

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LAND COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
JULY 21, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M.
STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 303
HELENA, MT**

Members Present

Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
Susie Hedalen, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Austin Knudsen, Attorney General
James Brown, Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State
Dawnell Fuller, Land Board Secretary

Members Absent

Greg Gianforte, Governor

Testifying Staff

Amanda Kaster, DNRC Director
Ryan Wiess, DNRC Trust Lands Deputy Administrator
Brian Bramblett, DNRC Chief Legal Counsel

Attachments

Related Materials, Attachment 1 – Sign-in-Sheet
Related Materials, Attachment 2-Legislative Summary

Call to Order

00:00:00 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor called the meeting to order.

00:00:52 Austin Knudsen, Attorney General moved to approve the July agenda. The motion was seconded by Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State and carried unanimously.

00:01:14 Austin Knudsen, Attorney General moved to approve the June minutes. The motion was seconded by Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State and carried unanimously.

Business Considered

0725-1 Montana Historical Society: Sale of Land

00:01:35 Amanda Kaster, DNRC Director, gave an overview of the item.

Public Comment:

00:02:45 Molly Kruckenberg, Director of the Montana Historical Society

00:03:48 Austin Knudsen, Attorney General moved to approve item 0725-1. The motion was seconded by Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State and carried unanimously.

Board Discussion/Comments: N/A

0725-2 Timber Sale: Beaver Creek

00:04:10 Amanda Kaster, DNRC Director, gave an overview of the item.

Public Comment: N/A

00:05:02 Austin Knudsen, Attorney General moved to approve item 0725-2. The motion was seconded by Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State and carried unanimously.

Board Discussion/Comments: N/A

0725-3A & B Cabin and Homesite: Set Minimum Bid for Sale

00:05:20 Amanda Kaster, DNRC Director, gave an overview of the item.

Public Comment: N/A

00:06:48 Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State moved to approve item 0725-3A & B. The motion was seconded by Susie Hedalen, Superintendent of Public Instruction and carried unanimously.

Board Discussion/Comments: N/A

0725-4 Easements

00:07:07 Amanda Kaster, DNRC Director, gave an overview of the item.

Public Comment: N/A

00:07:49 Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State moved to approve item 0725-4. The motion was seconded by Austin Knudsen, Attorney General and carried unanimously.

Board Discussion/Comments: N/A

0725-5 Approval to File Objections on Water Rights (Executive Session)

00:08:15 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor, gave an overview of the item.

Public Comment:

00:10:26 Sandy Graveley, Graveley LLC

00:12:52 Brian Henningsen, Rock Creek Cattel Company, Ranch Manager

00:15:14 Jocelyn Cahill, Senior Ag Water Rights Alliance (SAWRA)

00:17:02 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor

Board Discussion/Comments:

00:17:14 Austin Knudsen, Attorney General

00:17:42 Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State

00:18:07 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor

00:18:37 Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State

00:19:25 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor

00:19:41 Amanda Kaster, DNRC Director

00:19:54 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor

00:20:41 Austin Knudsen, Attorney General

00:21:54 Austin Knudsen, Attorney General, made a motion to provide 90 days written mailed notice. The motion was seconded by the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Board Discussion/Comments:

00:22:20 Austin Knudsen, Attorney General

00:23:06 Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State

00:23:36 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor

00:23:46 Ryan Wiess, DNRC Trust Lands Deputy Administrator
00:24:38 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:24:52 Ryan Wiess, DNRC Trust Lands Deputy Administrator
00:25:07 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:25:08 Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State
00:25:39 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:25:50 Sandy Graveley, Graveley LLC
00:27:03 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:27:30 Sandy Graveley, Graveley LLC
00:28:00 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:28:11 Sandy Graveley, Graveley LLC
00:28:14 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:28:27 Brian Henningsen, Rock Creek Cattel Company, Ranch Manager
00:29:40 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:29:50 Susie Hedalen, Superintendent of Public Instruction
00:30:45 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:30:47 Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State
00:31:03 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:31:07 Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State
00:31:14 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:31:19 Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State
00:31:21 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:31:23 James Brown, Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
00:35:01 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:36:10 Brian Bramblett, DNRC Chief Legal Counsel
00:37:07 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:37:32 Brian Bramblett, DNRC Chief Legal Counsel
00:38:03 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor

00:38:37 The motion to approve 90 days written mailed notice carried 4-1.

00:38:45 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor, moved to go into executive session.
00:39:20 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor

The Land Boards assembled into executive session at 9:40 AM in pursuant to MCA 2-3-203(4), to discuss litigation strategy in relation to these statements of claim. The public portion of the meeting resumed at 10:40 AM.

00:39:29 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor, resumes public meeting.

00:39:55 James Brown, Commissioner of Securities and Insurance moved to approve item 0725-5. The motion was seconded by Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor.

Board Discussion/Comments:

00:40:37 Austin Knudsen, Attorney General
00:41:45 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:41:50 Susie Hedalen, Superintendent of Public Instruction
00:43:50 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:43:57 James Brown, Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
00:45:33 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:45:40 The motion to approve item 0725-5 carried 4-1.

0725-6 Informational Item: Response to Public Inquiry

00:46:04 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor, gave an overview of the item.

Public Comment:

00:47:00 Jocelyn Cahill, Senior Ag Water Rights Alliance (SAWRA)
00:47:40 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:47:52 Amanda Kaster, DNRC Director
00:48:05 Brian Bramblett, DNRC Chief Legal Counsel
00:49:51 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor

Board Discussion/Comments: N/A

0725-7 Informational Item: Legislative Update

00:50:22 Amanda Kaster, DNRC Director, gave an overview of the item.

00:50:42 Ryan Wiess, DNRC Trust Lands Deputy Administrator Weiss
00:56:45 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor

Public Comment: N/A

Board Discussion/Comments:

00:57:03 James Brown, Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
00:58:31 Ryan Wiess, DNRC Trust Lands Deputy Administrator Weiss
00:59:37 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
00:59:38 James Brown, Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
00:59:50 Ryan Wiess, DNRC Trust Lands Deputy Administrator
01:00:21 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
01:00:23 James Brown, Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
01:00:50 Ryan Wiess, DNRC Trust Lands Deputy Administrator
01:01:39 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
01:01:40 James Brown, Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
01:01:54 Ryan Wiess, DNRC Trust Lands Deputy Administrator
01:01:01 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor
01:01:02 James Brown, Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
01:02:48 Ryan Wiess, DNRC Trust Lands Deputy Administrator
01:02:50 James Brown, Commissioner of Securities and Insurance
01:02:52 Kristen Juras, Lieutenant Governor

General Public Comment: N/A

Adjournment

01:03:40 Adjournment

PRESIDENT

ATTEST

/s/
Greg Gianforte, Governor

/s/
Amanda Kaster, DNRC Director

Please note: The Land Board has adopted the audio recording of its meetings as the official record, as allowed by [2-3-212, MCA](#). These minutes provide an abbreviated summary of the Land Board discussion, public testimony, action taken, and other activities. The time designations listed are approximate and may be

These abbreviated summary minutes and the audio recording will become the official adopted minutes at the next Land Board meeting when the board votes to officially approve them. Until then they are considered a draft.

used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio recording of this meeting. Access to an electronic copy of these minutes and the audio recording is provided from the Land Board at <http://dnrc.mt.Kristen.Juras.Lieutenant.Governor/LandBoard>. The written minutes summary, along with the audio recordings, are listed by meeting date on the Land Board Archive webpage.

DRAFT



The Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation

2025 Legislative Summary

This summary from the 69th Legislature captures bills that were passed during the 2025 Legislative Session that directly impact the Trust Land Management bureaus in the DNRC-Forestry and Trust Lands Division and the Land Board, as well as a brief synopsis of what the bill does.

It should be noted that this list is not all-encompassing of bills the agency was tracking or monitoring.

✓ **HB 80 – Provide Cash Lease-Only Bidding for Agricultural Leases**

****Agency Bill****

Revises statute to allow cash-lease only bids when there are competitive bids on renewal and vacant agricultural leases. This modernizes the bidding process, brings clarity and consistency for lessees and the department.

✓ **HB 299 – Define Public Purpose of Easements on State Land**

****Agency Bill****

Clarifies the purposes for which public use easements may be granted by the Land Board on state lands to specify public use as defined under the eminent domain statute (70-30-102, MCA). The other allowable uses for easements that were already in the statute remain, and public trails were added to complement the public parks use.

✓ **HB 931 – Allow for Nonprofit Development and Management of Attainable Workforce Housing on State Lands**

Revises the definition of “commercial purpose” in the state lands statute to include single-family home developments authorized under lease agreements with a master

lessee, including those with a nonprofit corporation for the purposes of developing attainable workforce housing.

✓ **SB 252 – Revise Land Use Laws Related to Manufactured and Factory Built Homes**

Revises the definition of “commercial purpose” in the state lands statute to include the development of mobile home parks or multiple manufactured housing units for lease or rent under a commercial lease.

✓ **SB 520 – Revise Laws Regarding Mining Leases on State Lands**

Revises lease term to include duration extensions for commercial production, MEPA review, legal action delays, exploration periods, and time under a DEQ permit. Also adds definitions to include “commercial quantities” and “covered and described” while limiting public inspection rights of confidential information.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF LAND COMMISSIONERS
SIGN-IN SHEET
July 21, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M.
STATE CAPITOL, ROOM 303
HELENA, MT

NAME	AFFILIATION	E-MAIL	Check to be added to the interested parties list.
Alan Tietz	BLKSH	alan@blksh.com	
Will Hays	Rock Creek Cattle	whays@rockcreekcattle.com	
Brian Henningsen	Rock Creek Cattle Co	bhenningsen@rockcreekcattlecompany.com	
Sandy Young	Gravelly Ranch	gyoung@blackfoot.net	
Jocelyn Catlett	SAWR		
Jon Metropoulos		jon@metropouloslaw.com	
Kaitlyn Wehzel	CSI	kaitlyn.wehzel@mt.gov	
Barb Wagao	Leg Fiscal		
Molly Kruckenberg	MTHS	mkruckenberg@mt.gov	
Ellie Brighton	MT Stockgrowers	ellie@mtstock.org	

Email landboard@mt.gov or indicate on this sign-in sheet if you would like to be placed on the Land Board interested parties list.

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