

MINUTES  
Missoula Conservation District  
May 8, 2017

**Missoula Conservation District**  
**May 8, 2017 Meeting Minutes**  
3550 Mullan Road, Suite 106  
Missoula, MT 59808

Missoula Conservation District Attendees:

Tim Hall, Supervisor & Chair  
Travis Greenwalt, Supervisor & Treasurer  
Bob Schroeder, Supervisor  
Sidney Wills, Supervisor  
Paul Parson, Supervisor  
Art Pencek, Supervisor  
Jen McBride, Staff  
Monica Perez-Watkins, Staff  
Brendan Hallmark, Big Sky Watershed Corps Member

Additional Attendees:

Ladd Knotek, MT FWP  
John Hart, Deputy County Attorney

Absent:

Libby Maclay, Supervisor & Vice Chair  
Bart Morris, Associate Supervisor  
John Bowe, NRCS

**Call meeting to order** – 7:03 pm by Tim Hall, Chair.

**Minutes** – Bob Schroeder moved to approve the April 10, 2017 minutes as submitted. Travis Greenwalt seconded the motion, motion passed – unanimous.

**Treasurer's Report** – Travis Greenwalt reported \$36,253.59 in the District checking account.

**Public Comment** – No Public Comment.

**Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Report** - District Conservationist John Bowe was absent but provided the Board with the NRCS report. The report included information on Environmental Quality Incentive Program recent contract work and applications, Conservation Stewardship Program existing contracts and applications, Wetland Reserve Program existing easements and an application, and a Montana NRCS Public Affairs Project.

The Board discussed the NRCS-conservation district partnership and the overlap of conservation districts and NRCS programs for greater overall conservation.

**Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) Report** – Elena Evans, MACD Executive Director, thanked the Board for their support to MACD through membership dues. She then discussed the legislative session, stating that MACD closely monitored 45 bills, with 11 awaiting the governor's signature. She spoke of her work to successfully lobby for more funding in the coal bed methane program. She discussed the floodplain resolution and described the work MACD staff did to speak with bill sponsors to remove bill language that would have impacted conservation districts' election processes. The Board expressed their gratitude in receiving MACD's weekly legislative newsletter, *News from the Front*, which provided detailed information and updates on relevant bills and MACD's work.

Evans then discussed MACD events and membership dues, stating that 38 of 58 conservation districts paid full dues in 2017. She noted that such uncertainty in membership funds makes budgeting difficult. She then reported that the MACD Convention will be held in Bozeman in November and the spring MACD Board meeting will be held in Helena in June. She plans to have 990s and financial reports ready at that time and will send the reports to conservation districts and chairs once they are approved by the MACD Board.

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Evans then discussed the importance of MACD's non-profit counterpart, Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Montana (SWCDM). She explained that in states in which the state conservation district organization does not have a non-profit counterpart, grant funds similar to those awarded to SWCDM go to non-profits not associated with conservation districts. She also noted that SWCDM facilitates contract work between conservation districts and NRCS, which provides ease to NRCS in contracting with a single entity rather than with each contracting conservation district.

### **Existing 310 Permit Application**

#### **MS-05-17 – Western Farms H.O.A. – O'Keefe Creek – Culvert Replacement**

(Geocode: 04232519101050000)

McBride reviewed the project to replace a culvert on O'Keefe Creek and recapped to the Board that action was not taken on the application at the previous meeting because it was incomplete. She said she spoke with the H.O.A. Secretary to see if they acquired a contractor, which they had not.

Art Pencek moved to decline further review of Application No. MS-05-17 since it remained incomplete. Tim Hall seconded the motion, motion passed – unanimous.

### **Existing 310 Permits**

#### **MS-42-16 – K3, LLC c/o Nick Checota - Blackfoot River – Fill and Vegetation Removal – Revegetation Update** (Geocodes: 04220121401230000 & 04220122101300000)

McBride reported that she received several calls regarding successful riparian planting from potential contractors working for the applicant of Permit No. MS-42-16. She said they are planning to combat the weeds by spraying this spring and fall, and will plant on the slope in 2018. McBride said she stressed to the contractor the District's main concern of ensuring the public will not access the bank and perpetuate erosion issues after the amphitheater opens in the summer. She suggested erecting a fence and said she encouraged contractors to be in touch with the county floodplain administrator. The Board discussed fencing and weed spraying recommendations. Ladd Knotek recommended a site visit to further discuss planting and to ensure that specifications of Permit No. MS-42-16 are being followed.

#### **EM-01-17 – Montana Rail Link (MRL) – Mill Creek – Culvert Inlet Rip Rap**

(Geocode: ROW north of 04242835102010000)

McBride reported that the District is awaiting a 310 application from MRL for the removal and replacement of the current rip rap, installed under emergency provision EM-01-17, with that which is of the appropriate size and placement. MRL must submit the application within 90 days of April 10, 2017.

### **310 Inquiries/Issues**

**Cobblestone Association Cottonwood Issues** – McBride discussed correspondence with the Cobblestone Association regarding their concerns that cottonwood trees will fall on homes. The Board reviewed images on PowerPoint and agreed that the trees could be trimmed vertically from the walkway, but a project for further removal would need a 310 application.

**Other** – McBride reported that the District has received several inquiries since mailing the 310 postcard. She spoke of an inquiry regarding the replacement of decking on a Rattlesnake Creek footbridge. The Board instructed her to ensure that the bridge was permitted and if not, to ask the inquirer to submit a 310 application for the decking.

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McBride then discussed other calls and visits regarding various streams following the 310 postcard, such as mowing, a temporary fence, flooding, and a debris pile.

Ladd Knotek reported that county officials operated under the emergency provision to remove downed and intact vegetation along O'Brien Creek on the property of O'Brien Creek Meadows H.O.A. Knotek said the county is being required to replant the area with substantial native vegetation. While in the area he noticed that other vegetation and downed debris were removed after the county's work. The Board agreed that McBride needed to send a letter to the HOA, informing them of the 310 law and asking them to cease vegetation removal or apply for a 310 permit if removal is required.

### Reports

**County Attorney** – Deputy County Attorney John Hart did not have a report for the District.

Chair Tim Hall asked Hart if he knew the guidelines regarding the District's allowance to use funds for meals, such as prior to the District Meeting. Bob Schroeder stated that he'd inquired about this, as the norms for meal purchases for Supervisors have changed over the years and he wants to be certain that we are operating correctly. Hart responded that he did not have a definitive answer on the topic, but said that he normally advised such inquiries by asking if the use of funds could be justified as beneficial use of public funds. Elena Evans, Ladd Knotek, and Supervisors discussed norms regarding meal purchases with Conservation Districts and other public entities. Hart said he will look into the matter and have advice at the next meeting.

**MT FWP** – Knotek reported on the FWP Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program and efforts for the upcoming boat season. Between 120 and 130 employees were hired statewide, with more stations added. He said that FWP has furthered their effort to ensure that all out of state boats and those crossing the continental divide are checked. He discussed last year's efforts.

**Bitter Root RC&D** – No report.

**Water Quality Advisory Council** – No report.

**MACD Dues Committee** – Elena Evans said that MACD intends to include a survey in a larger packet that will be sent out with financial reports.

**District Committees** – McBride asked the Cost-Share committee if they had a chance to review the draft 2018 Cost-Share brochure. The committee asked McBride to resend the brochure.

**Missoula CD Employees and Big Sky Watershed Corps Member** – McBride informed the Board that Senator Jon Tester may visit a host site of a Big Sky Watershed Corps member and that Missoula Conservation District was being considered. She asked the Board of Supervisors if this was okay with them, to which they answered yes. Elena Evans said SWCDM would help facilitate the visit if the District is chosen.

### **Jen McBride – Resource Conservationist – April 11 – May 8, 2017**

**310 Administration:** Reviewed 310 letters following the April 10, 2017 District meeting. Corresponded regarding 310 projects, inquiries, issues, and complaints. Corresponded with applicants for EM-01-17, MS-05-17, and went on site and assisted LaValle Creek landowners with questions regarding an upcoming project. Took Brendan up to this site and followed up with providing Bridge design samples to the landowner. Visited landowner on Donovan Creek regarding her concerns about a letter that we sent about mowing and removing vehicles and other non-native

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materials from the banks. Attended a future building site in Seeley Lake to advise a landowner on 310 requirements. Followed up on 6 other projects between Seeley Lake and Missoula. Reviewed updated sandbag policy with Perez-Watkins. Went up Miller Creek to review the site of an anonymous complaint, conducted a follow up on MS-14-16, Bridge, Holloman Creek. Worked on preparation of reports for the May meeting. Corresponded with County Attorney, Fish Wildlife & Parks, and other representatives regarding possible 310 projects and 310 inquires, issues, complaints. Went on site with MT FW&P representative regarding issues on O'Brien Creek. Visited the Cobblestone association to discuss issues they are having with dying cottonwood trees. Discussed 310 inquiries as needed over the phone or e-mail. Responded to several inquiries about the 310 postcard. Provided photos and reviewed District Meeting PowerPoint.

Conservation Planning: Worked with Monica Perez-Watkins on various District projects and programs. Worked on 2018 Cost-Share brochures and communicated with Cost-Share committee. Continued correspondence and planning with Board Chair and Perez-Watkins regarding Community Listening Sessions. Met regularly with Hallmark regarding improvements to the Healthy Riparian Guide and provided edits and feedback. Answered inquires on District grant programs, sponsorships, and the no-till-drill rental program. Continued correspondence as needed with partners regarding planning for the 2018 Western Montana Grazing and Agriculture conference and the Low-Stress Stock Handling Workshop. Attended Wiregrass workshop put on by the Weed District.

Office Administration: Worked on office function (e.g. dealing with issues with new e-mail forwarding and attempting to obtain a NRCS workstation for Hallmark). Followed up regularly with office IT regarding District computers and need for updates. Corresponded and met with County employees regarding the counties database and possibilities for Missoula Conservation District to buy into an existing database program with the County. Followed up and corresponded with contacts as needed following the last District meeting. Met with Perez-Watkins and Hallmark regarding weekly accomplishments, priorities and plans for coming weeks. Worked on reviewing files and updating working priorities sheet. Completed time reporting for CD staff and also completed BSWC time reporting requirements. Entered labor distribution reports into QuickBooks. Checked in on office project progress including, ongoing website updates, the Riparian Buffer Brochure updates, cost-share program, the 5-year planning process, and equipment program plans. Reviewed and edited May Agenda, April Minutes, and various correspondence. Wrote letters informing landowners of 310 issues on their property. Corresponded with the county attorney's office on office management, contracts, letters, and 310 administration as needed. Worked with Perez-Watkins on District meeting preparations. Updated employee review form. Completed performance review with the Personnel Committee and completed performance review for Perez-Watkins. Met with Budget Committee.

### **Monica Perez-Watkins – Conservation & Communications Coordinator – April 11 – May 8, 2017**

General Coordination: Scanned and made copies of new 310 applications; sent to FWP. Prepared 310 forms for site inspections and meeting. Sent weekly email to McBride regarding tasks completed and ongoing. Met weekly with McBride and Hallmark to discuss tasks completed and ongoing, meeting items, etc.

Communications and Outreach: Drafted 310 decision/follow-up letters and permits following April 10, 2017 meeting; emailed to FWP. Posted March 13, 2017 meeting minutes on website and sent to County. Wrote April 10, 2017 meeting minutes and drafted May 8, 2017 agenda; reviewed both with McBride. Posted agenda in office and on website; sent to agency representatives and County. Prepared meeting PowerPoint, packets, and Business handout for Board. Compiled correspondence. Contacted 310 applicant. Assisted and answered questions from callers and walk-ins regarding 310 law/application/process, Riparian Planting Mini Grant, no-till program. Scan and send permit information to inquiring public. Directed inquiries on issues outside of CD realm to appropriate agencies. Forwarded various emails of potential interest to the Board throughout the month and applicable items to applicable committees. Reviewed County emails for relevancy. Took no-till reservations, corresponded with Larry's Tractors, Trailers, and More (Larry's) regarding drill logistics, and sent reservation information to Larry's. Corresponded with no-till renters and took notes for tips. Published website.

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Reviewed SurveyMonkey questions, posted link on website. Performed self-evaluation and wrote s.m.a.r.t. goals; completed annual review with District Chair and McBride. Posted sandbag policy on website and sent to County representatives. Added event/workshop information to website. Corresponded with AlphaGraphics (AG) regarding 310 and community listening session postcards. Wrote Education Mini Grant approval letters; submitted DNRC Education Mini Grant application; corresponded with DNRC Education Mini Grant grant applicants.

Corresponded with riparian mini grantee. Arranged Ag Center tour, sent invites to NRCS and FSA, and participated in tour; transferred photos to computer and typed notes. Spoke with callers about 310 law and sent additional information following 310 postcard mailer. Drove up Miller Creek Road to find site of anonymous complaint.

Contacted local catering/food businesses regarding serving platters. Confirmed reservations with listening session venues, reviewed amenities. Submitted event listings to Missoula Events, Pathfinder, Missoulian Outdoors Briefs, Independent, Clark Fork Chronicle, Lolo Town Planner, MTPR online, Clearwater Resource Council. Created listening sessions poster and posted in building. Took postcards to Weed District. Wrote listening sessions agenda; reviewed with McBride. Created hand out for listening sessions, drafted sessions PowerPoint, and began drafting questions for consensogram. Wrote listening sessions invitation letter for county commissioners, city council members, and city mayor; compiled addresses. Corresponded with four radio stations regarding listening sessions radio ads; compiled rate and schedule information. Requested Google verification and updated MCD information on Google, linked Google search results to missoulacd.org, and updated Google maps location.

Financial Management: Emailed claims from April 10, 2017 meeting to County. Entered claims and checks into QuickBooks Online (QBO). Updated Supervisor timesheets/mileage as needed. Entered itemized purchases from petty checking and checking account into QBO. Reconciled bank statements, D.A. Davidson change in investment value, and County Milly Levy monthly report in QBO. Prepared claims to be signed at May 8, 2017 meeting.

Corresponded with County claims manager regarding Pitney Bowes payment. Requested payment/invoice from Larry's. Created listening sessions expense list. Priced Costco food platters. Updated FY17 to-date expenses into budget spreadsheet, estimated costs through end of FY17, and prepared FY18 budget to be reviewed by Budget Committee. Participated in Budget Committee meeting.

Administrative Duties: Maintained and updated 310 master lists. Prepared/restored conference room for meeting. Recorded meeting notes for minutes. Maintained and organized files. Created pdf documents of meeting packets and staff meeting notes. Prepared mail. Sorted and distributed office mail. Answered District phone and directed walk-ins as needed. Ran errands to Costco, Target, Staples, post office. Listened in to MACDEO conference call. Participated in Federal Securities Committee meeting. Completed and submitted US Census Bureau payroll survey. Created listening sessions checklist, purchased items.

### **Brendan Hallmark – Big Sky Watershed Corps Member – April 11 – May 8, 2017**

Watershed Education and Outreach: Continued to develop and revise the Healthy Riparian Buffer Guide to replace our current version. A draft has been passed along to a Technical Review Group to improve effectiveness, increase accuracy, and receive feedback and comments. I also attended a wiregrass workshop that presented information on *Ventenata dubia* including tools for identification, native versus invasive population characteristics, and impacts on Western Montana grasslands. Attended Ag Center tour for our local Future Farmers of America program with Monica Perez-Watkins, board members, and local government agency workers. On May 4th and 5th I participated in educating 4th graders during Lake County CD's Ag Days. Lake County CD hosted 4th graders during an event called Ag Day. The event was centered on teaching and exposing kids to different aspects of agriculture. I helped lead a watershed education station that explored how human activity can impact water quality but also explicated how conservation practices can be beneficial for numerous living things.

District Business Assistance: Accompanied Jen McBride to discuss two 310 inquiries where landowners had questions surrounding permit requirements and to assist in recommending the best possible project path. McBride and I assisted the LaValle Creek Landowners by taking stream measurements and providing them with the best type of stream crossing for the project proposal site. Assisted landowner with 310 permit questions and project site on

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his property in Seeley Lake. Continued to meet with McBride and Monica Perez-Watkins for staff meetings and individual check-ins.

**Professional Development:** I attended three different restoration events with local NGO groups. First, I assisted Trout Unlimited with a riparian planting on a side channel off Rattlesnake Creek, following up a completed fish screen project from 2013. Second, I helped the Bitter Root Water Forum clip willows that will be used for a restoration project aimed to reduce stream temperature in the Bitter Root River. Lastly, I assisted Lolo Watershed Group and Clark Fork Coalition plant riparian vegetation along Lolo Creek that will help reduce sediment transport. Completed a four week course on Geographic Information Systems and awaiting a successful completion certificate.

**Other** – No additional reports.

### **New Business**

**Correspondence** – Monica Perez-Watkins informed the Board of three correspondence items. The first was a notice that Lolo Watershed Group (LWG) will conduct a series of planning sessions to create a new strategic plan. The Board discussed the new plan, noting that LWG has taken similar steps in the past but lacks engagement from key landowners. The second item was a Swan Lands Coordinating Network meeting to be hosted by Swan Valley Connections. Perez-Watkins described the annual meeting, and McBride said she will attend if she has the time or if a Supervisor will not attend instead. The third item was Farmer Field Days workshops and tours, organized by Community Food and Agriculture Coalition and Farm Link Montana, to be held throughout the summer. Perez-Watkins noted that the June field day will be a grazing management and soil health tour with Oxbow Cattle Company, owned by Associate Supervisor Bart Morris.

**Other** – No further new business.

### **Old Business**

**Legislative Items** – See MACD Report.

**Website** – Perez-Watkins stated that the new website has been up for about one month. Tim Hall asked the Board to send their biographies for the Board's webpage to Perez-Watkins prior to the next meeting.

**Equipment Program** – Brendan Hallmark, Big Sky Watershed Corps Member, reported that he compiled a list of draft considerations of tips for potential renters for the Board of Supervisors to review. The Board and Hallmark discussed the cost of additional parts for the no-till drill.

**310 Law Outreach** – The 310 postcards were mailed to all streamside property owners in Missoula County. Staff said extra cards are in the office.

**DNRC Stream Restoration Guide** – McBride reported that she understood the original intention of the DNRC Guide to be for use by conservation district Supervisors as a revision for the Guide to Stream Permitting. She said a draft is ready for review, though staff do not yet have a copy on hand, but she will review it once it is obtained. McBride stated that she was under the impression that this guide became a stream restoration guide, rather than a guide to permitting. Elena Evans added that the draft was created with the Montana Department of Environmental Quality's 319 nonpoint source program in mind, especially as the publication will fulfill outreach requirements. The

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Board expressed interest in reviewing the guide and McBride will send a link. Evans noted that feedback from Supervisors who actually administer 310 permits would be beneficial.

**Long Range Plan & Community Meetings** – Tim Hall said that the dates and locations for the five community listening sessions are set and that his goal is to see as many Supervisors at the meetings as possible, especially those who live in the area of a particular meeting. The Board of Supervisors reported which meeting(s) they planned on attending. Hall added that a PowerPoint of the District's work would occur at each meeting that would include images of a local project.

**Missoula County Public School Agriculture Center Tour** – Perez-Watkins and Hallmark attended a tour of the Missoula County Public School's Agriculture Center on April 27 with Supervisors Tim Hall, Libby Maclay, and Art Pencek, and Associate Supervisor Bart Morris, along with NRCS and FSA staff. The Board viewed images from the tour on PowerPoint and discussed the operation, including potential sanitation and safety concerns. The Board agreed the center provides a good program, but could use more funding to address their concerns. The Board instructed staff to write a thank you letter to the center and provide information on additional funding sources.

**DNRC Renewable Resources Project Planning (RRPP) Grant Sponsorship** – Grass Valley French Ditch Co. & WWC Engineering – Clark Fork River Ditch Diversion Rehabilitation Project  
Perez-Watkins reported that there were not updates on the DNRC RRPP Grant application and she would register for the online application soon. Elena Evans discussed DNRC funding through the legislative session and state budget.

## Upcoming Events

**Administrator Training** – Helena, Wednesday – Friday, June 14-16, 2017

McBride informed the Board of the conservation district administrator training, hosted by the MACD Employee Organization (MACDEO), and handed out a draft agenda. McBride said she will be on paid leave during the week of the training, which falls on a district meeting week. She said she believed it would be a strain for Perez-Watkins to attend because of time constraints after the June District meeting. The Board agreed and will not send staff to this training.

**Area V Stockmanship Workshop** – Missoula, Tuesday, September 19, 2017

Staff did not have updates for the Board.

**Area V Meeting** – Missoula, September 26, 2017.

McBride reminded the Board that the Area V meeting will occur in Missoula. Staff did not have updates.

**MACD Convention** – Bozeman, Tuesday – Thursday, November 14-16, 2017

Elena Evans reported that the annual convention was moved to Bozeman and will be hosted by Gallatin Conservation District.

**Western Montana Grazing and Agriculture Conference** – Thursday – Friday, January 25-26, 2018

McBride reported that planning is still underway for the conference.

**Other** – No additional old business.

**Payment of Bills** -Tim Hall moved to pay the bills. Paul Parson seconded the motion, motion passed-unanimous.

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**Warrants:**

Blackfoot Communications	
Ck # 2301 – Internet	\$ 118.00
Verizon	
Ck # 2302 – District cell phone	\$ 69.07
First Interstate Bank	
Ck # 2303 – District vehicle gas card	\$ 32.32
All Things Metal	
Ck # 2304 – Trail fabrications	\$1,365.00
The Directory	
Ck # 2305 – Postage and mailing, 310 postcard	\$ 899.00
Alpha Graphics	
Ck # 2306 – 310 & Listening Sessions postcards	\$ 769.57
Brendan Hallmark	
Ck # 2307 – Mileage reimbursement	\$ 88.92
Monica Perez-Watkins	
Ck # 2308 – Mileage reimbursement	\$ 22.74
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$ 3,364.62</b>

Voting Record – CD Supervisor	FOR	AGAINST	ABSTAIN
Timothy Hall	4		
Sidney Wills	4		
Paul Parson	4		
Art Pencek	4		
Libby Maclay	Absent		
Bob Schroeder	4		
Travis Greenwalt	4		

**Adjournment** – Tim Hall moved to adjourn the meeting. Paul Parson seconded the motion - motion passed, unanimous. The meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm.

The next meeting of the Missoula Conservation District will be held June 12, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Missoula Conservation District conference room, 3550 Mullan Road, Suite 106, Missoula, MT 59808.