Lewis and Clark Conservation District

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

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 10, 2026
1 pm
USDA Service Center Conference Room, Helena MT, 59601
& Via Zoom Conferencing

Call to Order-The meeting was called to order at 1 pm by chair Jeff Ryan. In attendance were Jeff Ryan, Karl Christians, Stan Frasier, Elena Frederick, *Sarah Howe-Cobb*. Also in attendance were *Becca Boslough King*, Andrew Kretschmer, Tracy Wendt, Joe Kremer-Herman, and Chris Evans. *Italics denote Zoom attendance. John Baucus joined on Zoom at 2:25 pm.*
Introductions-Introductions were made.
Public Comment-There was none.
310 Permit Applications
CP-02-26-Little Wolf Creek Ranch LLC-Danny Buetler installed a dam around 2022 without a permit. John had called Chris with some comments. He said it's obviously a huge dam. He said that the structure looks good except for the spillway, and that the rock wasn't really adequate. The opposite side would have worked as a natural spillway if rocked adequately. John said that the landowner should have progress notes back to the CD within 1 month of the board meeting, but preferably before the October 8, 2026 meeting. Jeff said that the CD could probably live with it, but that the landowner needs to create the spillway. Motion by Jeff that the work done is in violation of the law, second by Frasier; landowner needs to complete a 310 permit application with stamped engineered plans for the the spillway and the structure. Landowner should have progress notes to the CD before the October 8th meeting. Motion carried. If documents aren't provided to the CD then the dam will be required to be removed.
LC-35-26 Grady-Application was at the last board meeting, but the board had requested more information on the pivot crossings. The applicant would like to delete those crossings from this application, pending the other work so that they can have a better idea in the spring for where the crossings will be, but they had designs for the cattle crossings. Motion by Frasier to approve as presented, second by Ryan, motion carried.
LC-42-26 Shorer-Site visit is scheduled for tomorrow.
LC-43-26 Gill-Applicant wants to replace the current dock (70 feet) on Hauser with a new one. The dock will be between 100 and 110 feet long. Posts will be metal. The applicant plans to submit an application for shore armoring. Motion by Christians to approve as proposed, second by Elena; motion carried. (Make it VERY clear in the permit that this doesn't cover armoring)
Review Governance Calendar for September/October-The calendar was reviewed and discussed.
Minutes—August 2026-Motion by Ryan to approve as sent, second by Frederick; motion carried.

Financial Statement August 2026 & Outstanding Bills motion by Ryan to approve the financial statement as presented, second by Frederick; motion carried.
Supervisor absences-John was gone haying but was able to be on for part of the meeting; Jeanette was going to join by Zoom, but she must not have been able to attend.
Correspondence-The monthly weed post from Extension is in the packet. In addition, DNRC sent out a recent email with personnel changes.

Reports
NRCS-Andrew handed out a written report, as well as a draft of the new program format, Locally Led Conservation Proposal, which would replace the Targeted Implementation Plans. Andrew, Becky and Chris have all reviewed this document and concur that it would be a good start for the next 2 years. In addition to the LLCP, there are a couple of other programs, the Regenerative Ag Pilot program and the Migratory Big Game Initiative (both are national programs).

Peter Kolb will be the first in our speaker series in 2027, starting February 2 with a presentation on pile burning. There was a question about the possibility of doing a demonstration the next day. Andrew has a couple of locations that would be suitable for the 2nd day demonstration.

The post fire assessment process appears to be defunct-Karl had asked about that at the last meeting.

Becky and Andrew are planning to attend the area 6 meeting at the convention and are open to the possibility of car pooling.

Andrew did recently submit an application to a detail in Alaska, so if he's accepted, he may not see us for a few months.
DNRC-As noted in correspondence, there have been some personnel changes in the DNRC CDB section. Catey Bauer had also provided a written report. Discussion on the majority/quorum new legal guidance centered on the fact that in the time that Chris has been with the CD, Lewis and Clark has always used the more strict interpretation of "quorum and majority". She will keep the board posted on next steps, whether the board needs to approve a policy defining quorum and majority.
SRWG-Tracy Wendt was in the room to give their report and had provided a written report too. They don't have any events coming up, but will be scheduling an irrigation workshop in February. It will still be ag focused but will be opened up to other interests as well. It will be on a Saturday this year, since they are trying to get legislators and lobbyists there too. They are doing their library speaker series again, January through May. Their big board meeting is next month. Joe asked if she had the PPLT easement stuff that Travis sent to her. She said that she passed it on to Madison.
MRCDC-Written report in the packet. Jeff Ryan sat in on the quarterly meeting. They had to cancel the River Rendezvous due to lack of attendance. Next year they are considering bringing it to High Plains CD. Karl noted in Molly's notes that the committee had also talked about it possibly being a hard time of year to have the event.
LHWG-They haven't met this month yet.
Helena CORE-School is back in session, so the teaching focused groups are buried in work while the summer ed folks are taking a bit of a break. The summer walks aren't gathering as many

participants as they have in the past years. It started during Covid to get people outside, but they may need to re-think the format. Tracy said that they've also had lower participation in their events, but she doesn't have any theories. Advertising thoughts: to the schools in June, to day/summer camps.

WQPD-No report.

Weed District-No report.

MACD

- Resolution comments for discussion-Comments from Doug Bonsell; Becca will work on potential language to bring to the Area Meeting for a change.
- Resolutions Review in prep for Area mtg-There are 4 resolutions going to the Area 6 meeting, 3 of which are from our district. There was a comment for adding some language to the data center resolution. The 4th one is from the Gallatin CD, and is about the penalty changes for the 310 law. Karl noted that there is no Policy Statement in that resolution.
- Convention-Monday will be a new supervisor training by Ray Ledgerwood-Evans will provide information on that event as well as the rest of the Convention to CD Supervisors as soon as we get it.

Supervisor Reports

Jeff Ryan-Got his brand new e-trike and says it's really scary to drive.

Karl Christians-Karl has been waiting for some rain so he can finish cutting hay. Their irrigation ditch has been full of moss this year for some reason. There has been a lot of third cutting hay this year in the area.

Stan Frasier-Nothing exciting going on at his place except rain.

Elena Frederick-With school back in session, things are getting back to normal. She will work with Joe especially on getting the CD back into the schools. We should probably schedule a work meeting to talk about it. Tracy would be interested too. We need to be sure to keep the East Helena District in mind too.

Sarah Howe-Cobb-They are happy with all the rain, especially due to the Camp Creek Fire in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. If it gets out of the mountains, it will come right down Benchmark. Nilan users only got about ⅓ of the water that they usually get.

John Baucus-John is cutting hay. They had some fires at the exit a few weeks ago. It was about a mile long and there was wind blowing and they had to scramble to protect equipment and animals. It ended up being about 50 acres. In the sheep world, an area ranch had about 250 sheep killed by one lightning strike. The Arington Ranch (previously Settle Ranch) sold, half to someone in Montana and half to an entity in Louisiana. They are gearing up for fall roundup, and they are hoping for more rain.

Becca Boslough King-While she was with MACD she had started working on a program with NASA using their Earth Observation Geospatial data tools to create relevant information for land users. It was put on hold in 2025 due to some funding and other changes at the federal level. They are interested in getting that started up again. Becca is working on it in her current job. It would be relevant in the cheat grass area along with other areas. It could also apply to conifer encroachment issues. Karl said that in his travels to the Denton place, he's noticed that spotted

knapweed is moving east quickly and if they could figure out a way to use those tools there, it would be nice.

Staff Reports

Evans provided a written report-Highlights about the realtor's workshop idea being mostly a bust just due to their bureaucracy and the cost of registering every topic and every speaker. As far as the records project goes, they've had board turnover, so all of our stuff that hasn't come through (2 boxes) is on hold. She and Joe are working hard on figuring out how the district administrator staff transition will work in 2027.

Joe has had some family issues pop up so is trying to stay on top of everything, with the knowledge that he'll probably have to drop everything at short notice. Even when he's gone for a bit, he'll be able to work remotely and Evans will cover what she can of his work.

Old Business

Revisit the Realtor's Workshop-Updated requirement information has made it unworkable. The requirements to register every speaker individually and every topic individually is expensive and needlessly bureaucratic. It was the opinion of the board that we should just try the speaker series, roping in our partners for assistance in advertising and even presenting at it.

New Business

Planning Meeting Date-December 10 at 9 am for a strategic plan re-write, Operation plan and budget review, with lunch provided between that and our afternoon meeting. An after meeting gathering will be planned in East Helena at the Missouri River Brewery. Karl will work with them on that.

Federal Grant Possibility-Threemile Dam-Motion by Ryan, second by Frasier, motion carried.

Education Grant and request from the Feathered Pipe Ranch for a Pollinator Grant-Motion by Ryan to approve both the Education and Pollinator application, second by Frederick; motion carried.

Announcements

Next meeting—October 8, 2026 1 pm Helena MT.

Adjournment-Meeting adjourned 3:01 pm.

Approved by Jeff Ryan Date 10/8/26

Recorded by [signature] Date 10/5/2026