



**Missoula Conservation District
April 13th, 2026, 5:30 p.m.
1075 South Avenue West, Missoula, MT 59801 – with virtual option**

Missoula Conservation District Attendees: Tim Hall (Chair), Robert Schroeder (Vice Chair), Travis Greenwalt (Treasurer), Libby Maclay, Art Pencek (Supervisor), Bart Morris (Supervisor), Martin Oakland (Supervisor), Karen Williams* (Associate Supervisor), Radley Watkins (Staff), Bryan Vogt* (Staff), Sonja Skovlin (Staff)

Additional Attendees: John Hart (Senior Deputy County Attorney), Travis Lemke* (NRCS Supervisory District Conservationist), Ladd Knotek (FWP), Natalie Sullivan (MSU Extension Agriculture and Community Vitality Agent and representing Big Sky Horse Park), Kevin Hyde (Montana Climate Office), Jeffrey Dalton* (MS-04-26), Makalina San Souci* (MS-09-26), Mark San Souci* (MS-09-26), Kirk Treece (MS-10-26), Michael Field* (MS-11-26), Ray Bobzien (MS-11-26), Stacy Bobzien (MS-11-26), Gary Long (MS-11-26), Gretchen Long (MS-11-26), Megan Pfau* (Equipment Rental Policy)

Absent: Josh Schroeder (Associate Supervisor) - excused

*Denotes virtual participation via Zoom

Call Meeting to Order – Chair Hall started the meeting at 5:31 pm.

March 9th, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes – Travis Greenwalt moved to approve the March 9th, 2026 meeting minutes. Robert Schroeder seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

Treasurer’s Report – Travis Greenwalt presented the account balances from the District’s QuickBooks Balance Sheet dated April 10th, 2026 included in the Supervisors’ meeting packets. Also included was the year-to-date Profit and Loss report and FY26 Budget vs. Actuals Report, both dated April 10th, 2026.

First Security Bank – Checking	\$49,163.64
First Security Bank – Petty Checking	\$648.86
First Security Bank – Savings	\$58,597.14
DADCO Savings	\$211,413.99
Tax Mill Levy Account at County	\$314,204.40
Total Bank Accounts	\$634,028.03

Public Comment – No public comment was offered.

Reports

NRCS Report – Travis Lemke reported that the Missoula Field Office started receiving pre-approvals for applications from Missoula County, and that he and his staff have been working on contracts for these. He has been assisting the staff in Powell County. Lemke stated that his office has also been receiving pre-approvals for the Regenerative Agriculture Pilot Program, and that some



TIPS have been funded. He enthusiastically reported on a day that he and his staff spent presenting on soil health for a group of university students at the PEAS Farm.

County Attorney Report – John Hart reported that there are no legal issues at the County Attorney’s office that pertained to the CD.

Montana FWP – Ladd Knotek stated that until someone has been hired to replace him, Reuben Frey may be going out on site inspections. Watkins said that Pat Saffel will be part of the May site inspections and will attend the May board meeting.

DNRC Conservation District Bureau – Catey Bauer’s written report was included in the Supervisor’s meeting packets for review. Upcoming grant application deadlines were discussed.

MACD – No report was offered.

Bitter Root RC&D – Libby Maclay stated there was nothing new to report.

County Departments – No reports were provided.

Watershed Groups

Lolo Watershed Group - Watkins reported that the LWG and MCD co-sponsored a public meeting focused on the Lolo Creek Watershed Drought Management Plan in early April. Staff attended. He informed the Board of upcoming public events where he will be presenting.

Planning Board Update – Watkins displayed a written report provided by Josh Schroeder who was not in attendance. He displayed a site plan displayed for a rezoning request for property just downstream of Buckhouse Bridge. It was reported that the Consolidated Land Use Board voted 4-2 recommending denial of both the Growth Policy Amendment and the zoning request.

Water Quality District – Chair Hall informed the Board of a meeting taking place on April 14th in Frenchtown to update the public on the status of the former Smurfit-Stone site.

District Committees – Chair Hall reported that the Personnel Committee met recently and that the Scholarship Committee met before the Board meeting. He stated that there has been email communication with the Grants Committee and the Equipment Committee. More information will be presented on the committee work later in the meeting.

Missoula CD Employees – Written reports were included in the Supervisor’s packets

Other Reports

Montana Climate Office - Chair Hall introduced Kevin Hyde (Missoula Climate Office) who presented information about the Montana Mesonet. Watkins presented a slide provided by Hyde of Mesonet Stations in Missoula County. Hyde stated that 215 stations have been built in the past 10 years around Montana. Most, he said, are east of the divide since severe flooding in North Dakota led to funding for the sites in that region. The MCO has worked across agencies building stations on private and public land. Hyde described the difference



between the Agrimet (smaller) versus Hydromet (larger) stations. Data is available to support agriculture, and all manner of research. He stated an interest in building more stations west of the divide and working with the Lolo Watershed Group to develop sites within the Lolo watershed. Funding is needed to install these sites. Watkins suggested a work session between the LWG, MCD, and the MCO to further discuss where sites could be located and how they might be funded.

310 Emergency Notices – None were presented.

Existing 310 Permits

MS-16-25 – Paul Parson obo Amy Waller – Ninemile Creek – Channel/Bank Projects

Geocode: 04-2635-22-1-01-05-0000

Chair Hall moved to grant a one-year extension to existing 310 Permit No. MS-16-26 with all other conditions remaining unchanged. Art Pencek seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor, and the motion carried.

MS-19-25 – George Neumunz c/o Howard Anderson – Six Mile Creek – Crossings/Roads

Geocode: 04-2427-23-2-01-02-0000

Watkins reported that the Missoula County Floodplain Administrator (MCFA) has stated that they will not approve the revised plan that Howard Anderson submitted to MCD and to them. The permit will likely expire with no bridge being built. The Board directed staff to remove this item from the agenda.

MS-02-26 – Karen Sippy – Grant Creek – Tree Removal

Geocode: 04-2326-29-4-04-05-0000

Watkins presented a species planting list from the permittee that differs from what was on the approved application. He displayed part of an email from the applicant that specified the native riparian species she would like to plant.

Art Pencek moved to approve modifications to existing 310 Permit MS-02-26 as requested by the permittee. Robert Schroeder seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

APO Applications – None to discuss at this meeting.

310 Permit Applications

MS-04-26 – Jeffrey Dalton – Pierce Creek – Vegetation Removal

Geocode: 04-2873-21-1-02-01-0000

Watkins displayed a site selection slide and photos from the site inspection as well as photos from a site visit several years ago. Many trees were blown down during a storm in December of 2025. The landowner expressed concern about flooding that could lead to damaging the road, and fuels build



up. Karen Williams, in her TMR, stated that it was important to retain wood that was either touching or spanning the stream, as it creates habitat and can help cool water. Leo Rosenthal's TMR concurred with Williams' report.

Robert Schroeder moved to make Application MS-04-26 a project for consideration under the 310 Law and to approve the project with modifications incorporating recommendations from team member reports to leave all the trees spanning or touching the stream intact with their root wads, and to waive the 30-day waiting period following the Board's decision. Art Pencek seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

MS-08-26 – Olen Walch – West Fork Petty Creek – Vegetation Removal

Geocode: 04-2321-35-3-01-03-0000

Watkins displayed site location slides and photos from the site inspection and explained the applicant's concern about liability over downed trees. Ladd Knotek said that he explained at the site inspection that the landowner is not liable for a tree that falls naturally. Travis Greenwalt, reading from his TMR, recommended approval with the modification of cutting trees at the fenceline. Karen Williams and Ladd Knotek concurred.

Travis Greenwalt moved to make Application MS-08-26 a project for consideration under the 310 Law, to approve the project with modifications incorporating recommendations from team member reports, and to waive the 30-day waiting period following the Board's decision. Art Pencek seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

MS-09-26 – Mark San Souci – Lolo Creek – Buildings/Structures

Geocode: 04-2090-20-4-01-03-0000

Watkins presented a slide of the site location, photos from the site inspection and from another visit to the site, and slides of the design plan. He stated that this lot is not in the floodplain. Travis Greenwalt, reviewing his TMR, recommended approving the application with the modifications of removing fence that is within 30 feet of Lolo Creek and reseed the area with seed of native species, removing weed fabric in the riparian area and reseeding, removing privacy fence on the upstream end of the property, and avoid removing trees or mowing within 30 feet of the stream. Karen Williams and Ladd Knotek concurred with Greenwalt's TMR.

Travis Greenwalt moved to make Application No. MS-09-26 a project for consideration under the 310 Law, to approve the project with modifications incorporating recommendations from team member reports, and to waive the 30-day waiting period following the Board's decision. Art Pencek seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

MS-10-26 – Kirk Treece – Miller Creek – Buildings/Structures

Geocode: 04-2093-19-1-01-10-0000

Watkins showed a site location slide, photos from the site inspection and from other visits to the site. He presented a slide that stated, from the application, the project's goals: removing broken trees that are close to infrastructure, and planting riparian vegetation downstream of the bridge. Ladd Knotek recommended approval with the modification of leaving cut trees along the stream. Travis Greenwalt added the modification of refraining from mowing within 15 feet of the creek.

Travis Greenwalt moved to make Application No. MS-10-26 a project for consideration under the 310 Law, to approve the project with modifications incorporating recommendations from team



member reports, and to waive the 30-day waiting period following the Board's decision. Art Pencek seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

MS-11-26 – Micheal Field obo Ray Bobzien – Blackfoot River – Channel/Bank Projects
Geocode: 04-2202-02-4-01-17-0000

Watkins displayed site location slides, photos of the affected property, of the downed tree hanging over the Blackfoot River and other photos from the site inspection. He stated that several community members joined in the site inspection, and that Ladd Knotek took the opportunity to talk to them about riparian management. The applicant, Mike Field with Garden City Tree Service, stated that the downed Ponderosa presents a potential danger to recreationalist floating the river. Ladd Knotek, reviewing his TMR, concurred with the applicant, stating that it could be difficult for someone to see the tree prior to entering the side channel. He recommended removing at least the top portion of the tree that hangs over the OHW. Members of the public who were present at the meeting questioned and discussed whether the HOA could do the work if the permit is approved. The applicant is the contractor.

Travis Greenwalt moved to make Application MS-11-26 a project for review under the 310 Law, approve the project with modification including recommendations from team member reports that include removal of the ponderosa pine with the landowner's discretion of whether to remove it from the willow to the root wad, and with a stipulation that no burning occurs in the riparian zone, and the requirement that no further riparian vegetation be removed with the buffer zone, and to waive the 30-day waiting period following the Board's decision. Robert Schroeder seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

310 Complaints

CM-15-25 – Kim Kinsman – Clark Fork River – Vegetation Removal and Unpermitted Structures
Geocode: 04-2427-34-3-02-11-0000

Watkins reported that the landowners had been out of town, but a site inspection is planned prior to the May meeting. He stated that he had submitted this complaint to the MCFA as the Board had requested him to do.

Existing Violations Needing Action

CM-01-24 – Glen and Rhonda Brownlee – Donovan Creek – Crossings/Roads
Geocode: 04-2095-08-3-01-05-0000

Watkins displayed a slide of the site location and a photo from the initial site visit. The Board instructed him to send the violator another letter, reiterating the need for a proper bridge to remedy the violation.

CM-05-25 – Trevor Thornburg and Rick Thornburg – McCormick Creek – Excavation of Creek Banks
Geocode: 04-2429-27-4-01-06-0000



Watkins informed the Board that he had received correspondence from the Thornburgs, who stated they would be submitting a permit application soon.

CM-11-25 – Wild Country Enterprises LLC – Sin-tin-tin-em-ska Creek – Unpermitted Culvert Installation

Geocode: 04-1975-26-4-02-02-02-0000

Watkins requested directions from the Board regarding next steps, as the violator has stated that he does not want to set a precedent by conceding that this site requires a permit for the culvert that he installed. John Hart stated that he will contact the violator and will follow up at the May Board meeting.

CM-12-25 – Michael and Shirley Mitchell – O’Brien Creek – Vegetation Removal

Geocode: 04-2199-27-1-02-26-0000

John Hart stated that he studied information about the subdivision. He concurred with statements that Ladd Knotek had made at recent Board meetings about covenants that restrict vegetation removal in a wide buffer zone on both O’Brien Creek and the Bitterroot River. He reported that he had talked to Missoula County Planning Department personnel because the county can enforce these covenants. Hart stated that the Board could fine the property owner but suggested scheduling a site inspection first with the tenants (whom he found no evidence of being under contract to purchase the property, as has been discussed at prior meetings), to learn more about unpermitted work. Knotek reiterated that the area was cleared last fall, as that is when he noticed that it had been done. He stated that the county had gotten involved in the past when work happened that violated the covenants, but that they do not wish to dedicate limited staff time now. Hart noted that the covenants sunset after thirty years, but then automatically renew unless the HOA agrees to remove them.

CM-16-25 – Kenneth Brewington – Butler Creek – Vegetation Removal

Geocode: 04-2326-19-2-03-03-0000

John Hart reported that he had sent a letter to the violator and had received no response. The Board agreed that they would wait one more month to see if he responds to Hart.

Existing Violations Pending Follow-up Inspection

CM-03-23 (Re: MS-17-23) – Tyler and Tracy Deeds – Clearwater River – Vegetation Removal

Geocode: 04-2540-14-2-02-05-0000

Watkins reported that the MCFA has called this violation resolved. He will continue to work on arranging a meeting with the landowner to ensure that he has completed the work that the Board required him to do.

CM-05-23 (Re: MS-41-23) – David and Lori Rath – Lolo Creek – Stream Excavation

Geocode: 04-1972-05-1-01-03-0000



CM-07-23 – Kathy and Bruce Graham – Clearwater River – Vegetation Removal
Geocode: 04-2540-14-2-02-01-0000

Watkins stated that when he has driven by the property, he has observed that they do not appear to have the 10-foot no mow/no clearing buffer from the ordinary high-water mark of the side channel of the Clearwater River. He suggested that the Board direct him to write a letter stating that from a public right-of-way it was observed that the buffer is not maintained as instructed, and to please provide photo evidence showing the existing buffer no later than May 31st, or risk being fined. The Board directed him to do so.

CM-14-23 – Joan Mulligan – Clark Fork River – Vegetation Removal
Geocode: 04-2095-21-2-02-01-0000

Watkins stated that he needs new contact information for this property.

CM-03-24 – Nathan Woronik – Clearwater River – Vegetation Removal and Heavy Equipment Operation
Geocode: 04-2540-10-3-01-13-0000

Watkins stated he will visit the site this summer and several of the sites for the violations listed below.

CM-02-25 – Lawrence and Frances Daly – Rattlesnake Creek – Vegetation Removal
Geocode: 04-2200-11-3-06-11-0000

CM-03-25 – Charles and Mary Erickson – Clark Fork River – Unpermitted Berming
Geocode: 04-2201-27-2-03-03-0000

CM-06-25 – Marc and Tonya Davidson – Clark Fork River – Vegetation Removal
Geocode: 04-2201-18-3-05-13-0000

CM-10-25 – Richard Orizotti – Clark Fork River – Vegetation Removal and Building of Structure
Geocode: 04-2201-18-3-05-12-0000

CM-14-25 – Karl and Nancy Grenager – Clark Fork River – Vegetation Removal and Bank Excavation
Geocode: 04-2427-33-1-02-01-0000

310 Inquiries & Issues – Nothing was discussed.

New Business

Budget– Watkins displayed a budget sheet used for FY26 and explained a \$16,600 discrepancy. He showed his calculations show a budget savings of \$29,884.49 to-date and asked for the Board to approve these modifications to the approved budget. The Board questioned whether official approval was needed for this modification since the budget is just a guide for spending throughout the fiscal year and is not reported out. Watkins mentioned that the state is changing their end-of-year fiscal reporting requirements for special districts, so from his understanding this kind of



approval is appropriate. Vogt pointed out that there was a \$2,825 award made for CI-02-26 that should be accounted for under the category of Landowner Cost Share Grants. It is a reimbursement grant that has been awarded and allocated but not paid yet. Watkins amended his modification to the budget to account for this.

Travis Greenwalt moved to modify the approved fiscal year 2026 Missoula CD Budget as discussed. Chair Hall seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

Executive Director Evaluation and Compensation - Watkins stated that this item should have been in New Business and will appear that way in the Minutes. He reviewed that the Personnel Committee recommended a 1 % raise beyond the 2.5 % raise. A member of the Board stated that Watkins' salary was low for someone in his position and inquired about the use of the funds in the DA Davidson account.

Art Pencek moved to award Radley Watkins an additional 1% increase in pay on top of the previously awarded 2.5% increase for cost-of-living adjustment with the increase to be made effective at beginning of the 2026 calendar year. Robert Schroeder seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

Correspondence and Upcoming Events – Information was included in Supervisor Packets. The retirement party for Ladd Knotek on May 1 was highlighted.

Site Inspections Scheduling – Watkins reported that the next site inspection date is being determined.

Programs

Grants Program – Vogt had included a grant report in the Supervisor Packets.

MCD Grants

Tree Donation - Sullivan introduced herself and her involvement with the Big Sky Horse Park. She discussed work she's been involved with to enhance the park and mentioned conversations with MCD staff as to how goals and objectives of each entity overlapped. She stated that tree planting was an obvious area of overlap and the CD's tree planting award was very appreciated. She wanted to clarify the amount of the award that the Board approved last fall. The initial email from Watkins, verified by Vogt, was \$3,149.00.

Watkins clarified that at a subsequent Board meeting there was discussion that the initial amount included a line item for a raised bed, which did not align with the MCD Tree Donation's intention of how monetary awards were to be used. The award was then brought down to \$1,649.09 at that meeting, but that wasn't communicated clearly to Sullivan, who understood the award to be in the amount of \$3,149.

Sullivan distributed a modified BSHP Tree Planting Budget of \$2,927.86 that has already been put into motion. She stated that the initial six out of 12 trees shown on the budget have already arrived and will be planted within the week.

The Board discussed that MCD will provide the signs mentioned in the initial award motion.



Art Pencek moved to approve the tree donation award to the Big Sky Horse Park at \$3,000 as an upfront payment. Travis Greenwalt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

OpMG-04-26 MT Natural History Center – Vogt reviewed the request from MNHC and reported that the Grants Committee had recommended approval.

Chair Hall moved to approve Operation Mini Grant OpMG-04-26 to the Montana Natural History Center for an award of \$375 as requested. Robert Schroeder seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor, and the motion carried.

Outside Grants

2027 DNRC CDA Grant – Vogt stated that the application is due May 31st for the CDA grant that provides the \$3,500 for MACD dues and reimbursement of 310 permitting expenses for 2025.

Bart Morris moved to approve the Missoula Conservation District applying to the 2027 DNRC CDA Grant program for coverage of \$3,500 worth of the district's upcoming 2027 dues to the Montana Association of Conservation Districts and reimbursement of 310 Permit expenses for 2025. Travis Greenwalt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

Soil Health/Equipment Program –

Out of County Rental Policy – Vogt reported that several residents of counties other than Missoula have requested to rent MCD's no-till drill. Staff have been directing these individuals to Bitterroot CD and their new rental program. Vogt also asked the Board to clarify whether MCD is not renting at all outside Missoula Co. or just not renting to Lake and Ravalli Counties since they have drill rental programs.

Megan Pfau of Ravalli County stated that she prefers MCD's drill because it is easier to maneuver for smaller acreages. Ravalli's is designed for larger acreages and larger implements. Vogt explained that the BRCD drill requires a 1-ton truck to tow and is 8 feet wide, and a minimum of a 40 hp tractor is needed in the field. Pfau stated that her Massey tractor works for MCD's drill.

The Board discussed that the MCD drill was purchased with a state grant, and it was brought up that the drill should be rented out on basis of soil health.

Travis Greenwalt moved to amend the Missoula Conservation District's Equipment Rental policy to allow for out-of-county rentals per staff discretion. Bart Morris seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

Pollinator Program – Skovlin reported that the public has been calling and emailing to inquire about availability of wildflower seeds. The CD still has seed from 2025 and is distributing that. Staff will meet with Area 5 CD colleagues in April and at that time they anticipate receiving 2026 wildflower seed mix. Vogt added that staff will table at the Rocky Mountain Garden's Phlox Fest on Saturday, April 25th.

Other New Business – The Board recognized Ladd Knotek's many years of service and presented



him with a gift. He has been in his position for 27 years. The Board recognized his contributions for the Mineral County CD as well. He stated that he learned a long time ago that “if you stand up for the resource you may not be popular, but people tend to respect you.”

Travis Greenwalt brought up concerns regarding current spending limit of \$500 on staff credit cards and how Skovlin had to use Vogt’s credit card to pay for the meal tonight due to this limit. Bart Morris moved to approve increasing the staff spending limits on First Security Bank credit cards for the Missoula Conservation District from \$500 to \$1,000. Art Pencek seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

Old Business

MCD Special Meeting – Restructuring and Planning – Chair Hall stated that the Board needed to schedule this meeting. Watkins displayed dates. The Board selected April 24th from 9 am – 12 noon.

310 Civil Penalty Working Group Meeting – Watkins displayed slide from the working group showing 310 Penalty Formula. He stated that a CD would still have the discretion to decide how to enforce a penalty. Following this formula will help a decision stand up in a legal case. He stated that there will be a recorded informational webinar regarding the new formula, with a comment period following that. He will inform the Board when this is scheduled.

MCD Scholarship – Skovlin reported that application materials were sent to all Missoula County High Schools. The college natural resources departments were also notified.

Travis Greenwalt reported that there were 7 strong applications received for the two different scholarships being offered. The Scholarship Committee met before the Board meeting. He highlighted the range of responses and topics were very diverse.

Travis Greenwalt moved to award the 2026 Missoula Conservation District college student scholarship of \$2,500 to Adeline Schick and the 2026 graduating high school scholarship of \$2,500 to Noah Stone with both awards made payable to the awardee’s college of enrollment. Robert Schroeder seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor and the motion carried.

Other Old Business – No other old business was discussed.

Payment of Bills and Claims

Chair Hall moved to pay the Missoula Conservation District bills and to adjourn the meeting at 9:48 pm. Travis Greenwalt seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor, and the motion passed.

The next regular Missoula Conservation District meeting is scheduled for **Monday, May 11th, 2026 at 5:30 pm** in the Gerald W. Marks Exploration Center, 1101 South Avenue West, Missoula, MT, 59801. A virtual option will also be offered.



Voting Record – CD Supervisor	IN FAVOR	OPPOSED	ABSTAIN
Tim Hall	17	-	-
Libby Maclay	17	-	-
Travis Greenwalt	17	-	-
Art Pencek	17	-	-
Robert Schroeder	17	-	-
Bart Morris	17	-	-
Martin Oakland	17	-	-

Robert Schroeder

5/13/2026

Minutes approved by
Sonja Skovlin

Date
 5/7/2026

Minutes prepared by

Date

APPROVED