



CALL TO ORDER & ATTENDANCE

Chair, Pete Woll, called the September 25, 2023, Business meeting to order at 10:10 A.M. in the conference room.

Board members present: Pete Woll, Chair; Donna Pridmore, Secretary/Treasurer; Bill Yankee, Supervisor; Scott Rumsey, Supervisor; Roger Marsonette, Supervisor; Mike Kopitzke, Supervisor; being a quorum of the Board.

Board members absent: John Ellis, Vice-Chair. Absence is excused.

Also, in attendance were Jessie Walthers, Samantha Tappenbeck, and Ginger Kauffman, FCD Staff; Sean Johnson, Karli Becher, and Alec McLelland, NRCS; John Steitz.

CONSENT AGENDA

Consent Agenda Item 1: Signature Authority

- Authorization for Samantha Tappenbeck to sign on behalf of Supervisors attending the meeting virtually.

Consent Agenda Item 2: Minutes

- August 28, 2023, Business Meeting minutes

Consent Agenda Item 3: Financial

Check Detail dated 9/13/2023

1. CHS \$25.00
2. Fisher's Technology \$287.00
3. Forestation \$1,070.00
4. Granite CD \$150.00
5. MT Biological Weed Control Coord. Project \$25.00
6. River Design Group Inc. \$13,530.00

Check Detail dated 9/20/2023

1. VISA – Donna Pridmore \$271.79
2. VISA – Samantha Tappenbeck \$1,180.60

Consent Agenda Item 4: Correspondence

- MACD District Dispatch
- Upcoming Events, Area Meetings, Convention

Donna Pridmore motioned "to approve the consent agenda as presented." Bill Yankee seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one was present to comment on items not listed on the meeting agenda.

310's

Birk, FL-2021-011, Flathead River, bank stabilization: Donna Pridmore explained that Mr. Birk submitted correspondence requesting another site visit. Samantha Tappenbeck explained that no application to remediate the permit violation has been submitted. However, Eric Urban, who is now the consultant for Mr. Birk, contacted the office on Friday and will be available for an onsite inspection. An onsite inspection was scheduled for Tuesday, October 3, 2:00 P.M. at the site.

NEW BUSINESS

Education Grant Request: Jessie Walthers explained that a request in the amount of \$1,980.00 was received from Land to Hand for field trip transport to Wildcat Garden, for 30 classes, 300 students. Staff described that education grant funding is offered on a rolling basis and the current budget and availability of funds. Discussion held regarding funds being used for fall and spring, and option for approval of partial funding for the fall request with encouragement to reapply for funding in the spring. Roger Marsonette motioned "to approve \$990.00 for education grant #FCD-EG-2024-01." Bill Yankee seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Supervisors asked Staff to encourage Land to Hand to apply again in the spring if they still needed funds.

Conservation Grant Reimbursement Request: Jessie Walthers stated Phase 2 under grant #FCD CG 2022-05 for John and Carol Steitz, Steitzhof Merinos, has been completed and invoices have been submitted for a final reimbursement of \$2,939.00. John Steitz thanked the Board and provided full details of the project. Jessie explained she had completed the final inspection of the project and recommended payment. Bill Yankee motioned to approve the final reimbursement request for FCD CG-2022-05." Roger Marsonette seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

310-Admin Grant CDA-23-0092 Final Report: Ginger Kauffman explained that funding for the DNRC 310-Administrative grant is based on the number of 310's the district received in 2022. The grant ended June 30th and the final report must be submitted to DNRC. The income expense spreadsheet was provided for the Board's review. Donna Pridmore motioned "to approve the 310 Admin Grant #CDA-23-0092." Mike Kopitzke seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

June 2023 End of Month Report – Corrections: Ginger Kauffman reviewed corrections to the June 2023 End of Month Report with the Board and explained that it is necessary to document those corrections for auditing purposes. Mike Kopitzke motioned "to accept the corrections for the CPA/Auditor notes as presented." Bill Yankee seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Area V Resolution 23-02: Samantha Tappenbeck explained that the Area V meeting is tomorrow, and the Area V conservation districts will review and vote on resolutions for the meeting. Resolution #23-02 was brought forward from Missoula CD, to update wording in property transfer documents re: NSLPA/310-Law and contact information. Samantha noted that the Board must vote on the resolution and designate a spokesperson to carry that vote to the

Area V meeting. Donna Pridmore motioned to accept the resolution as presented." Roger Marsonette seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Donna Pridmore motioned "to appoint Roger Marsonette to be spokesperson for Flathead CD." Mike Kopitzke seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

2023/2024 Final Budget: Samantha Tappenbeck explained final budget sheets for Funds 7201 and CIP Fund 7235 were received from the county. Additional revenue was incorporated into the budget worksheets, and final budget figures were reviewed with the Board. Purchase of a vehicle or printer was designated for expenditures from CIP Fund 7235. Future funding for 310 projects involving restoration efforts and grants from Fund 7201 was discussed, but not implemented in this budget. Donna Pridmore motioned "to purchase a new printer from CIP funds for up to \$20,000." Roger Marsonette seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Donna Pridmore motioned "to approve the final 2023 2024 budget as presented." Roger Marsonette seconded.

REPORTS

Flathead CD Staff: Attached.

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS): Attached.

DNRC Conservation Districts Bureau: Attached.

Flathead County Planning Board (FCPB): Attached.

Haskill Basin Watershed Council (HBWC): No report. The next meeting will be in November.

Flathead River Commission (FRC): No report.

MATTERS OF THE BOARD/STAFF

MACD Auction Item: Samantha Tappenbeck explained that a joint auction item for the Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) and Montana Conservation District Employee's Organization (MCDEO) event needs to be either submitted by individual conservation districts or one from the Area. Funds do not come from the district budget for this. Supervisors and Staff agreed to donate from their own pockets/items for a basket as an individual auction item from Flathead CD.

The next 310-meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 10, 2023, 7:00 P.M. in person and via ZOOM.

Adjournment: Donna Pridmore motioned "to adjourn." Roger Marsonette seconded. Motion carried unanimously. As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 P.M.

Submitted By:

Ginger Kauffman
Administrator

Reviewed By:

Samantha Tappenbeck
Resource Conservationist

Minutes approved by FCD Board motion made on:

<u>10/23/2023</u>	<u>Pete Woll</u>	<u>Chair</u>
(Date)	(Signature)	(Title – Chair etc.)

Staff Report: September 2023

Samantha Tappenbeck, Resource Conservationist
Jessie Walthers, Conservation Program Manager
Ginger Kauffman, Administrator

Office and Administration

310

- 2023 total 310's to date = 98
- Processing of 310's
- Scanning of older 310-files continues
- McDonald Creek/Ambler violation and declaratory ruling:
 - Consulted with DNRC legal counsel and 310 coordinator, supervisors, and staff
 - Finalized exhibit record and mailed to hearing officer, posted on website

Bookkeeping

- Processed daily bookkeeping items: payroll, payroll reports and payments, invoices, credit card receipts, deposits, grant billing/vendor invoices, program payments, and reconciliation of statements.
- Updates to district files made as needed.
- Waiting for information from CPA accountant regarding bookkeeping processes and reporting.
- Provided payroll related documents to new Supervisors.
- Compiling documents for Annual Financial Report
- Received 2023/2024 budget documents from Flathead County Finance Office

Office Support

- Staff meetings held weekly per staff availability
- Ordered apparel, business cards, and nametags for supervisors

Big Sky Watershed Corps

- Camryn assisted FCD this month by:
 - Assisted with a Rolling Rivers Trailer Presentation on September 19th.
 - Assisted with the Rain Garden Walking Tour Sept. 13th
 - Continued coordination for Septic Cost Share Program
 - Demonstration Garden workdays 9/1/23, 9/15/23, and 9/29/23

Projects

Cow Creek Restoration Project

- Submitted seedling order for spring 2024 planting in enclosures
- Coordinated herbicide application and drafted planting plan and supplies list
- Meeting with MACD to discuss possible application to Ranching for Rivers program

Trumbull Creek Restoration & Aquifer Protection Project

- No activity this month

Study of Boat Wake-Driven Erosion on the Flathead River

- Draft final report received from Tetra Tech on 3/9/23; Review and revisions sent back to Tetra Tech on 6/26/23; Contacted Tetra Tech to check-in on status of revisions and final report and request invoice for grant reporting
- Approximately \$9800 remain in project budget

Programs

College Scholarships

- No activity this month.

Conservation Grant Program

- Met with landowners who are ordering seedlings this year, for selection and ordering support.
- Checked in for Fall updates to grant activities.
- Conducted one site visit for an extended grant completion.
- Met with one landowner for possible grant application for pollinator habitat.

Education Grant Program

- One submission for an education grant, from Land to Hand for bus support for school field trips to Wildcat Garden.

Pollinator Initiative

- Conducted outreach for fall pollinator seed distribution and planting guides.
- Researched seed sources for next year's pollinator initiative

Rain Garden Initiative

- Held a second Rain Garden Walking Tour 9/13/23 with 20 attendees.
- One site visit conducted for a program participant in Columbia Falls
- Responded to inquiries about the program after Daily Inter Lake Ad and mailer were distributed.
- Participated in interview and drone flight at Somers Beach State Park for footage to include in promotional videos.

Seedlings & Native Seed Program

- Ordering window opened 9/18/23
- Conducted consults and ordering support for landowners utilizing the program this year.
- Met via zoom with Nursery staff for updated procedures.

Watershed Support Program

- Program funding is currently allocated to support of the Trumbull Creek Restoration & Aquifer Protection Project and the Flathead River Boat Wake Erosion Study

Youth Camp Sponsorships

- No Youth Camp Sponsorships request were received this month

MT Biological Weed Control Coordination Project

- Knapweed root weevils distributed to 1 landowner

- Provided information about Canada thistle biocontrol options to 1 landowner

Education & Outreach

Advertisement

- Ran 310-permit ad in Mountain Trader on 9/21/23

Education Events

- Rolling Rivers Trailer:
 - Presentations to Trinity Lutheran 6th grade students and Fellowship Alliance Church elementary age students.
 - Subleased to the Eastern Sanders and Green Mountain CDs for outreach Sep 22-Oct 6
 - Routine maintenance
 - Training for Area 5 employees Sept. 22

Demonstration Garden

- Mowing after recent rains, other maintenance in preparation for fall
- Provided photos and information to intern for final report

Website

- Posted approved meeting minutes and September 2023 meeting agendas
- Website visited by 1.4K users; Impressions = 58K; Total Clicks = 738

Social Media

- Facebook: Page followers = 1,022; Post Reach = 385
- Instagram: Page followers = 885; Accts Reach = 153
- Flathead CD featured on Montana Watershed Coordination Council's social media for their "watershed summer" series:
 - Instagram: Accts Reach = 762, Post Engagements = 76
 - Facebook: Accts Reach = 523, Post Engagements = 58

The Local Dirt eNewsletter

- Distributed on 9/1/23 to 809 recipients.

Partnerships

- WMCC and FCD Meeting for Partner Coordination 9/6/23
- Rolling Rivers Trailer Committee Meeting 9/12/23
- Flathead CORE Meeting 9/14/23
- Septic Cost-Share meeting with Gallatin Water Quality District 9/20/23
- Area V CD Meeting and Training 9/22/23
- Area V Meeting 9/26/23
- Cow Creek Partner Meeting 9/27/23

Photos



NRCS DC Report – 9/25/2023

Sean Johnson

➤ Programs

- EQIP and Joint Chiefs
 - Finally wrapped up our 2023 contracts. Record year since I have been in Kalispell with 38 contracts, 1,901 acres treated, and \$2.4 million in cost share provided
- CSP
 - No active applications for FY23
- Signup deadline of Oct 27th for both EQIP and CSP for our FY24 cost share

➤ Review Items

- New Soil Con, Alec McLellan, started on Monday September 11th. Has a forestry degree from Humboldt State University so he will be a great addition to our team
- Went through spot checks on some of our conservation practices
- Attended FireSafe Flathead meeting on September 21st

➤ Upcoming Items

- End of Federal FY coming up at the end of September
 - Looming annual government shut down that would potentially start on Monday October 2nd
 - I'm assuming they will pass a CR at the 11th hour like they usually do to kick the budget can down the road
- FireSafe Flathead meeting on October 18th

➤ Miscellaneous

- Snow Report
 - Next Snow Survey report will come out January 1st, 2024
- Drought – Most of Flathead now in “Extreme” category. Drought spreading and intensifying across all of northern MT.
 - None – 53%, D0 – 8%, D1 – 14%, D2 – 15%, D3 – 10%, D4 – 0% - September
 - None – 46%, D0 – 16%, D1 – 24%, D2 – 13%, D3 – 0%, D4 – 0% - August
 - None – 60%, D0 – 26%, D1 – 11%, D2 – 4%, D3 – 0%, D4 – 0% - July
 - None – 70%, D0 – 13%, D1 – 13%, D2 – 4%, D3 – 0%, D4 – 0% - June
 - None – 35%, D0 - 43%, D1 - 22% , D2 - 4%, D3 – 0%, D4 – 0%, - May
 - None – 33% , D0 – 27% , D1 – 35% , D2 – 5% , D3 – 0% , D4 – 0% - April

August Drought Monitor

Map released: Thurs. August 17, 2023

Data valid: August 15, 2023 at 8 a.m. EDT

Intensity

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

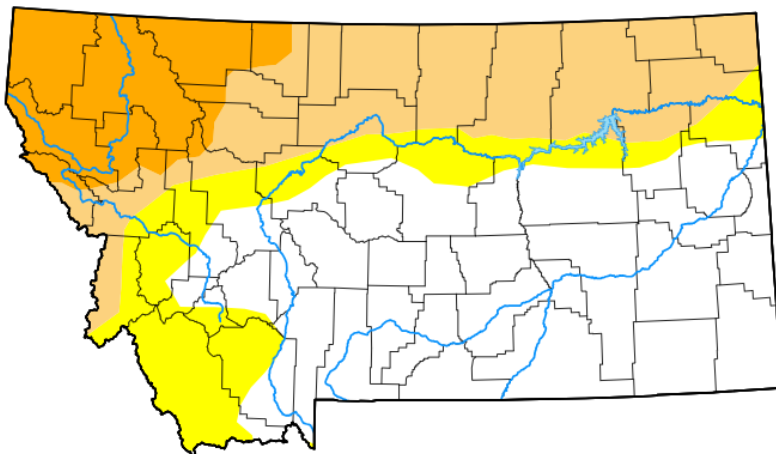
Authors

United States and Puerto Rico Author(s):

[Lindsay Johnson](#), National Drought Mitigation Center

Pacific Islands and Virgin Islands Author(s):

[Curtis Riganti](#), National Drought Mitigation Center



September Drought Monitor

Map released: Thurs. September 21, 2023

Data valid: September 19, 2023 at 8 a.m. EDT

Intensity

- None
- D0 (Abnormally Dry)
- D1 (Moderate Drought)
- D2 (Severe Drought)
- D3 (Extreme Drought)
- D4 (Exceptional Drought)
- No Data

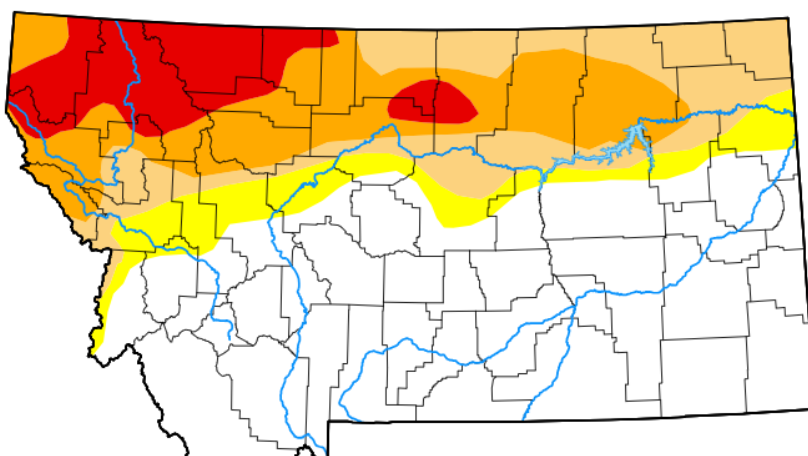
Authors

United States and Puerto Rico Author(s):

[Richard Heim](#), NOAA/NCEI

Pacific Islands and Virgin Islands Author(s):

[Richard Tinker](#), NOAA/NWS/NCEP/CPC





REPORT TO WESTERN CONSERVATION DISTRICTS SEPTEMBER 2023

FUNDING FORUMS

Thank you, sincerely, to all the CD staff and supervisors that attended the CD funding forums in Kalispell and Missoula. The conversations were very informative and your recommendations very insightful. Moving forward, CDB will explore ways we can further help CDs with accounting services, leveraging funds for on-the-ground conservation, administering the 310 Law, providing technical training, and all the other suggestions you brought forward. We really appreciate your input!

NEW WESTERN CD SPECIALIST!

Starting August 28th, Catey Bauer will be the new CD Specialist representing western CDs. We've reorganized the CD Specialist areas a little, so I've included an updated map with contact information for everyone. I'll be working with Catey over the next couple months for onboarding and training. Starting in September, please reach out to her directly for any questions regarding CD operations and administration. In my new role as the 310 Permitting Coordinator, you can continue to reach out to me with 310-related questions.

310 PERMIT APPLICATION UPDATES

We are in the process of updating the Joint Application. If anyone is interested in being on the 310 committee to help with these updates, please send me an email. Time commitments will likely be minimal, but may include 1-2 zoom meetings over the next couple months.

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The next round of funding for CDB grants will open September 1st. The deadline to apply is October 15. This includes funding for:

- CD Planning Grans: \$2,000 - \$20,000
- Project & Implementation Grants: \$2,000 - \$50,000
- Pollinator grants: \$1,000 - \$15,000

See you at area meetings and convention!
-Hailey Graf



Hailey Graf
Conservation District Specialist,
Stream Permitting Coordinator

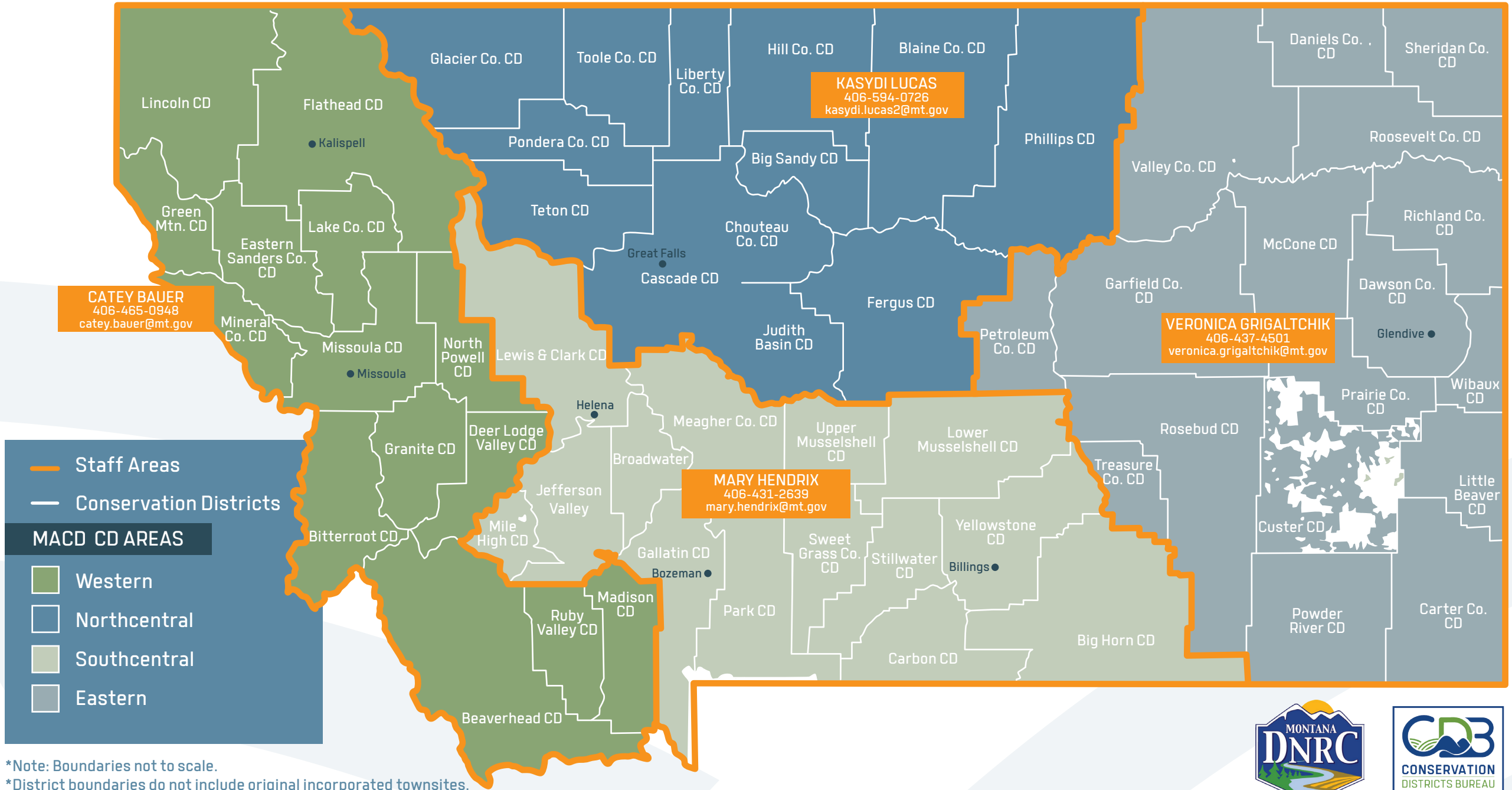
Conservation Districts Bureau

Phone : (406) 437-4435

Email: hailey.graf@mt.gov

Montana Conservation Districts (CD)

<https://dnrc.mt.gov/Conservation/Conservation-Programs/Conservation-Districts/>



*Note: Boundaries not to scale.

*District boundaries do not include original incorporated townsites.

Click for exact boundaries.



CD Bureau Staff



Bureau Chief
Stephanie Criswell

406-444-6669, steph.criswell@mt.gov

Serves all CDs in Montana



Stream Permitting Coordinator
Hailey Graf

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Serves all CDs in Montana



CD Specialist
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Serves Western Montana



CD Coordinator
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Serves all CDs in Montana



Conservation District Advisory Council (CDAC):

The Conservation Districts Advisory Council's purpose is to advise and assist the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation on programs, activities, and programs relating to conservation entities.

EASTERN MONTANA

Judi Knapp, Hysham - Treasure CD

Richard Iversen, Culbertson - Richland CD.

CENTRAL MONTANA

Greg Jergeson, Chinook - Blaine CD

Gayla Wortman, Cascade - Cascade CD

Steve Tyrrel, Lavina - Lower Musselshell CD

WESTERN MONTANA

Robert Schroeder, Florence - Missoula CD

Kathleen Johnson, Fortine - Lincoln CD

CDAC Members, January 2023. Bob Schroeder not pictured.



Scan for
district directory.



Conservation Districts Grant Program Guidelines

2023-2025



Garfield County Photo

Updated 8/1/23

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Background

The Montana State Legislature (MCA 76-15-106) provides funding for the conservation districts of Montana. The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) distributes funds through the Conservation District Bureau (CDB) based on need to conservation districts (CD) for any purpose that they are authorized to perform pursuant to MCA 76-15-4. Since 1981, conservation districts have used these funds for conservation and administrative related projects. CD funding is also allocated to partner organizations, such as the river councils and Montana Salinity Control Association, who are subject to these guidelines. The purpose of these guidelines is to assist grant applicants in developing their grant proposal.

General Grant Eligibility Requirements

All grant funds are provided by the legislature with the goal of empowering conservation districts to conserve the natural resources of Montana through locally-led conservation. Grant funds can be used for activities such as implementing on-the-ground conservation projects, educational programs, and building district capacity. General guidelines for all grant programs include the following:

1. Conservation districts **must submit an annual work plan or strategic plan** that includes conservation priorities, planned annual activities, and an operational budget prior to application. The only exception is if applying for a planning grant to conduct strategic planning and/or develop an annual work plan.
2. Funds cannot be used to purchase food in excess of 10% of the total project budget, common items that can be easily borrowed, equipment for contractors, or items not considered essential to conducting a project or meeting project goal.
3. Applications must demonstrate a public conservation benefit(s). Funds will not be provided for projects that are for private benefit only. Applications that address multiple resource benefits will rank higher in the evaluation process.
4. Preferential consideration will be given to applications that include in-kind or cash match from other sources or that are for less than the total project costs.
5. All previous grants received by the conservation district must be in good standing (invoicing up to date and reports filed on time) before any new funds will be released.
6. The Authorized Representative must be an elected official (conservation district Chair, Vice Chair, or other Supervisor as approved by a motion of the board) and must sign the application. District staff may not be the Authorized Representative, but they may be the main point of contact.
7. Incomplete applications or applications not meeting the expectations described below will not be considered.
8. Applications should be approved by the Board of Supervisors during a public meeting prior to application submittal.

Deadlines and Cycles

Open grant cycles will be announced on the [CDB grants website](#) and through the *Conservation Matters* newsletter. In general, it takes 3-4 months for the review, approval, and contracting process for any submitted application. For this reason, applications for projects that will take place in the spring/summer must be submitted in the preceding fall and vice versa. Contracts are generally one year or less in duration unless a longer period is specifically requested in the application.

Grant	Occurrence	Application Periods	Implementation Begins
CD Administrative & 310 Grants	Annual	March 1 - April 15	Beginning July 1
Education Mini-Grants	Ongoing	Rolling Deadline	No sooner than 3 months following application submission
CD Planning Grants	Biannual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 1 - March 15 • September 1 - October 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 1 • March 1
CD Project Grants	Biannual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 1 - March 15 • September 1 - October 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 1 • March 1
Pollinator	Biannual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 1 - March 15 • September 1 - October 15 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • August 1 • March 1

Grant Types and Program Details:

CONSERVATION DISTRICT PLANNING GRANTS

Conservation District Planning Grants are intended to assist conservation districts with operational planning and for the planning and design of technically feasible natural resource projects. These grants are specifically available to fund a formal planning process that results in a written plan or report. Examples include strategic plans, watershed restoration plans, preliminary engineering reports, feasibility studies, new program guidelines, or completed applications for larger project grants. In addition to the general guidelines provided previously in the overview section, the following guidelines apply specifically to the Conservation District Planning Grants:

1. The minimum application amount is \$2,000 and applications may not exceed \$20,000.
2. The final deliverable must be a completed planning document, report, or grant application.
3. Planning grants are intended to lead to on-the-ground project(s).

CONSERVATION DISTRICT PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS

The Conservation District Project Implementation Grants are for any project under the authority of Conservation Districts pursuant to MCA, Title 76, Chapter 15, Part 4. Funds may be used for any project a conservation district is authorized to carry out, including, but not limited to stream restoration, soil health improvements, water quality improvements, demonstration projects, farm

experiments, equipment purchases, or construction projects. In addition to the general guidelines provided previously in the overview section, the following guidelines apply specifically to the Conservation District Project Implementation Grants:

1. Projects must be identified in the district's strategic plan or annual workplan, a copy of which must be provided with the application.
2. The minimum application amount is \$2,000 and applications may not exceed \$50,000. Conservation Districts may request funds above this limit, but 50:50 cash match is required for the entire amount.
3. Applications that include a monitoring plan, a public outreach and education plan, and a partners' plan will rank higher.
4. For education events, funds can only be used to pay for expenses that exceed revenues (registration fees, sponsorships, donations, etc.). A detailed spreadsheet that itemizes expenditures and revenues must be submitted with the final report.
5. Applications that include the purchase of equipment must include a maintenance plan that includes rental fees, repair and maintenance costs, deposits (if applicable), and long-term leases (if applicable). Reasonable rental fees must be charged to cover maintenance and replacement costs.
6. Per DNRC policy, noxious weed projects must demonstrate that funding was first sought through the through the Noxious Weed Trust Fund at the Montana Department of Agriculture and be coordinated with the local weed district.
<https://agr.mt.gov/NoxiousWeedTrustFund>
7. Per DNRC policy, aquatic invasive species project funding must be sought through the DNRC Aquatic Invasive Species Program. <https://invasivespecies.mt.gov/montana-invasive-species/Aquatic-Invasive-Species-Grant-Program>

EDUCATION MINI-GRANTS

The Education Mini grant program assists conservation districts with conservation and natural resource educational projects that are on a smaller scale and may not be included in the annual workplan, allowing focus on a specific audience and/or topic. Activities for both youth and adults are eligible. Schools and other organizations may apply, but their application must be sponsored and approved by their local conservation district.

Example projects include organizing and attending workshops, school field trips, adult or youth programs, promoting educational opportunities, developing resources for the community, and working with a school or group to promote natural resource education. Funds may be used for CD employee salary related to the project, travel expenses, advertising, resource materials, scholarships towards camps, speaker fees, or transportation costs for field trips. A description of ineligible expenses can be found in the overview section of these guidelines. In addition to the general guidelines provided previously in the overview section, the following guidelines apply specifically to the education mini-grant program:

1. The minimum application request is \$1,000, and requests may not exceed \$5,000.

2. An outreach strategy must be included in the application.
3. If an education event takes place annually, applicants are encouraged to apply for multiple years at a time.

POLLINATOR GRANTS

Pollinator grants are available to conservation districts for any projects that will improve pollinator habitat within Montana. Example projects include community and demonstration gardens, area-wide pollinator initiatives, education events, and planting pollinator plots. In addition to the general guidelines provided previously in the overview section, the following guidelines apply specifically to the Pollinator Grants:

1. The minimum application request is \$1,000, and requests may not exceed \$15,000.
2. Applications that include a monitoring plan, a public outreach and education plan, and a partners' plan will rank higher.
3. Schools and other organizations may apply for a Pollinator Grant, but the project must be approved and sponsored by the conservation district. All payments will be made from the DNRC to the local conservation district. The school or organization will be reimbursed by the sponsoring conservation district.

CD Eligibility Requirements

All conservation districts in Montana are eligible if they: 1) have levied the maximum county mills allowed for the current fiscal year, 2) demonstrate a need for additional funds; and 3) are working towards a conservation activity as identified in an annual workplan, watershed restoration plan, or district strategic plan.

Eligible conservation districts may also sponsor grants for partner organizations, as long as they demonstrate they are active partners in the project. When sponsoring a grant, a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) outlining the roles and responsibilities between the CD and partner organization is required. Any equipment or software purchased with grants funds must stay in CD ownership will be required.

Application and Submittal Process

All applications will be submitted through the [Submittable online grant system](#). Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. Early submissions are encouraged. Requesting a preliminary review of a grant application prior to submission is also encouraged. CDB staff are available to help with project development and the application process. Please utilize the planning form, found [here](#), to solicit initial feedback.

Authorized Representative

The grant application must be authorized by a representative of the conservation district (conservation district Chair, Vice Chair, or other Supervisor as approved by a motion of the board).

Conservation district employees or administrators may not be the authorized representative; however, they may be listed as the main contact for the grant.

Submittable Account

Each CD must create an account with Submittable to apply for grants. CDs are encouraged to create an account for the district, rather than for an individual employee. This will enable the account to be maintained in the event of staff turnover. All applications will be submitted through the district's established Submittable account.

Scope of Work

Applications must include a clear scope of work including a description of the public natural resource benefits, the goals and objectives, specific tasks that will be accomplished, and what deliverables will be provided to DNRC during reporting. The scope of work is the main justification for the funding and clearly demonstrates how the funding will be used and what activities will be accomplished.

Public Resource Benefits

All grant funding must benefit a public natural resource. To receive funding, an application must clearly describe how the funds will be used to benefit a public natural resource(s). This could be direct benefits such as on-the-ground conservation, or indirect benefits such as public education or increasing a district's capacity to fulfill their mission of conserving natural resources. Projects benefiting multiple natural resources will be more competitive.

Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives describe intended outcomes of the project. They should be specific and measurable so anyone could clearly understand what will be accomplished with the grant funding. Simply stating that capacity will be increased, or that a resource will be improved is not specific enough. Rather, goals and objectives should result in quantifiable outcomes (e.g., miles of streambank that will be restored, number of trees that will be planted, acres that will be seeded, number of students that will be taught, skills that will be gained by an employee, or the number of additional hours an employee will work). Partners can be a great way for determining accurate, measurable outcomes of a project.

Tasks

Tasks describe the specific actions the district will take to accomplish the goals and objectives of the project. For example, a task for a planting project may include developing landowner

agreements, purchasing seedlings, coordinating volunteers, and submitting the final report to DNRC. For an educational project, the tasks might include hosting a planning meeting with local teachers, purchasing materials, presenting the lesson, and grant management.

Deliverables

Deliverables are tangible items that can be used to demonstrate the project was successful. Deliverables should include before and after photos of a restoration project, copies of newspaper ads or newsletters, monitoring reports, workshop attendee surveys and attendance lists, technical reports, training certificates, or snapshots of website updates. Copies or records of the deliverables should be included in grant reporting.

Timeline

The project timeline must include specific benchmarks indicating when each task will be accomplished including reporting deadlines. The following are common examples: construction will take place July-August 2023, workshop planning meetings will be scheduled in April with the workshop hosted on May 15, website updates will be completed by October 31, supplies will be purchased in March. A timeline such as, “the project will begin immediately and be completed within a year,” will not be accepted.

Budget

The budget is an estimated accounting of how all funds will be spent and must be detailed. Grant funding cannot be provided as a “blank check” where funding is requested for a generalized purpose. The budget must describe what will be purchased and the estimated cost. If the budget includes salaries (either as match or as a grant expense), include the estimated hours and hourly rate. For travel expenses, estimate the miles and the rate or the number of nights in a hotel and associated costs. Mileage and per diem are reimbursed at the state rate. Lodging is reimbursed at the GSA rate. A budget template can be found [here](#).

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Ineligible expenses will not be reimbursed. As grant funds are tax dollars, all expenses must be appropriate to the project. Expenses that benefit an individual or an organization other than a CD will not be considered eligible. This includes, but is not limited to, the items below:

- Activities outside the scope of work
- Costs incurred outside the contract term
- Costs for food in excess of 10% of the overall project budget
- Routine maintenance and operation
- Equipment or gear that will be owned by an entity other than the CD beyond the grant lifetime
- Salaries/wages, travel, or other expenses not directly related to the project

- Funding for infrastructure
- Expenses not supported by back-up documentation

MATCH REQUIREMENTS/EXPECTATIONS

Match is not required for any of the grants; however, applications that include match will be more competitive, rank higher, and are more likely to receive funding. Match can include in-kind services or cash match.

CASH MATCH

Cash match includes any purchases or expenses paid for by the CD or partner organizations directly for the project and not reimbursed by a grant. This might include the purchase of supplies or equipment or payments for services. It does not include the purchase of equipment that will be retained in private ownership. That is, equipment purchased by a contractor or partner that will not be retained by the district does not count as match.

Irrigation construction or design projects, including sprinklers and drip systems must have a 50:50 cash match from the landowner(s) or other beneficiary (such as an irrigation district, ditch company, or community garden host).

IN-KIND MATCH

In-kind match is match that is calculated as the value of time volunteering for the project or the provision of free services for the project. This can include in-kind match from CD Supervisors or employees, landowners, partner organizations, and community volunteers. It can be calculated at an hourly rate using [the Value of Volunteer Labor Worksheet](#), or as a total estimate of the value of provided professional services. A record of the in-kind match should be included with the final report. This record could be a simple spreadsheet documenting who volunteered on what dates and the number of hours, or it could be documentation from a contractor/consultant estimating the value of the free professional services provided.

In-kind match can also be provided from other grant sources. For example, if applying for multiple grants for one project, include in the budget table a description of each funding source and what components of the project are budgeted for each funding source.

TYPES OF EXPENSES

If a project is approved for funding, the applicant must enter into a grant agreement with DNRC before any funds will be reimbursed. The agreement will include a detailed scope and budget with eligible expenses. Actual costs for eligible expenses within the grant agreement will be reimbursed with proper reporting and back-up documentation. Types of expenses include:

Administrative expenses are the actual personnel costs associated with administering a grant. Typical costs include grant reporting and financial management of the project. These costs can be invoiced at the employee's wages plus benefits.

Project management expenses are the actual costs associated with managing the activities of a project. These costs can be incurred by CD staff or by external individuals hired to carry out the project activities.

Project activity costs are the other direct costs incurred to complete the work described in the scope of work and may include costs associated with communications, materials & supplies, travel, equipment, construction.

MEPA

All projects are subject to the Montana Environmental Protection Act (MEPA). Potential impacts to the natural environment will be determined through a simple questionnaire during the application process. If the project is determined to have a physical impact on the natural environment, the MEPA process must be completed before the project can begin.

Application Assistance

CDB staff are available to CDs for assistance with the application process. While CDB staff cannot write the application, they can help develop project ideas and review preliminary proposals prior to application submittal. They are also available to help with questions regarding match, budget development, and allowable expenses. This assistance is offered so CDs can confidently submit high-quality applications. CDs interested in application assistance are encouraged to communicate with the CD specialist for their area well in advance of the grant application deadline.

Application Ranking Criteria

Receipt of grant funds is not guaranteed and is subject to available funding. Only those projects that demonstrate a public resource benefit and include clearly stated objectives, deliverables, timelines, and budget will be considered. All applications, regardless of the grant program will be reviewed based on the following ranking criteria:

Ranking Criteria	Scoring Range
<p>Overall, is the application high-quality, clear and concise, and well thought out?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Proposed project has few grammatical or mathematical errors, all sections are complete, and the proposal is clear to the reviewer. • 5 = Proposed project is complete but has some errors and is missing some needed details. • 0 = Proposed project has missing sections, is poorly written, and does not include enough detail for the reviewer. 	0-10
<p>Does the proposed project address the district's conservation priorities as identified in their annual workplan or strategic plan?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Proposed project is clearly identified in the CD's planning documents • 5 = Proposed project is in line with the CD's priorities but not specifically identified. • 0 = Proposed project is not in line with the CD's planning documents or CD has not submitted any planning documents. 	0-10
<p>Has the applicant/CD demonstrated their ability to lead the project to a successful outcome?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = The project team has the collective experience, education, and capacity to lead the project to a successful outcome. • 5 = The project team has some experience leading projects. • 0 = The project team has no experience leading projects, lacks the capacity, or currently has other grants that are not in good standing. 	0-10
<p>Are the public resource benefits clearly described?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Proposed project clearly indicated how public natural resources would benefit from the successful project. 	0-10

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 = Proposed project indicates some public benefit but does not adequately describe how the grant funds will help accomplish the benefit. • 0 = Proposed project does not describe how public resources will benefit. 	
<p>Does the application include clearly stated goals and objectives?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Proposed project includes specific and measurable goals and objectives, and it is clear what the outcomes of the project will be. • 5 = Goals and objectives are vague, and it is somewhat unclear what will be accomplished with grant funds. • 0 = Proposed project does not include goals or objectives; it is unclear what the outcome of the project will be. 	0-10
<p>Does the application include clearly stated tasks that describe what actions will be taken to accomplish the goals and objectives and associated tasks?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Proposed project includes clearly stated tasks that detail what actions will be taken to accomplish the goals and objectives. • 5 = Proposed project includes tasks, but they are not detailed, or it is unclear how they will accomplish the goals and objectives. • 0 = Proposed project does not describe what actions will be taken to accomplish the goals and objectives. 	0-10
<p>Does the proposed project list specific deliverables as evidence of how grant funding will be used to successfully complete the project?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Proposed project lists specific, tangible deliverables that will adequately showcase the accomplished goals and objectives. • 5 = Proposed project includes some deliverables, but the deliverables are not appropriate to prove the project was successfully completed. • 0 = Proposed project does not indicate what deliverables will be provided to DNRC. 	0-10
<p>Does the timeline include milestones describing when each task will be accomplished?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Proposed project clearly describes what will be accomplished and when. • 5 = Proposed project includes a timeline, but it is unclear or too vague to understand what will be accomplished at what time. 	0-10

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0 = Proposed project does not include an appropriate timeline. 	
<p>Is the budget reasonable, clear, and includes only allowable expenses?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 = Budget clearly describes how grant funding will be used, what the anticipated expenses will be, and provides sufficient detail to ensure all expenses are allowable. 5 = Budget provides some detail, but it is unclear what specific rates are or how the grant funds will be spent. 0 = A budget is not provided or is a “blank check” request with no detail provided on how the grant funds will be used. 	0-10
<p>Does the project have broad community support as showcased through letters of support, project partners, or matching funds from other sources?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 = Proposed project includes letters of support, confirmed project partners, or matching funds from other sources. 5 = Proposed project includes some description of community support but does not include letters of support, does not have project partners, and does not include matching funds from outside sources. 0 = It is unclear if the project would be supported by the community. 	0-10
Total Possible Points	100

Grant Review Process

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Conservation Resource Development Division (CARDD) provides fiscal management of the grant programs. The Conservation Districts Bureau (CDB) staff review applications, rank them qualitatively and quantitatively, and provide funding recommendations to the Conservation Districts Advisory Council (CDAC). DNRC makes final funding decisions based on recommendations. All projects will be reviewed and ranked according to the guidelines described in this document.

CDAC

The Conservation District Advisory Council (CDAC) will review and rank applications for any CD Planning Grants, Project Grants, or Pollinator Grants over \$10,000. The CDAC will review the applications during a public hearing during which applicants may present their project and address the CDAC's questions. Following the hearing, the CDAC will rank all proposed projects

including recommended funding and justifications, as well as any constraints or stipulations. CDAC recommendations and rankings will then be provided to DNRC for final decision making.

Awarding and Contracting

The grant agreement will not be effective until fully executed (signed by both the Authorized Representative and DNRC). Any expenses incurred before the contract is fully executed will not be reimbursed. Districts are advised that it generally takes several months for contracts to be written, approved, and executed. Therefore, planning is critical when seeking grant funding. Please note, DNRC is transitioning to executing all grant agreements electronically.

Reporting and Reimbursement

All grant programs, except the CD Administration/310 Grants, are reimbursable programs. Costs may not be incurred outside of the contract term and signatures. DNRC will reimburse project costs upon receipt and approval of a vendor invoice, supporting documentation, proof of payment and project status report. Ten percent of the total project funds may be held back until receipt of a complete final report.

Reports must include an accounting of all project costs, including those funded by the district and other matching funds/grants. The district will receive the final payment based on the total of actual costs submitted, not to exceed the total contracted amount, upon delivery of a final report and a final invoice.

Progress reports are required quarterly on January 15, April 15, July 15, and October 15 for the entire duration of the grant. Progress reports are required even if no work has been done on the project that quarter or no reimbursement is requested. All progress reports must be completed online using Submittable.

Progress reports must include project activities during the reporting period, costs incurred, funds remaining, anticipated activities during the next reporting period, and expected changes in scope, schedule, or budget. Reported project costs must include those funded by the district and matching funds.

DNRC will release final payment based on the total of actual costs submitted, not to exceed the total contracted amount, upon delivery of a final report, final invoice, and other deliverables as outlined in the grant agreement. The conservation district will submit the expenses using the DNRC vendor invoice and final report. The final invoice must accurately account for all grant expenses for contractors and grantee expenses for time and materials, including hourly rates and work hours, contract award amount, total grant amount expended, grant amount received, and remaining grant balance, if any. Remaining funds will be reverted to DNRC's conservation district account.

Additional guidance on status and final reports can be found in the grant contract.

Procurement and Permitting Requirements

Grantees agree to comply with all relevant procurement and contracting requirements related to work performed under DNRC grant agreements. Record of all procurement and solicitation processes should be submitted with grant reporting. In some cases, DNRC retains the right to approve subcontracts.

Grantees are responsible for conducting all necessary environmental assessments and obtaining all necessary local, state, and federal permits. Landowner permission must be secured for projects on private land before contracting.

For specific questions about procurement and solicitation, please contact your CD Specialist or review the resources on the CDB website.

Contract Terms and Conditions

Amendments to a grant must be approved and documented as part of the grant contract by CDB. **Requests for contract extensions must be provided in writing to DNRC 45 days prior to the end of contract term and must include a justification or description of why the extension is necessary.** Additional terms and conditions can be found in the grant contract.

Project Close Out

Final disbursement of funds is contingent upon DNRC receipt and approval of a final report that meets the requirements specified in the grant contract. Final reports must be submitted to DNRC within 90 days of the Agreement termination date. Final reports must include a signed Certificate of Compliance (included in this attachment) to DNRC upon project completion. Projects that included construction must also submit a signed Engineer's Statement of Completion. DNRC may also request as-built drawings for construction projects, if applicable to the project.

FLATHEAD COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Wednesday, September 13, 2023

1. **FZC-23-04** A zone change request from WGM Group, on behalf of Longbow Land Partners, LLC, for properties within the Bigfork Zoning District. The proposal would change the zoning on parcels accessed from Bigfork Stage and Highway 35 via Peaceful Drive near Bigfork, Montana, from *RC-1 (Residential Cluster) and R-1 (Suburban Residential)* to *R-2 (One-Family Limited Residential)*. The total acreage involved in the request is approximately 105.03 acres. **THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THIS MATTER HAS BEEN CLOSED.**

Traffic study was received however not reviewed by the Planning Board – item remainder tabled until October 11, 2023

2. **FPPUD-22-02** A request from WGM Group, on behalf of Longbow Land Partners, LLC for Preliminary Planned Unit Development (PUD) approval for properties accessed from Bigfork Stage and Highway 35 via Peaceful Drive near Bigfork, Montana, within the Bigfork Zoning District. Containing approximately 105.03 acres, the applicant has also requested a zone change from *RC-1 (Residential Cluster) and R-1 (Suburban Residential)* to *R-2 (One-Family Limited Residential)* with a PUD overlay to reduce the minimum lot size from 20,000 square feet to 10,000 square feet, reduce the minimum lot width from 100 feet to 60 feet, and reduce the side setback from 10 feet to 5 feet and the side corner setback from 20 feet to 15 feet. **THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THIS MATTER HAS BEEN CLOSED.**

Traffic study was received however not reviewed by the Planning Board – item remainder tabled until October 11, 2023

3. **FPP-22-29** A request from WGM Group, on behalf of Longbow Land Partners, LLC, for preliminary plat approval of Northshore Woods-Phase 1 Subdivision, a proposal to create 51 residential lots on 105.03 acres. The proposed lots would be served by Bigfork Water & Sewer. The property is accessed from Bigfork Stage and Highway 35 via Peaceful Drive near Bigfork, Montana. **THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THIS MATTER HAS BEEN CLOSED.**

Traffic study was received however not reviewed by the Planning Board – item remainder tabled until October 11, 2023

4. **FZD-23-01** A request from Upper West Shore Alliance, Inc., with technical assistance from Lindsey Hromadka, Weinberg and Hromadka, PLLC to create a new zoning district that will be called Lakeside North Zoning District. The properties are in Lakeside, MT and are currently not zoned. The proposed district would create zoning on approximately 1,029 acres to include R-2.5 (Rural Residential), R-1 (Suburban Residential), R-2 (One-Family Limited Residential), R-3 (One-Family Residential), R-4 (Two-Family Residential), R-5 (Two-Family Residential), and RR-1 (Low Density Resort Residential).

There were approximately 114 members of the public in attendance. 19 spoke in favor and 4 opposed.

Proponents

- **Zoning was in response to the Alpine Coaster.**
- **Help provides for orderly growth.**
- **1029 acres primarily residential.**
- **Many express the benefits of zoning.**

Opponents and Planning Board Comments.

- **Private property rights**
- **Problems with overlay zoning on existing parcels**
- **We are not a democracy we are a republic.**
- **Did not believe that 65% of affected landowners were on board.**

**Motion made to forward a negative recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners
Motion approved 6-1, Sandra Nogel only disapproval of motion vote.**

5. **FZC-23-13** A zone change request from Flathead Geomatics, on behalf of Igor, Viktoriya, and Dennis Serov, for property within the Highway 93 North Zoning District. The proposal would change the zoning on property located at 4550 Highway 93 S. near Whitefish, MT from AG-40 (Agricultural) to SAG-5 (Suburban Agricultural) on 10.19 acres, and to AG-40 (Agricultural) and B-6 (Rural Area Commercial) on the remaining 6.60 acres.

**Motion made to forward a negative recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners
Motion approved 4-3. Stevens, Larsen and Jackson voted to disapprove.**

6. **FZC-23-14** A zone change request from Grizzly Falls, LLC, and Ronald D. Ferron for property within the Evergreen Zoning District. The proposal would change the zoning on properties located at 231 West Reserve Drive near Kalispell, MT from R-1 (Suburban Residential) to R-5 (Two-Family Residential). The total acreage involved in the request is approximately 12.71 acres.

This item was placed on hold.

7. **FPP-23-13** A request from SJW Land Surveying on behalf of Nicholas & Jessica Milligan and Shawn & April Mahoney, for preliminary plat approval of Blaine View Subdivision, a proposal to create two (2) residential lots on approximately five (5) acres. The proposed lots would be served by individual septic systems and individual wells. The property is located at 243 and 245 Beartrap Road, Kalispell, MT.

This application requested 3 variances: to off-site roadway improvements, on-site paving requirements and lot width to depth ratio. All three were approved without meeting the requirements for a variance.

Motion made to forward a positive recommendation for the three variances to the Board of County Commissioners.

Unanimous

Motion made to forward a positive recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.

Unanimous

8. **FPMA-23-02** A request by the Middle Canyon Land Use Advisory Committee for an amendment to the Flathead County Growth Policy, specifically to add the West Glacier Vision Plan as an addendum to the Canyon Plan which has been incorporated into the Flathead County Growth Policy.

The West Glacier community has been working on the WGVP since 2018. Disapproved by the Commissioners about a year ago. Trying again to get it approved.

Motion to forward a positive recommendation to the County Board of Commissioners

Unanimous

9. **FSTA-23-01** A request by the Flathead County Planning Board for amendments to the Flathead County Subdivision Regulations, specifically to Section 4.7.17 of the Flathead County Subdivision Regulation. The proposal, if approved, would amend the roadway improvement requirements for subdivisions.

Motion to forward a positive recommendation to the County Board of Commissioners.
Unanimous

10. **FSTA-23-02** A request by the Flathead County Planning Board for amendments to the Flathead County Subdivision Regulations in order to comply with the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act. The proposal, if approved, would amend Sections 4.1.4 Time Period for Approval, Conditional Approval, or Denial, 4.1.15 Final Plat Approval, 4.2 First Minor Subdivisions, 4.3.1 Subsequent Minor Subdivision Review Procedure, 4.4 Major Subdivisions, 4.9 Definitions (amend the definitions for First Minor Subdivision, Original Tract of Record and Subsequent Minor Subdivision), and Appendix A and B of the Flathead County Subdivision Regulations, in compliance with the changes made to Montana Code Annotated during the 2023 legislative session. The proposal would also amend Sections 4.5 Subdivisions Providing Multiple Spaces for Recreational Camping Vehicles or Manufactured Homes, 4.6 Condominiums, and Appendix F of the Flathead County Subdivision Regulations and add, remove, and amend definitions in Section 4.9 Definitions of the Flathead County Subdivision Regulations to comply with the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act.

Motion to forward a positive recommendation to the County Board of Commissioners.
Unanimous

MGK