

Conservation District Supervisor Manual

Updated February 2021

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This series is a compilation of laws pertaining to conservation districts.
It may not be all-inclusive, as other laws may apply in certain circumstances.

Chapter 1: Montana's Conservation Districts

History & Organization

Conservation districts grew from public concern for the condition of our natural resources in the early 1930s. Poor farming practices, in combination with the unusually harsh weather, caused massive soil erosion. In 1935 the U.S. Congress declared soil and water conservation to be national policy, with the passage of Public Law 46.

At the state level, the Montana Conservation District Law (Section 76-15-101 et seq., MCA) was enacted in 1939 to allow land users to form soil and water conservation districts. Conservation districts (CDs) are political subdivisions of state government and are public bodies with certificates of organization issued by the Secretary of State.

TODAY, Montana's 58 conservation districts provide local citizens with an opportunity to shape resource planning in their areas. They are part of national network of over 3,000 conservation districts similarly organized in all 50 states.

Serving on a Board

A CD Board

Each district is governed by a non-paid elected and appointed board of supervisors.

Residency Requirements

Supervisors must reside within the boundaries of the CD they serve. Some districts have passed ordinances that divides the district in supervisor areas. If so, a supervisor would be required to live in the area they represent.

Elected Supervisors

Five supervisors are elected in the general election and serve 4-year terms 76-15-303 and 304 MCA.

Urban Supervisors

Two urban supervisors are appointed by incorporated municipalities within the district and serve 3-year terms 76-15-311 MCA.

Urban and elected supervisors have the same powers. There is no limit to the number of terms a supervisor may serve.

5- or 7-Member Board

Districts without incorporated municipalities have a maximum of five supervisors but may request a change to a seven-member elected board 76-15-305 MCA.

Associate Supervisors

The CD may appoint an unlimited number of local individuals to serve as associate supervisors. Associate supervisors are not required to live within the boundaries of the CD. Associate supervisors may not vote on motions before the board. 76-15-311 MCA.

Officers

Annually (usually in January) conservation districts are required to elect a chair. Districts may also elect a vice chair, secretary, treasurer, committee chairs, or other officers necessary for the smooth operation of the district.

Compensation

By unanimous vote of the board, supervisors may be paid for mileage, expenses, or other compensation for attending special meetings, project work, 310 activities, etc. However, except mileage, supervisors may not be compensated for attending regular monthly meetings. Per diem and mileage reimbursement rates are set by state law. State rates are referenced in Section 2-18-501, MCA.

Important

Code of Ethics

Supervisors must carry out their duties for the benefit of the public, and as public officials may not use their positions to personally benefit. Supervisors as public officials may not use their position to personally benefit (Section 2-2-101 through 132, MCA).

Governmental Code of Fair Practices

All services, including distribution of funds, implementation of projects, letting of public contracts, and employment opportunities, must be offered without discrimination based upon race, color, religion, creed, political ideas, sex, age, marital status, physical or mental handicap, or national origin (Section 49-3-101 through 312, MCA).

Liability

Montana's liability laws are intended to balance the individual's right to sue with the protection of public officers acting in their official capacity. The law states that, if a supervisor is sued for an act while working in the scope of his employment (duties), the conservation district will defend that supervisor in court, which includes paying for monetary judgments, legal fees, etc. This protection does not apply if the supervisor commits an act of oppression, fraud, or malice; is not acting within the scope of his conservation district duties; or commits a criminal act (Section 2-9-101 through 318, MCA).

The best way to avoid legal liability is to perform your job as a supervisor conscientiously - understand your role and responsibilities, keep well informed about what your district is doing, and stay free of any potential conflicts of interests. Board members shouldn't have any business transactions with the district, although supervisors are entitled to district services and programs without discrimination or preference. It is recommended that all supervisors read and understand the liability law. See 76-15-320 MCA.

Chapter 2: District Authority

Title 76. Land Resources and Use, Chapter 15 Conservation Districts, Montana Code Annotated, Part 1. General Provisions 76-15-101 through 76-15-106

Part 1: The legislative determinations that gives Conservation Districts' its authority.

Part 2: The shortened statement as a Declaration of Policy:

76-15-102 Declaration of Policy. It is hereby declared to be the policy of the legislature to provide for the conservation of soil and soil resources of this state, for the control and prevention of soil erosion, for the prevention of floodwater and sediment damages, and for furthering the conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water and thereby to preserve natural resources, control floods, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, preserve wildlife, protect the tax base, and protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of this state.

Part 3: Definitions that will be used in this chapter(s).

Part 4: Adjournment of Hearings - if a hearing was held at the time and place noticed, adjournment may be made without renewing the notice for the adjourned dates.

Part 5: Duties of the Department

Part 6: Conservation District Account -the state special revenue fund established in 17-2-102 to be administered by DNRC for providing funding for CDs.

Title 76. Land Resources and Use, Chapter 15 Conservation Districts, Montana Code Annotated, Part 2. Creation of Conservation Districts

This section begins with the petition to create a conservation district 76-15-201-216, MCA through the process of the district becoming a governmental subdivision and public body.

Title 76. Land Resources and Use, Chapter 15. Conservation Districts Montana Code Annotated, Part 3. Administration of Conservation Districts, 76-15-301 through 76-15-324

This important section pertains to the governing body of the District - Supervisors, Elections, Administrative Functions, Cooperation with State Agencies and between districts, Legal immunity, and others. Interesting excerpts below ...

76-15-319 Legal Assistance. (1) The supervisors may call upon the county attorney of the county in which the greatest portion of the district is located or the attorney general of the state for the legal services they may require, or they may employ their own counsel and legal staff. (2) If the county attorney is unable to provide legal assistance because of a conflict of interest, then the matter may be referred to the attorney general or the department.

DNRC Conservation and Resource Development Division (CARDD) retains an attorney for this purpose.

76-15-331 Rulemaking authority. A conservation district and the supervisors thereof shall have the power to make and from time to time amend and repeal rules to carry into effect the purposes and powers of this chapter.

that chapter is ... Chapter 15. Conservation Districts

Title 76. Land Resources and Use, Chapter 15 Conservation Districts, Montana Code Annotated, Part 4. Operation of Conservation Districts 76-15-401 through 76-15-411

This interesting section covers the study of problems relating to soil and water conservation, developing plans and projects, acquisition and management of property and others. Here's a few ...

76-15-401 Study of problems relating to soil and water conservation

- conduct and publish surveys, investigations and research on soil erosion, floodwater and sediment damages, water quality and saline seeps conservation, development, utilization, and disposal of water
- work in cooperation with state and federal agencies

76-15-402 Develop Soil and Water Conservation Plans

76-15-403 Operation of projects and works

Cooperate or enter into agreements ... subject to any conditions that the supervisors consider necessary ... to conduct or complete:

- erosion control and prevention operations
- flood prevention
- soil conservation
- water management and others

76-15-406 Furnish supplies and equipment

Title 76. Land Resources and Use, Chapter 15 Conservation Districts, Montana Code Annotated, Part 5. Financial Aspects of CD Loan Programs

Conservation district supervisors have been given authority to raise funds and to manage district finances to carry out their duties.

They can:

- borrow money
- issue bonds
- invest surplus funds
- collect fees, rent, or charge for services
- levy taxes
- establish loan programs
- receive federal and state grants

76-15-516 Levy of regular and special assessments

Conservation districts are financed by a legislated mill levy on real property within the boundaries

of the district. The mill levied is a floating mill which typically does not go down in total revenue from year to year but may increase to adjust for cost of living. Refer to 15-10-420 Procedure for calculating levy if you have any questions.

76-15-523 Depository of District Funds

Every year district supervisors submit a budget to the county requesting the amount of funds to be levied (within the statutorily set limit). The district may receive on demand, all or a portion of tax funds collected by the county and deposit those funds in a bank or financial institution as the board considers appropriate.

76-15-526 Treasurer's Report

Supervisors must account for how district funds and other assets are used. CD funds should be handled only by supervisors or CD employees that have been delegated this responsibility and bonded with a surety bond. The treasurer should prepare a written financial report at every meeting. Financial transactions must be documented and approved in the conservation district minutes.

76-15-531 Special Administrative Assessment Permitted - Voter Approval

Since 1993, upon a vote of the residents of a district, a special levy can be assessed to increase county tax collections for administrative purposes.

Title 76. Land Resources and Use, Chapter 15 Conservation Districts Montana Code Annotated, Part 6. Project Areas 76-15-601 through 76-15-625

Under Section 76-15-601 through 623 MCA, conservation districts may establish a project area to work on specific resource issues that can be isolated by definite boundaries (they may cross district boundaries). If 51 percent of the effected landowners vote in favor of creating project area, a special levy (not to exceed 3 mills on real property) can be assessed to cover the project costs.

Title 76. Land Resources and Use, Chapter 15 Conservation Districts Montana Code Annotated, Part 7. Land Use Regulations 76-15-701 through 76-15-727

76-15-701 Adoption of land use regulations. (1) The supervisors of any district shall have authority to formulate regulations governing the use of lands within the district in the interest of conserving soil and water resources and preventing and controlling erosion. The supervisors may conduct such public meetings and public hearings upon tentative regulations as may be necessary to assist them in this work. (2) The supervisors shall not have authority to enact such land use regulations into

law until after they shall have caused due notice to be given of their intention to order a referendum for submission of such regulations to the qualified electors within the boundaries of the district for their indication of approval or disapproval of such proposed regulations and until after the supervisors have considered the result of such referendum.

Examples: bison ordinances, sod busting ordinances, coal bed methane rules.

Title 76. Land Resources and Use, Chapter 15 Conservation Districts Montana Code Annotated, Part 8. Alteration and Termination of CDs 76-15-801 through 76-15-810

What began in Part 2. Creation of Conservation Districts can be altered or terminated by reviewing Part 8. Alteration and Termination of Conservation Districts.

Title 76. Land Resources and Use, Chapter 15 Conservation Districts, Montana Code Annotated, Part 9. Coal Bed Methane Protection – RESERVED

Title 76. Land Resources and Use, Chapter 15 Conservation Districts, Montana Code Annotated, Part 10. Procurement and Competitive Bidding 76-15-1001 through 76-15-1014

76-15-1001 Power to enter and execute contracts. A conservation district is authorized to make contracts necessary to implement the applicable powers granted by this chapter and to provide for the manner of executing contracts.

76-15-1004 Service Contracts. (1) Contracts for architectural, engineering, land surveying, auditing, accounting, or legal services. Review for more information on solicitation procedure, request for proposal, invitation to bid, and contract value limitations.

Chapter 3: Supervisor Roles and Responsibilities

Administration Structure

Supervisors carry out their duties through a structure of board officers, members, committees, and others.

Chair: The law requires that the board elect a chair each year. The chair is the presiding officer of your board. The chair has full rights as a member of the board and can vote, make motions, and express opinions just like any other member. While the chair presides over meetings and assumes other responsibilities, all members are considered leaders. Everyone has a say and everyone participates equally.

Other Officers: Most districts elect a vice-chair to act when the chair is not available and to assume other duties as requested by the board. In addition, offices of secretary, treasurer (or combination secretary-treasurer) and committee chairs are helpful to the smooth administration of a conservation district.

Associate Supervisors: Many districts have associate supervisors working in an advisory capacity, providing their expertise, helping the board to make informed decisions. While associate supervisors do not have a vote on the district board meeting, they do play an important part by providing their time and energy to carry out district activities. Drawn from the community at large, they can be an asset and should be actively recruited.

Committees: The use of committees is helpful in distributing the district workload. The chair and board members appoint themselves, associate board members, district advisors, representatives of cooperating agencies and associations, or interested citizens as committee members. Look for people with an active personal or professional interest in the committee's purpose. It's recommended that at least one board member serve and chair on each district committee. All committees should report to the full board for final approval of all committee business.

Planning

Annual and long-range plans provide direction for conservation district programs for the upcoming year(s). Planning provides a mechanism for supervisors to identify key resource concerns in the district, determine the necessary actions needed to address those concerns, and to establish goals to get there.

During planning phases, supervisors can identify costs for the development, implementation, and management of conservation district programs, projects, and services. This goes hand in hand with any future budget planning.

PLANNING ASSURES THAT ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS AREN'T LEFT UP TO CHANCE.

It's important to take advantage of upcoming programs, grant deadlines, educational and/or training opportunities. Many districts arrange for events that require exceptional speakers and the availability of meeting spaces that may be reserved months/years in advance.

This is also an ideal way to inform citizens and local government of the district's focus and activities for the upcoming year(s).

Budgets

An important part of district finances is developing budgets to allocate conservation district funds and other resources. Your district budget should be prepared annually.

It is a good idea to budget staff time to accomplish your objectives. You may also include dollar value estimates of volunteer contributions.

To keep track of your budget status, the board treasurer should report on income, expenses, and other budget status information at monthly board meetings.

A budget should include:

- narrative summary
- projected expenses and revenue
- proposed budget with the prior year's actual expenditures and income
- proposed budget with recommended allocation per line item for the coming year

It would be helpful to have a five-year review of revenue and expenses for cost projections. This in-depth analysis intends to identify, estimate, and project total expenses for conservation district operations.

Sources of Income

Conservation districts may receive income streams from multiple sources, here are a few of the common ones:

1. County Mill Levy
2. County Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT)
3. Special Assessment Taxes (Voter approved)
4. DNRC Conservation District Administrative Grants
5. Administrative fees from grants
6. Rental fees from district owned equipment

WHAT IS PILT? In addition to benefits provided to individual landowners in a county, conservation districts can help counties with soil surveys and interpretations for planning, county assessments, structures, highways, and drainages. Some conservation districts receive PILT funds to cover some of the district's costs.

Grants: Grant funds are available to districts from a variety of sources for carrying out programs, demonstrations, and educational projects. Most grants are awarded on a competitive basis for a fixed period, usually for very specific purposes. Federal and state government and private and industrial foundations are all sources of grants.

Finance Committee

The finance committee:

- reviews and actively seek other sources of funding
- develops budgets and budget reports
- arranges required audit procedures
- checks the reliability of financial information

Ultimately, decisions on the budgets or other financial matters are made by the full board of supervisors.

Financial Recordkeeping and Audits

Districts should adopt and maintain a financial accounting system that enables them to adequately manage their local, state, and federal funds. Money targeted for specific uses should be tracked accordingly. All district financial information is open to the public.

Funds obtained by districts are classified as public funds, regardless of how they were obtained. As public officials, you are accountable for these funds, property, and equipment. You should also report to the public on how you are using their resources.

Districts are required to provide an annual audit of accounts, receipts, and disbursements. A copy of the audit is to be sent to the DNRC Conservation Districts Bureau (CDB). The district treasurer leads this effort, but all supervisors must be aware of what is involved.

The district may also be required to have an audit done under the Single Audit Act, if the district had revenues of \$750,000 or more pass through the district. Annual financial reports help you maintain contact with your community and show them what you are doing with public funds. It is necessary to set up and maintain a good records management system. Increasing demands for government accountability require a complete and accurate record of financial accounts.

In addition to financial matters, the district should maintain a current office filing system. Pertinent

district correspondence, guidelines for district programs, inventories of property and equipment, reports, and memorandums of understanding should be maintained in a well-ordered filing system. Materials should be filed regularly, and district equipment should be inventoried annually.

Personnel

Conservation districts employ personnel to carry out day-to-day activities. These employees are responsible to their district supervisors and serve at their discretion.

From the hiring process to the guidance of personnel, it is the supervisors' responsibility to ensure the daily operation of conservation districts.

Supervisors should establish a personnel committee to handle personnel matters. They should also maintain a written personnel policy addressing:

- hiring processes
- work hours
- rate of pay and schedule of increases
- leave
- grievance procedures
- employee benefits

Conservation districts follow:

- state law regarding sick, annual, and holiday leave benefits for their employees
- legally required employee benefits including Social Security (in some cases), unemployment insurance, and workers' compensation

These laws apply to all conservation district employees, no matter the funding source. It is important to make sure your district is adhering to all applicable laws for all employees.

In addition, supervisors should provide adequate training opportunities for employees.

Monthly Duties for Staff (Abbreviated list)

Monthly:

- Agenda, Board Meeting, Minutes
- 310 applications
- Pay federal 941/Montana taxes if applicable (payment schedules vary)

- Payroll (schedules may vary)

Quarterly: Unemployment taxes, insurance, taxes

Tree program: Fall through spring

January:

- Taxes - W2 taxes/1099 to employees/non-employees
- Taxes - MW3 and State copy of W2 to IRS/state
- In even years, supervisors up for re-election file Oath of Candidacy
- In odd years, supervisors elected administer Oath of Office

March: Administrative grants - due by May 1st

April: Help with Envirothon

August: Tax Valuation Form (Mill Levy) should arrive in the mail

September:

- Mill Levy Budget - complete form and return to your clerk and recorder's office
- Water users report (if you have water reservations)

October:

- MACD Area meetings
- Order tax forms from IRS or plan with accountant

November: MACD Convention

December: Annual Financial Report for Special Districts - due December 31

*Not an exhaustive list, but this gives you a general schedule for the entire year

Meetings

SUPERVISORS SHOULD PLAN TO ATTEND & ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN ALL DISTRICT MEETINGS.

Meetings are fundamental to conducting conservation district business. Most districts meet monthly and conduct special meetings as need arises. Monthly board meetings have two basic purposes:

- deciding on conservation district policies, and
- monitoring their implementation

Board meetings also serve social, educational, inspirational, and communication purposes. Supervisors also participate in meetings of committees, conservation district associations, and groups where they represent the district.

District board meetings should be run efficiently, following specific meeting procedures, and staying on track will help you achieve the ends of your meeting.

Setting a yearly calendar for all board meetings will help people know when future meetings will take place. Meeting times can be staggered, in case there is a specific time of day, week, or month that certain participants aren't able to attend.

A quorum, or majority of the full board, is needed to conduct all conservation district business. Motions carried by proxy, violate open meeting laws and are void.

NEW in 2020: Virtual Zoom meetings have become the norm for many conservation districts. Previously, motions carried over the phone were deemed to violate open meeting laws and therefore void. With virtual meetings, this restriction has been lifted.

In addition, supervisors should plan to attend at least one meeting outside the district (area meetings/annual meetings) and at least one local jurisdiction meeting (county planning board) as the conservation district representative.

Open Meeting Laws: All meetings must be open to the public, except as stated in Section 2-2-203(4) MCA. A conservation district should ensure that the people of Montana be allowed reasonable opportunity to participate in decisions that are of interest to the public. Members of the press may not be excluded from an open meeting (Section 2-2-201 through 221, MCA).

Rules of Order: In 1987, supervisors voted to use the Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure as a guide for conduction business. Most districts operate their monthly meetings in a less formal manner by using rules of order only to handle specific action items, policy issues, or 310 activities.

1. Basically, a motion is proposed, seconded, restated by the presiding officer, discussed, and then voted on.
2. Amendments may be offered during discussion of a motion.

3. Discussion of only the amendment may take place until the amendment is voted on.
4. The presiding officer has a vote, too.
5. If a vote ends in a tie, the motion fails, because it takes a majority to pass a motion.

Minutes: Minutes are kept and made available for public inspection at reasonable times. Minutes should include:

1. The date, time, and place of the meeting
2. A list of individual members of the public body, agency, or organization in attendance (first and last name)
3. The substance of all matters proposed, discussed, or decided
4. The request of any member, a record by individual members of any vote taken (Section 2-2-313, MCA).

Minutes provide a permanent written record of conservation district business meetings and become very important if you are involved with legal matters. Minutes are approved by the board only if they are accurate and complete.

Minutes can be taken by a board secretary and/or personnel. They can be read and approved at the next meeting.

Chapter 4: Programs & Activities

The role of Conservation Districts is to identify the natural resource issues in their district and decide how best to address them. Each district customizes their program to prioritize the needs of the landowners and residents of their district.

The Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act (SB310)

This act was enacted by the state legislature in 1975 to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation and maintain the quality of Montana's surface waters. The law is administered by conservation districts. The act requires a person to obtain a permit before engaging in any activity that will modify the bed or banks of a stream. Activities such as irrigation diversions, streambank stabilization, equipment crossings, culverts, bridges, and dams require a 310 permit. The permit process provides an applicant with helpful technical advice through an on-site consultation with representatives of the conservation district and the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Water Reservations

In 1978, to ensure an adequate supply of water for future agricultural and other uses, the Board of Natural Resources and Conservation granted water reservations to 14 conservation districts (CDs) in the Yellowstone River basin. Ten CDs were granted reservations in the upper Missouri River basin in 1992, and eleven CDs were given reservations in the lower and Little Missouri River basins in 1994. Some CDs have reservations in more than one basin. Each of these CDs administers its reservation for use by individuals within the district. Applications for reserved water use can be obtained from the applicable conservation district.

Non-point Source Pollution (NPS) – Surface Water and Groundwater Quality

The Clean Water Act of 1987 shifted the emphasis of federal involvement in water quality from pollution and problem identification to developing standards and enforcement.

The act also authorizes federal loan and grant funds to help states and units of government, conservation districts, individuals, farmers, foresters, and businesses manage non-point sources of pollution.

Districts play a role in NPS pollution management by sponsoring workshops and tours in Riparian Management, Pesticide and Fertilizer Management, Erosion and Sediment Control, and Animal Waste Management. Districts are also involved in urban and rural water testing projects and watershed assessments to identify potential water pollution sources. To be eligible for funds, conservation districts should lead an effort on watershed plans to address non-point source pollution.

Equipment Rental

For many districts, their equipment rental program enables them to promote and have an impact on the installation of conservation practices in their areas. District engaged in a rental program have leased or purchased the equipment offered for use.

Common equipment available for rent: tree planter, fabric mesh layer, weed sprayers, grass seeders, tree chippers, and no-till drills.

Considerable forethought and planning should take place prior to the purchase of any equipment. Program management and equipment maintenance can require a lot of time and energy.

If managed properly, this can be an excellent revenue stream contributing to the district's financial well-being. Managed poorly, it can be a financial burden requiring excessive amounts of time and money.

Local Conservation Advocacy

Providing information and education is a mandate for every conservation district. The responsibility for delivering the message of natural resource conservation to local citizens lies with the district and its supervisors. Districts take a wide variety of approaches to get the message across to landowners and the public.

Districts also sponsor or support teacher training programs and provide conservation-related classroom materials.

There are many miscellaneous educational activities across the state that districts may actively sponsor and participate in. Examples include the Montana Envirothon, Montana Youth Range Camp, Range Days, and the Natural Resource Youth Camp.

Workshops and Tours

Districts often sponsor workshops and tours addressing local conservation issues. Most events last a few hours and present an opportunity for questions and an open exchange of information with experts on a given topic. District workshops cover such topics as water quality, riparian and rangeland management, nonpoint source pollution, and various conservation practices.

THERE IS NO LIMIT TO THE IMPACT A DISTRICT CAN HAVE ON CONSERVATION EDUCATION.

Legislation – local and state issues

Supervisors often work with their local county commissioners and state legislatures on conservation resource related issues important to their districts.

Districts who are members in good standing with the Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), can craft and submit resolutions to help direct the advocacy and policy work on specific natural resource issues. Through the resolution process, districts can provide MACD with direct input on natural resource topics of high interest or concern at the local, regional, state, and/or national level. Visit the MACD website resolutions page at <https://macdnet.org/resolutions/>

Newsletters

Most districts publish a newsletter that is distributed through the mail, emails or available for review on district websites. Conservation topics covered may vary widely, but this serves as an excellent means of improving awareness of districts and their involvement with local conservation activities and efforts. Supervisors are encouraged to contribute articles on a regular basis.

Media

Working through local news or social media can help to elevate the district profile to the community. You may see articles in your hometown newspaper, online publications, and social media. Many districts have established a web presence with websites, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and others as technology evolves.

Annual Meetings and Awards

Annual meetings are a special type of conservation district meeting. They are frequently large, banquet-style affairs with an educational or inspirational presentation. Annual meetings provide an opportunity to interact informally with cooperators, assisting agencies and others, as well as to update them on current district activities and direction. This is also an occasion to recognize supervisors, agencies, and individuals who have helped in district programs.

Award Programs: Nearly all districts get involved in awards programs. Promotion of these programs offers districts an opportunity to spotlight selected individuals and themselves.

Partnerships

Districts work with a variety of partners. A few of the core partners are the Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD), Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS), Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and others.

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

The DNRC is responsible for ensuring the wise management, development, conservation, and use of some of Montana's natural resources in a manner consistent with environmental quality. It works to sustain and improve the benefits derived from our water, soil, and rangeland; to encourage energy conservation and the use of renewable energy resources; and to make certain that projects under its jurisdiction are developed with minimum adverse environmental efforts.

The Conservation Resource Development Division (CARDD) provides technical and financial assistance to local governments, state agencies and private citizens for conservation, development, protection, and management of the state's natural resources. The division is incorporated into three bureaus to help target resource improvement needs to best deliver focused resource assistance as follows:

- Conservation Districts Bureau (CDB)
- Financial Bureau (FB)
- Resource Development Bureau (RDB)

DNRC Website: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/>

CDB Website: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/conservation-districts>

FB Website: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/financial-bureau>

RDB Website: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/resource-development>

CD Specialist: Mary Hendrix 406-444-4253

310 Specialist: Jason Garber 406-444-4340

Water Reservations Technician: Randell Hopkins 406-232-6359