



# Lewis and Clark Conservation District

790 Colleen Street, Helena MT 59601 406.502.8591 <https://lewisandclarkcd.org>

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

August 14, 2025

Lambkins Restaurant, Lincoln, MT  
and via Zoom

**Call to Order**—The meeting was called to order by chair Jeff Ryan at 9:31 am. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Stan Frasier, Jeanette Nordahl, Sarah Howe-Cobb. John Baucus joined the meeting at 9:57 am. Also in attendance were Elena Frederick, Andrew Kretschmer, Joe Kremer-Herman, Chris Evans, Becky Ayre, Jerry Strong, Dan Fiehrer, Will Standenmeyer, Pat Keim, Matt Ferrell and Fred Sargeson. On zoom: Madison Colyer; County Commissioner Tom Rolfe joined the meeting at 10:21 am.

**Introductions**—Introductions were made

**Governance Calendar Review**—the board reviewed August and September's Governance Calendar. The most notable item was in regard to MACD related activities.

**Minutes**—motion by Jeff Ryan to approve the July minutes as presented, second by Sarah Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

**Financial Statement/Outstanding Bills**—Jeanette Nordahl made a motion to approve the financial report as presented and to pay the outstanding bills, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

**Supervisor Absences**—Karl Christians was not present due to farming issues in Denton.

**Correspondence**—Subdivision notice from the county.

**Public Comment**—See Tenmile Creek below. Tom Rolfe from the Board of County Commissioners was present on Zoom. He wants to ensure good communication.

## Reports

**NRCS**—Andrew said that they have a new acting state conservationist. The Secretary announced the USDA reorganization, which will supposedly mostly affect the Washington DC offices, moving people to the Regional Hubs. There is no indication yet if it will affect the local offices. TIPs are going to be moving forward for at least this year. Congress did rescind the IRA funding. The office doesn't know immediately what funding will look like. Becky Ayre said for the county, because of the hold up of the IRA funding, they haven't gotten as much funding as in the past. They have 4 of the EQIP projects pre-approved, with \$351,000 and 3 CSP preapproved contracts, with over \$100,000 in funding.

**DNRC**—Written report from Catey Bauer. Most notably the opening grant cycle in September was mentioned. Jeff Ryan asked if the brushy toe application on Little Prickly Pear Creek near the town



of Canyon Creek would be appropriate for this round of funding opening September 1st. Chris would like the information for that application before the end of September, since she'll have the Pollinator Grant to apply for, as well as the one for Grant Williams, assuming the board approves his request.

**SRWG**—Madison was on zoom to give the SRWG update. They are starting to wind down for the summer. GID is done for the season, FSID is looking at mid-August. The river is under hoot owl designation. Bashin' Trash will be revamped most likely moving forward. Water quality monitoring is still ongoing. Madison wanted to know if Joe could assist in the September round of monitoring. Muddy Creek is coming along with a 90% design expected soon. They're releasing the RFQ for the project planning. They are applying for a BSWC member for next year and will be looking for office space for that person. They are also losing a board member in January and will be looking for a new person. Madison mentioned the forestry BMP reviews project and wanted to know if John was still interested in participating. He's pretty squeezed for time, but would like to take a look anyway. Training would probably be in about a year. Lastly they made a stakeholder survey and would appreciate board members and staff with the CD filling that out.

**MRCDC**—Written Report.

**WQPD**—Fred from Public Health was present to discuss the issue with Jeff Ryan leaving the WQPD board. He's new to the department and wanted to make sure that we maintain conversation and connections between the WQPD and the LCCD boards. He will be doing a review of the Grizzly Gulch project and see what broke down in regard to communications with that project. He would like to be sure that operational capabilities are maintained. Elena asked about their involvement with businesses, schools, etc. in regard to public health. At the last LCCD board meeting, no one else on the CD Board indicated that they wanted to be on that board at the moment. Jeff Ryan said that the term "sever ties" was probably a bit extreme and that the CD will continue working with the WQPD on cost share on water tests and collaboration on the various activities that we both do. Sarah Howe-Cobb asked if to be a board member on the WQPD board, if they have to live in the WQPD and that is apparently the case.

**LHWG**—Matt from LHWG said that the big thing coming up with them is the Watershed Festival in Women't Park. They spent a lot of time talking about the Upper Tenmile at their last meeting and have offered to facilitate the conversation between the landowners and RV Ranch manager.

**Helena CORE**—Joe has been running CORE since Corie has been on maternity leave. The Summer Walk series is wrapping up.

**Weed District**—no report.

**MACD**—motion by Ryan to support the resolution, second by Baucus, motion carried. Evans reminded the board about the Area meeting that's coming up, and said that the Area 6 employees opted for a joint auction item for the convention—a pair of kayaks. She asked that if the board have any requests for breakout sessions, training or session topics for the convention, to let her know and she'll pass those on to MACD.

### Supervisor Reports

**Jeff Ryan**—fishing has been slow

**Stan Frasier**—Stan won't be at the next meeting due to a family event. He has been pulling knapweed at his place and is up to about 2 pickup loads.



**John Baucus**—Extremely dry conditions. The ranch has about 160 developed springs and all are down, some are dry.

**Sarah Howe-Cobb**—Sarah said they are fall calving which is a fun time of year. It's so dry that even though there's grass in the forest service, the streams are dry so there's no water. They found a bunch of leafy spurge up by Scoutana on the Forest Service property; the Forest Service said they have no money to spray so told them to take care of it.

**Jeanette Nordahl**—Jeanette said that she doesn't have anything to report, but mentioned that Powell County ran some kind of ATV down the Blackfoot spraying weeds and is apparently in hot water over that.

**Elena Frederick**-Elena's summer school is over and she has 3 weeks before she's back to school.

### Staff Reports

Evans provided a written report.

Kremer-Herman reported on the Summer walk that he hosted, and the other various education work he's been doing, especially with the Rolling Rivers Trailer. He was on sick leave for a week or so due to some surgery.

### Old Business

Supervisory Residency Area Resolution & map-Motion by Ryan to approve the proposed changes to the residency areas, second by Nordahl; motion carried. Evans will find out from DNRC what the next step is with the Ordinance.

Mesonet Project Update-The northern site location in the county will be on Judemann's place; Kevin has made contact with Mark Diehl and Ed Chevallier and both seem to be interested in hosting a site.

FWP-Boat Check Station-Discussion-Motion by Frasier to decline, second by Howe-Cobb; motion carried.

Quarter 2 report-Operations, Website and Social Media-Evans shared the written report with the board for their review and apologized for not having it at the July meeting.

Lewis and Clark County Planning Board-Discuss at the next meeting. Elena said that she would be willing. Motion by Ryan, second by Howe-Cobb to approve her appointment; motion carried.

### New Business

Ten Mile Creek-There were a number of people present with concerns on Tenmile Creek. The main concern seems to be water rights. The board explained the 310 law and the fact that not only does the Conservation District not get involved in water rights, but that DNRC's Water Resources handles them. The Conservation District cannot disallow a water right holder from accessing their water, but can ensure that it's done in the least destructive manner possible. Stan Frasier said that when he viewed the current diversion dam, there was virtually no water going down the creek.

There were more comments about the fact that the ditch was running bankfull going to the new pivot systems. Landowners in the area-not the RV Ranch- have moved rocks from the dam, RV Ranch put bigger rocks back with heavy equipment. The RV Ranch has also deepened ditches that were remediated with the Ten Mile mine reclamation work and there is concern about



contamination. They also cut down trees within the ditch easement. EPA/DEQ are on the potential contamination issue.

There was then more discussion about water rights, and that when the RV Ranch altered the stream, there's little to no water flow. The representative from Centennial Livestock said that their water right is supposed to remain in the creek as part of a prior agreement. Evans told their representative that apparently the DNRC Water Rights people don't know about that, and recommended that he get in touch with them. The recommendation of the Conservation District was that the landowners and water users petition for a water commissioner, and work with the Lake Helena Watershed Group if the RV Ranch will as well, to come to some kind of understanding.

Matt Ferrell has offered, on behalf of the Lake Helena Watershed Group, to help facilitate a conversation between the interested parties to try to defuse the situation and work to come to some sort of agreement. Evans has his phone number for any of the landowners that are interested.

Request for Grant Sponsorship-Threemile Dam-postponed until next meeting

Pollinator Initiative Grant-2026 program-Motion to approve by Ryan, second by Nordahl; motion carried.

### **310 Permit Applications**

CP-01-25-RV Ranch-Stan said that the current dam situation is a mess and he thinks that there is a better way for the RV Ranch to get their water. Stan believes that it's reasonable to require removal of the dam at the end of the irrigating season. Motion by Frasier that the action taken to maintain the dam was a violation since the RV Ranch had no permit in place for maintenance, second by Ryan; motion carried. To remedy the violation, Frasier made a motion that the existing dam should be removed at the end of landowner's water right withdrawal no later than the end of September; in addition, the RV ranch is required to replace the current dam with a better diversion **with an approved 310 permit**. Second by Howe-Cobb; John asked about the water agreement that was noted in some of the correspondence from landowners. Evans will follow up on that. Motion carried.

EME-04-25 RV Ranch-Stan believes that running low on water at the end of July doesn't constitute an emergency. Starting a crop in July was likely misguided. John Baucus said that emergencies are unexpected, and this doesn't appear to be an emergency, more a lack of planning. A neighbor moved rock from the initial diversion, which led to what the ranch manager considered to be an emergency. The manager used heavy equipment to replace the rock with rock that was too large for someone to move by hand. Motion by Frasier second by Baucus that it was not an emergency. Motion carried. Work done was in violation. Remediation will consist of the requirements for CP-01-25.

### **Other Business—**

Policies/Procedures-Evans indicated the need to have a committee review the Policies before bringing to the board for adoption-Jeff and Jeanette would be willing to review. Elena would like to see them when they're all in hard-copy format.

**Announcements**

Next meeting—September 11, 2025 at 1 pm, USDA Service Center Conference Room, 790 Colleen Street, Helena MT.

Approved by Jeff Ryan Date 9/11/25  
Recorded by [Signature] Date 9/11/2025