



The Explorer

Volume 64, Issue 1 Winter 2025



Pollinator Initiative 2025

We are happy to let our readers know that that our Pollinator Initiative grant application to the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation last cycle was approved!

Pollinator plot seed will be available only to properties in Lewis and Clark County. We will have at least 3 mixes this year, with a possible 4th mix for high elevations, if we can find the seed. Seed pickup will be in April and May this year. **If you cannot irrigate the seed, it should be seeded prior to May 15th.**

By signing up for the program, you commit to proper site preparation and follow up monitoring (responding to a once or twice a year email from the CD, with updated photos of your plot). We use the monitoring information when applying for grants for the program.

This will be our 6th year running this program and it has been extremely popular, with almost 300 individual landowners/managers participating and around 15 acres worth of seed distributed.

If you are interested in applying for seed, you can sign up [online](#), or scan the QR code with your smart phone to go directly to our Pollinator Page on our website.

We have an option to download a pdf form that you can return to us via email, but we lost or missed a number of seed applications last year, so the online application form would be best.

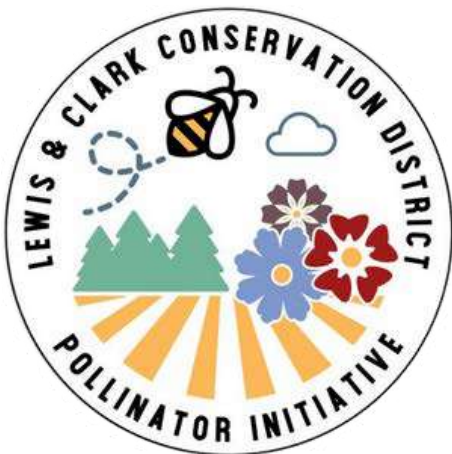


Photo of the Selma Held Community Garden

The Grizzly Gulch Planting Project



The other grant that we were awarded is one that will assist the Lewis & Clark County Water Quality Protection District in finishing their Grizzly Gulch project.

Grizzly Gulch, outside of Helena, is a historic mining site. Mining activities and road realignment created a 30 foot drop from the upstream culvert to the lowest elevation of the pit. Most of the material from the historic mining activities has been either moved within the project, or removed from the site completely.

The project that the WQPD is doing addresses chronic and worsening erosion issues. They had received a grant from DNRC to complete the project, but with inflation, the costs of the materials ended up being more than their original grant was for.

The grant that the Conservation District was awarded will assist the WQPD in paying for the plant materials and coir fabric to help stabilize the site and reduce erosion.

[Read more information on the project!](#)

We are seeking 2 new Supervisors!

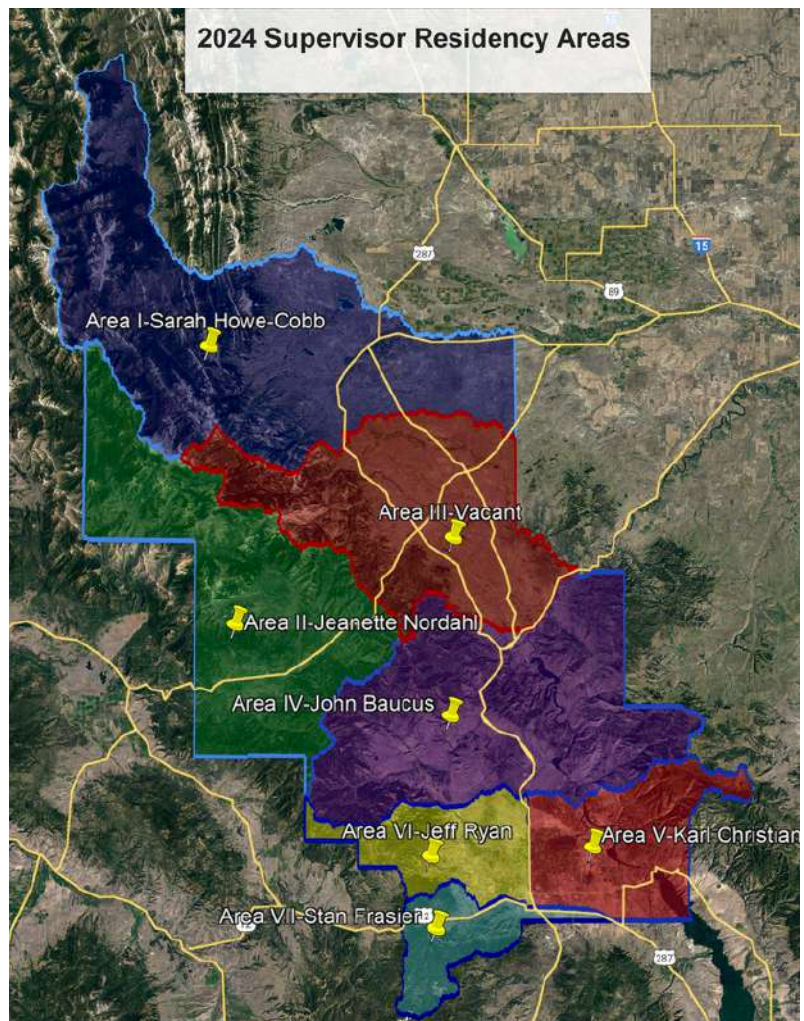
Lewis & Clark Conservation District is looking for a couple of new Board members. Area 3 is currently vacant and Area 2 will be vacant at some point this winter.

Lewis & Clark CD is unique in that it has residency requirements, meaning that a person has to live in the area that they are elected to represent. Current board members can appoint a person to fill the positions until the end of the current term, or the next general election, whichever comes first.

Conservation Districts are political subdivisions of state government and the Board of Supervisors is an independent organization, directing the mission and activities of their district within the realm of their authority. From administering the Stream Permitting Law, to education projects, and more, each supervisor on the Board can provide guidance and their energy in directing the District mission.

[Read more and fill out an interest form!](#)

If you, or someone you know, might be interested in learning more about the positions, please contact Chris Evans at 406-502-8591 or email chris@lewisandclarkcd.org.



Early 2025 Conservation District Activities

- January 23-Conservation District Awareness Day at the Capital Rotunda
- February 4-Invasive Annual Grass Workshop/Snow Forecast-
One Pesticide Applicator Credit is available by attending!
- Mid-Winter-date to be determined-Pollinator Workshop
- March 27-noon to 1 pm, Annual Local Work Group Meeting (see below)
- April 19-Montana Conservation Elders Outdoor Youth Experience



Join the **Lewis & Clark Conservation District** and the **Helena NRCS Field Office** for a presentation by **Dr. Jane Mangold** on **Invasive Annual Grasses in Montana**, followed by a Snow Forecast presentation.

When: February 4, 2025 from **5:00-7:30 pm**
Where: Montana Wild, 2668 Broadwater Ave, Helena MT
 Snacks Provided

****1 Pesticide Applicator Credit can be obtained with this event****
Seating is LIMITED so RSVP today!

  **Natural Resources Conservation Service**
 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Please RSVP by emailing chris@lewisandclarkcd.org. For more information call Chris at 406-502-8591.

WHAT: Lewis & Clark County Work Group

WHO: Anyone who has feedback on natural resource concerns in Lewis & Clark County

WHY: NRCS and the Conservation District use information to update their long range plans

Lewis & Clark County Local Work Group Meetings



Or scan the QR code to fill out the online survey

  **United States Department of Agriculture**
 Natural Resources Conservation Service

WHEN: Thursday March 27, 2025 from 12 pm to 1 pm
WHERE: Conference Room at 790 Colleen Street, Helena MT, 59601
 For more information call Chris Evans at 406-502-8591 or email at chris@lewisandclarkcd.org



Come and join the local NRCS and Conservation District folks and help us define or re-define natural resource concerns in Lewis & Clark County! All are welcome!

310 Permit Requirements

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.

Project 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 at right with your smart phone and go right to the app.

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



The Winter “Slow-Down” Fallacy

Years ago, the Conservation District used to experience a “slow-down” in the late fall and winter. Not so much anymore. With a 2 person office and trying to cover the entire county, we transition into planning mode now in the fall and winter, and immediately start working on projects for the new year.

In November, the board met to review updates to our 2022-2026 Strategic Plan. Those updates incorporate responses from landowners and managers in Lewis and Clark County. We gather responses with our [Natural Resource Concern Survey](#), as well as our [Local Work Group](#) meetings every year. We also created our Operational Plan and the Budget for 2025.

Along with our edited 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, you can find our 2025 Operational Plan on our website at <https://lewisandclarkcd.org/landowner-resources/planning/>.

Now that our planning is complete and documents are updated for 2025, District staff will begin work on the events and projects that the District has planned for 2025. Some highlights:

- Our 2025 Pollinator Initiative
- A Pollinator related workshop
- Participation at Partner Events like the Montana Youth Matters Outdoor Experience, the Lake Helena Watershed Festival, and more
- The Rolling Rivers Trailer activities
- And of course, the State-mandated Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act’s Permitting program



District Report-Chris Evans, District Administrator & Explorer Editor

The 4th quarter of 2024 saw CD Staff winding down summer and fall projects, and preparing for the end of the year. In the last days of September (yes, that was 3rd quarter), we hosted the Montana Association of Conservation District Area 6 meeting, with a tour at the Prickly Pear Land Trust Sevenmile Creek project.

In a year where 310 permit applications seemed uncharacteristically slow, things sure changed in the 4th quarter with numbers suddenly jumping to 40 applications for the year.

District staff attended the Montana Association of Conservation Districts’ annual convention in Great Falls in November, attending the Employee Organization meeting and breakout and regular sessions on topics pertinent to the district.

In November, the Board of Supervisors met for a very long day, doing some budget and operations planning for 2025, board and staff training for transition, and the regular meeting.

We have begun planning a lot of great activities for 2025, from workshops, to stream projects. Stay tuned for more information on those!

Partner News



Montana's Rangeland Resources Program

The Rangeland Resources Program with Montana DNRC has a new website! The new site has improved functionality, and is mobile friendly!

RREC's Working Lands Internship Program is open and [accepting applications](#) until February 3, 2025.

They will be hosting Range in the Rotunda on March 24th!

From NRCS

Wheat Stem Sawfly Best Management Practices

The wheat stem sawfly (*Cephus cinctus*) is a dominant pest of dryland wheat production in Montana. Currently, no insecticides provide successful control of wheat stem sawfly. As a result, cultural methods such as variety selection, crop rotation, and harvest management, are the only successful methods of suppression for this pest. This bulletin provides practical and effective best management practices for wheat stem sawfly management to promote greater economic and ecological sustainability for Montana farmers.

More information is available at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/resources/guides-and-instructions/agronomy-montana-resources>



December's MSU Extension Weed Post

Montana State University Extension does a monthly weed post. December's was all about locoweed and that it hosts a fungus that makes locoweeds toxic to livestock. They go on to say that the fungus doesn't spread from plant to plant, but that first grows in the seed coat, and develops within the emerged seedlings every spring.

Read more at the [MSU Extension website](#)!

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.

Your first call should be to the Lewis and Clark County Water Quality Protection District at 406-457-8584 for recommendations on what tests would be best to run. They should also have test kits available from the Well-Educated program from MSU. You may also get your test kits from other labs that do water testing.

Once you've gotten your results back, email a copy of your results and invoice to us at chris@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!



Word Search

V T T D E T S C R J F F R R N M M N O I B A G H E U J X T J A F
 I Y I W N U C T P B O X S S T I M R E P C K R N Z F W N Q R V K
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AGGRADATION	BIOLOGISTS	DEPOSITION	GEOTEXTILES	RESOURCES
ALTERATION	BRIDGE	DIKE	INCISED	REVTMENT
ARMORING	CHANNEL	DISTRICT	INSTALLATION	RIPARIAN
AVULSION	CHANNELIZATION	DREDGING	IRRIGATION	RIVER
BACKFILL	COMPLAINT	EMERGENCY	LEVEE	SCOUR
BACKWATER	CONSERVATION	ENTRENCHMENT	PERMIT	STREAMBANK
BANK	CULVERT	EROSION	PRESERVATION	STREAMBED
BAR	DEADMAN	FASCINE	REMOVAL	THALWEG
BEDLOAD	DEGRADATION	GABION	RESERVOIRS	TOE

Unscramble the Words!--The Answers

- | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------|--------------------|----------------|
| 1. LPIPTANA | APPLICANT | 16. ACPLITMNO | COMPLIANT |
| 2. NDETMRPTE | DEPARTMENT | 17. VLARTOIO | VIOLATOR |
| 3. FIANDCIIOTM | MODIFICATION | 18. UNGIRL | RULING |
| 4. DONLWNREA | LANDOWNER | 19. MKRBENTSAA | STREAMBANK |
| 5. TACAUHQ | AQUATIC | 20. TONRIPEEAVSR | PRESERVATION |
| 6. PIATCPOLAN | APPLICATION | 21. STINAMTRIOANDI | ADMINISTRATION |
| 7. IIECSOD | DECISION | 22. GEDNIRG | DREDGING |
| 8. UEPSISROVR | SUPERVISOR | 23. EROTNICOPT | PROTECTION |
| 9. ERPINEALN | PERENNIAL | 24. XCTNVIAAOE | EXCAVATION |
| 10. UGRLNI | RULING | 25. RDEMBESAT | STREAMBED |
| 11. SOAZINTIBTIAL | STABILIZATION | 26. SOIDVIREN | DIVERSION |
| 12. WLIWLOS | WILLOWS | 27. GTITNAEVOE | VEGETATION |
| 13. EERYDM | REMEDY | 28. NRIIDVSOE | DIVERSION |
| 14. IPNMOALCEC | COMPLIANCE | 29. OTLISBIGO | BIOLOGIST |
| 15. RSRTTAEIOIN | RESTORATION | 30. ASVERMPROTPE | PRESERVATION |

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Karl Christians--Vice Chair and Area 5
Jeanette Nordahl--Treasurer and Area 2
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Area 3-Vacant

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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
Josh Neth--NRCS Engineer

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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LCCD CHAMPIONS "Those who fight for a cause"

Action Print
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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.