraying bear spray. After a quick lesson on weed identification and removal, volunteers disburse throughout the canyon to pull weeds until midday. Around noon, lunch is served: local hamburgers donated by Mike and Sarah Cobb, grilled up by the Waldner family. Volunteers all get door prizes, then we head home.

More events can be found at www.sunriverwatershed.org/events. Contact madison@sunriverwatershed.org to volunteer or for more information.

Partner News, continued

Garden Succession Planting-from NRCS

Learn how to stagger plantings to spread out your harvest and often dodge pest problems.

All across the northern temperate zone, a popular question in early June is "Got your garden in?" As if it was a one shot deal; like you plant it and you're done with it.

Well, even in the far northern U.S. where it can frost in late May or early June, many gardeners are already on to their second planting in a few beds by early June. Out with radishes, in with a crop of beans; out with wintered-over spinach, in with tomatoes or cucumbers. By staggering plantings you can spread out your harvest and often dodge pest problems as well.

Technically, succession planting refers to successive sowings of a single crop at specific intervals to ensure an extended harvest. We use the concept somewhat more loosely here.

TRANSPLANTS AND SUMMER COVER CROPS

By early summer, you can turn over what's left of your early spring planted salad greens to make room for summer transplants or the next direct seeded crop. Starting seedlings in flats in anticipation of space that will open up 4 to 8 weeks later saves room in the garden, and makes it easier to provide the extra care needed to grow tender young seedlings into strong transplants. Try to always have some seedlings ready to take advantage of any space that opens up in the garden.

Another option is to grow a quick summer cover crop in between spring and fall planted vegetables. Try planting buckwheat in vacant beds to keep the soil covered until it is time to plant again. You can cut the cover crop and put it in the compost pile, or chop and drop it for use as a mulch around transplants of fall greens and brassicas.

CREATE MICROCLIMATES FOR EXTENDED HARVESTS

While you usually get only one chance to grow the main season summer crops like tomatoes, melons and eggplants, cool weather crops give you multiple opportunities to extend the season on both ends. One way to successively plant cool weather crops in the summer is to create shade for them in the garden and keep them moist. For example, try growing summer lettuce or endive under your bean trellises, or spinach in the partial shade around your sunflowers. You can also use shade cloth or shade trees to mitigate the heat of the summer sun.

In autumn, coldframes or frost blankets can extend the harvest long into the fall and winter. Plant cold tolerant crops like salad greens, kale, broccoli, cauliflower and leeks in August and September to keep a portion of your garden productive while cover cropping the rest.

By creating microclimates in the garden and planting throughout the season, you can grow many of your favorite crops over a much longer period. Whether it's providing shelter from the summer sun, protection from the frosts of spring and fall, or an insulated environment in the dead of winter, you can sustain a longer and bigger harvest, and maximize the use of your precious garden space.

Water Test Cost Share Program

Lewis & Clark Conservation District will reimburse landowners in Lewis and Clark County \$25 when they get their well water tested.

You may use any lab of your choice to complete the tests. We ask that you do a minimum of the bacteria and total dissolved solids test. Some of the local test labs are Energy Lab, the State Laboratory, and Alpine Analytical.

Once you've gotten your results back, email a copy of your results and invoice to us at admin@lewisandclarkcd.org or mail to LCCD, 790 Colleen Street, Helena MT 59601. There is a limited amount of funding for this program so get your information in soon!



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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Karl Christians--Vice Chair and Area 5
Jeanette Nordahl--Treasurer and Area 2
John Baucus--Member and Area 4
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Area 3-Vacant
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LCCD STAFF

Chris Evans--District Administrator
Joe Kremer-Herman--Resource Specialist

NRCS STAFF

Rebecka Ayre--Supervisory DC
Andrew Kretschmer--District Conservationist
Jason Saari--Soil Conservationist
Zach Williams--Forester

Stream Permitting Required!

If you are planning any work that may affect the streambed or the banks of any perennial stream, or on the shores of Canyon Ferry, Hauser or Holter Reservoirs, in Lewis & Clark County, you are required to fill out a permit application with the Conservation District, along with a number of other agencies, using the [Joint Application](#). Culverts, bridges, fords, streambank work, construction etc. all require a permit.

In the event of any emergencies, where life, crops or property may be at risk, landowners are allowed to do the minimal amount of work to protect their property, but need to file a Notice of Emergency within 15 days of completing the work. Before and after photos are particularly helpful in these cases.

If you see a project that is affecting a stream somewhere in the county, and want to know if it's permitted, please contact our Resource Specialist, Joe Kremer-Herman at 406-594-9823 or via email at joe@lewisandclarkcd.org.

Our Thanks to our Education Program Sponsors!

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