

RESOURCE CONSERVATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

February 23rd-24th, 2022

Lubrecht Experimental Forest, Dry Lab

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This meeting is open to the public. The most current meeting information including meeting materials are available on the CDB website at:

<http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/conservation-districts/resourceconservation-advisory-council>



Resource Conservation Advisory Council



AGENDA

February 23-24, 2021

Lubrecht Experimental Forest, Dry Lab

Please review prior to meeting:

- November 16 meeting minutes
- 223 grant proposals—review and rank
- Draft bylaws
- MACD strategic & operational plans

Wednesday, February 23, 2021

8:00 a.m.	Travel from home or Missoula to Lubrecht
9:00 a.m.	Call to order Roll call ACTION: Approval of minutes from November 16, 2020 meeting
9:30 a.m.	223 grant hearings
10:30 a.m.	Foundational document review and discussion Statute and council purpose Grant program guidelines, application, and ranking criteria CDA grant application
11:45 a.m.	Wrap up and adjourn May meeting Public comment
12:00 a.m.— 1 p.m.	Lunch (provided)
1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Closed Session: Strategic Planning Session
5:30 p.m.	Reception and Dinner

Thursday, February 24, 2021

8:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Working breakfast Review of strategic planning session and wrap-up
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This meeting is open to the public. The most current meeting information including meeting materials are available on the CDB website at: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/conservation-districts/resource-conservation-advisory-council>.

Agenda is subject to change and times are approximate. Actual times may vary by up to one hour

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in this public meeting. For questions about accessibility or to request accommodations, please contact Katherine Certalic at 406-444-0552 or KCertalic@mt.gov as soon as possible before the meeting date.

ZOOM LINK

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/84537712205?pwd=dWNDR1VNcXVjcFRcUXAzbVAwWWFHZz09>

Passcode: 281153

Or One tap mobile :

US: +12133388477,,84537712205#,,,,*281153# or
+12063379723,,84537712205#,,,,*281153#

Or Telephone:

Dial(for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location):

US: +1 213 338 8477 or +1 206 337 9723 or +1 646 558 8656

Webinar ID: 845 3771 2205

Passcode: 281153

International numbers available: <https://mt-gov.zoom.us/j/kcBa0GoQvb>

Or an H.323/SIP room system:

H.323: 162.255.37.11 (US West) or 162.255.36.11 (US East)

Meeting ID: 845 3771 2205

Passcode: 281153

SIP: 84537712205@zoomcrc.com

Passcode: 281153

RCAC Meeting minutes – November 16, 2021

In-Person RCAC members present: Bob Schroeder, Kathleen Johnson, Judi Knapp, Bob Bonsell, Gayla Wortman, Ramsey Offerdal, and Bob Breipohl

RCAC members who were absent: None

Staff present: Steph Criswell, Jason Garber, and Mary Hendrix

In-Person presenter: John Hollenback, *Deer Lodge Valley Conservation District*; Connor Mertz, *Lewis & Clark Conservation District*; Tenlee Atchison, *Cascade Conservation District*; Scott Brown, *Montana Salinity Control Association*; Rebecca Boslough, *Montana Association of Conservation Districts*; Cole Mannix

Approval of August 25, 2021 minutes: Gayla moved to accept the minutes with edits, Bob seconds. Motion passes.

Budget: Steph discussed the Environmental Contingency grant for fire recovery. Three new contracts awarded: Broadwater CD-\$20,000.00; Meagher CCD-\$20,000.00; and Lake CD-\$13,000.00. DNRC will be asking for \$150,000.00 from the governor's budget.

By-Laws: Draft by laws will be emailed to council members.

Election of Chair: Bob S moved to elect Gayla to Chair, Ramsey seconded. Motion carried. Kathleen moved to elect Doug to Vice Chair, Judi seconded. Motion carried.

Advisory Council Two-year term: Statute 2-15-122. Term ends June 30, 2022 for all members.

Strategic Planning: CD Bureau will conduct a strategic planning that will include in January 2022. Results will be provided to RCAC at the February 23, 2022 meeting in Missoula.

New Staff: CD Bureau will be fully staffed effective December 19, 2021. New hires: Hailey Graf, CD Specialist-west of the divide, Veronica Grigaltchik, CD Specialist-eastern Montana, and Katherine Certalic, Admin Assistant-Helena.

District Development Awards

Conservation District	Project	Amount Requested	Amount Awarded
Deer Lodge Valley	Training New District Employee	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
VOTE:	Judi motioned, Kathleen seconded, vote passed unanimously		

223 Awards

Conservation District	Project	Amount Requested	Amount Awarded
Lewis & Clark	Lake Helena Willow Lift	\$11,796.40	\$11,796.40
VOTE:	Gayla motioned, Doug seconded, vote passed unanimously		

Cascade	Feasibility Study to Explore a MT Soil Health Initiative	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
VOTE:	Bob S motioned, Ramsey seconded. Vote: Gayla abstained, Kathleen and Judi-nay Bob S, Ramsey, and Doug-aye. vote passed		
TOTAL		\$46,796.40	\$46,796.40

Garfield County CD Greener Pastures School – WITHDREW APPLICATION

Public Comment: None

Add to next meeting agenda: Draft Strategic Planning document; Advisory Council 2-year term discussion

Next Meeting Date: The next RCAC meeting will be February 23, 2022 in Missoula. It will be held at the DNRC large conference room at 2705 Spurgin Road.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:02 pm.

STATE OF MONTANA
Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Conservation Districts Bureau
Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-1601

For Department Use

Received by _____
Date _____
Application No. _____
Annual Budget Submitted _____

Conservation Districts Grant Program
HB 223 Grant Application

Please fill out application completely.

1. Name of District: Gallatin Conservation District
2. Name of Project: Invasive Species Education Trailer
3. Amount Requested: \$10,000.00
4. Total Project Cost: \$53,200.00
5. Has the district levied the maximum county mills allowed for the current fiscal year?
No ☐ Yes ☒ Mill Levy = \$ 314,590.00 (amount)

Mill Levy Verification See attached verification form.

Name

Title

Date

Note: Acceptable signatures verifying a county mill levy includes the county commissioner, treasurer, finance officer, or clerk and recorder. Also acceptable is the annual mill levy verification form.

6. Has this project been identified in a conservation district plan? (Projects must be part of a CD plan).
Yes, the Gallatin Conservation District supports the construction of an Invasive Species Education Trailer.
7. Give a brief statement of need, including why the project cannot be financed from present sources of funding. **(If the district has not submitted a budget to DNRC for other financial assistance programs for the current fiscal year, a current CD budget must be attached).**
Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance is a 501c3 non-profit organization working to protect natural resources from the threats of invasive species. This trailer will be a free service when invited to events, so funding is needed to help pay for exterior and interior educational signs, features and materials. Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance has began solicitation for additional funding for the custom trailer and additional materials.
8. Conservation District's contact person's name, address, and telephone number:
Contact Person: Elizabeth Emeline, Gallatin Conservation District
Physical Address: 120 S. 5th St., Suite B104, Manhattan MT 59741
Mailing Address: PO Box 569, Manhattan MT 59741 Phone: (406)282-4350
9. This application was approved by the Gallatin Conservation District Board of Supervisors meeting on the 16th of December, 2021.

Revised 2020


Authorized Signature

Project Statement

Describe the project using no more than three sentences. Be concise and describe the objective of the project, the action(s) required to complete it, and the accomplishments that will be delivered.

Statement Narrative:

The objective is to build an education trailer project to help inform the greater community (landowners, recreationalists, visitors to the area, etc.) about terrestrial & aquatic invasive species, clean recreation practices, and the value of native plants and native ecosystems. Once purchased and built out, the education trailer will greatly increase our ability to engage, educate, and inspire the community to protect our natural resources. The deliverable will be an education trailer, with exterior and interior educational features, that will be used at community events, youth education events, farmers markets, and more by us and our partners for years to come.

Examples

The objective of the project is to educate 400 4th graders in Silver Bow County about natural resources and conservation. Students will learn about soils, water, fire, and rangeland health. The deliverable will be an all-day event at the civic center.

The objective of the project is to control salt cedar along 15 miles of the Yellowstone River between Laurel and Park City. The salt cedar will be killed by hand spraying and using an excavator to remove larger plants. At the completion of the project, 15 miles and 60 acres of salt cedar will be controlled.

The objective of this project is to conduct a feasibility study in four drought-afflicted counties to determine if cover crops will improve moisture retention. At the completion of this project data will be available to help make future decisions about soil health.

Project Details

1. What is the purpose of the project? How many people or acres will benefit from this project?

The purpose of the trailer is to engage and educate the public on invasive species and their impacts on the ecosystem. The interactive education trailer will include information / graphics / materials on:

- 1) Terrestrial & aquatic invasive species
- 2) Clean recreation practices (Clean.Drain.Dry. and PlayCleanGo)
- 3) Crail Garden / Grow Wild (promoting the use of native plants in our landscapes)

The education trailer will be used at community events, youth education events, farmers markets, and other venues by the Alliance and our partners at their events for years to come. It's reasonable to expect the trailer will reach thousands of people.

2. Where is the project located?

The education trailer will reside in the Upper Gallatin Watershed / Big Sky but can and will travel throughout Gallatin and Madison County.

3. What is the conservation district's role in this project?

The Gallatin Conservation District is a project partner, providing an avenue to apply for 223 funds and solicit input on trailer design and educational materials, and partnering with us to bring the trailer to GCD events.

4. What are the conservation benefits?

Invasive species replace native plant communities, increase soil erosion, degrade water quality, damage fish & wildlife habitat, reduce the value of land, decrease recreation & hunting opportunities, increase maintenance costs (including trails), and diminish recreational experiences.

By informing the public about the multitude of problems caused by invasive species, the education trailer will help prevent the establishment and spread of invasive species, thereby protecting the function and resiliency of native ecosystems upod.

5. What are the public benefits?

Our project area encompasses some of the most ecologically and economically important resources in the state, providing vital habitat and water for plants, wildlife, and the people who live and recreate in the area. This project will educate the public, inspire the community, and advocate for conservation practices that maintain the ecological integrity and economic health of the community. This project aims to address and mitigate the impacts of human activity upon natural resources to ensure that what we love so much about this place is not destroyed by our pursuit to experience it.

6. How will this project be executed and who will do the work?

Jennifer Mohler, Executive Director of Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance (a 501c3 non-profit), will implement and manage the entire project. She will coordinate with partners on the design and build process.

This project will move forward as fast as possible so that the education trailer can be ready for as much of the 2022 season as possible.

Phase 1: Purchase custom trailer.

Phase 2: Initiate, plan, and build exterior wrap, interior custom floors, and interior educational materials.

Phase 3: Use the trailer at youth education events, Big Sky Farmers Market, community events, Crail Gardens (our native demonstration garden at the Historic Crail Ranch), and more for years to come!

7. What specific tasks, and outcomes will be accomplished?

This education trailer will help us better serve the community at:

1. Youth education events - Ophir school 2nd graders annual field trip, Camp Big Sky, Jack Creek Preserve Outdoor Skills Camp, and more.

2. Big Sky Farmers Market - the weekly Farmers Market in Big Sky that runs every Wednesday night from late May through September.

3. Community events like The Rut (mountain running event), Total Archery Challenge, and more.

4. Crail Gardens, our native demonstration garden at the Historical Crail Ranch, where the trailer will be on display at our two open houses, wildflower festival week, and assist us with our annual native plant sale.

5. Mobile, season long advertising as when not in use, the education trailer will be parked around town in highly visible areas to serve as a nomadic billboard.

While the Alliance will be the primary user, we are keen to share the trailer with partners (i.e., Gallatin County Weed District, Madison County Weed District, Gallatin Conservation District, Gallatin National Forest, etc.) and attend their events. This will expand the reach to a greater area and audience and help foster partnerships.

8. Identify the partners who will participate in this project? (Do not list the cash or in-kind contributions under this question—those dollar amounts will be required on the Total Budget Page)

Partner	Task Performed
Gallatin Conservation District	Provide educational materials and partner on events.
Custer Gallatin National Forest	Provide educational materials and partner on events.
Gallatin County Weed District	Provide educational materials and partner on events.
Montana Invasive Species Council	Provide educational materials and partner on events.
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks	Provide educational materials and partner on events.

9. When will this project start and when will it end?

Project start: Raising funding for the project is already underway.

Project end: The goal is to have it fully built out by June 30. However, funding will dictate timeline of the build. The education trailer will serve the community for 20 years or more!

10. How will it be known if the project has been successful? (**Guideline #7 states: Applications must include a plan to monitor the effectiveness of the project.**)

The impact of the education trailer will be measured by:

- Feedback and engagement by people drawn to the trailer
- Number and types of events the trailer is used at
- The quality of educational materials produced and disseminated
- Number of times the trailer is used to transport materials for Alliance projects
- Number of years this trailer will be of service to the Alliance

The Alliance will track trailer use via a "trailer log", accounting for events, number of days and locations of being parked as a "mobile billboard", etc.

A landowner who benefited from our landowner assistance program and recognized the import role we play in protecting Big Sky's outstanding natural resources provided the initial \$5000 for the project, which is testament to the value that our services are already bringing to the community. The Education Trailer will both expand the reach of our message and improve the effectiveness of our efforts.

11. How will the district or sponsoring organization inform or educate the public about the project?

(Guideline #7 states: All grantees must write and disseminate a press release to local newspapers. The CD and DNRC's names must be mentioned as a source of funding. Conservation districts are also encouraged to publish articles in their newsletters, if available, but this may not take the place of a newspaper article).

Once the trailer is built out and in use, the Alliance will partner with GCD to create and disseminate a press release via local newspapers (Bozeman, Belgrade, and Big Sky area papers), social media and e-newsletters.

The trailer will then do the work of educating the public when in use! Additionally, the trailer will be parked in visible locations when not in use to increase awareness of the project and our conservation message.

223 Application Requirements for Equipment, Irrigation and Weed Projects

An application to purchase equipment must include a maintenance plan that includes: rental fees, user deposit (if applicable), funding repair and maintenance, and long-term lease options of equipment (if applicable). Please describe.

For irrigation projects, including community garden sprinkler or drip irrigation grant requests must have a 50:50 cash match. On the Total Budget Page under column two, please specify the cash contributions of the partners.

Applications for weed projects must first demonstrate that funding was sought through the Noxious Weed Trust Fund at the Montana Department of Agriculture. Applications for aquatic invasive species projects must first demonstrate that funding was sought through the DNRC Aquatic Invasive Species Program. All weed projects must be coordinated with local weed districts—especially for the purchase and application of chemicals.

Status of Current DNRC Grants

List the status of **current** CARDD grants (all grant reports must be current before new grant funds will be disbursed).

QMG-20-0073, Lower Gallatin Watershed Project Planning and Community Outreach - Approved 5/2/2020 for \$8,900.00
23G-20-3681, Camp/Godfrey Creek Rehabilitation - Approved 5/19/2020 for \$14,000.00
23G-21-3683, Plant & Animal Relationship in Montana's Forest - Approved 8/10/2020 for \$500.00
EC-21-024, 2020 Fire Recovery - Approved 3/18/2021 for \$75,000.00
RRG-22-1792, High Line Canal Co. Canal Breach Emergency Repairs - Approved 9/8/2021 for \$10,000.00

Note: 23G-21-3683 and

RRG-22-1792A

have been completed
prior to application
submission.

Thank you,
Elizabeth Emeline

223 Grant Budget

Provide a detailed budget indicating how grant funds will be used. Irrigation projects require a 50:50 cash match. Any project request exceeding \$20,000 must have a 50:50 cash match. Education grants cannot exceed \$10,000. Transfer all information in column one and two to the total budget table on page 6.

Item/Task Description	HB 223Funds	Explanation
Salaries (number of hours; hourly rate + benefits; type of work)		
Contracted services (identify services to be contracted) Alliance Project Management: 60 hours @ \$45/hour	0	Alliance does not have staff, but contracted staff. Funds for contracted staff via Big Sky Resort Tax 2021-2022 award. \$2,700
Per diem & travel expenses		
Communications & printing costs		
Materials & supplies (identify) Exterior and interior educational signs, features and materials.	10000	Exterior wrap total \$6,000, Interior features (custom storage, educational items, handouts/brochure racks, etc) total \$4,000, custom floor \$3,500, design services \$2,560. Total of \$18,700.
Equipment costs (identify)		
Miscellaneous (identify) Custom Trailer \$30,000, storage cover \$800, year 1 insurance \$1,000.	0	Funds from private donor, Big Sky Resort Tax, GISA project funds, Moonlight Community Foundation, and more. Total of \$31,8000. Please see included budget for full details.
Sub Total of Expenses	10000	
Administration (based on a percentage of the total expenses, not to exceed 10 percent)		
TOTAL (expenses & administrative fee)	10000	

Total Project Budget

Provide a detailed budget for the entire project including funding and in-kind contributions. In column one list the partner(s) and describe the task; in columns two through four only dollar amounts will be accepted.

Item/Task Description	223	Partner \$	Partner \$	Partner \$	In-Kind \$	Total
Salaries (number of hours; hourly rates + benefits; type of work)						0
Contracted services (identify services and professional/labor costs)						
Big Sky Resort Tax		2700				2700
Per diem (\$23/day) & travel (.58/mile) expenses						0
Communications & printing costs						0
Materials & supplies (identify) 223 grant: Exterior and interior signs, features and materials.	10000	6060			2640	18700
Equipment costs (identify)						0
Miscellaneous (identify) Custom trailer +. See attached budget for full partner list.		31800				31800
Sub-Total of Expenses	10000	40560	0	0	2640	53200
Administration (based on a percentage of the total expenses not to exceed 10 percent)						0
Total (expenses & administration fee)	\$ 10000	\$ 40560	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 2640	\$ 53200

Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance

Project: Education Trailer

223 Grant

Source	Total	Secured Funds	Unsecured Funds
Income			
Private Donation	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$0.00
GISA Clean Recreation & Grow Wild Restricted Funds	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$0.00
Big Sky Resort Tax: 2021-2022 Grant	\$5,700.00	\$5,700.00	\$0.00
Moonlight Community Foundation: Fall 2021 Grant App	\$9,500.00		\$9,500.00
Yellowstone Club Community Foundation: Fall 2021 Grant App	\$9,500.00		\$9,500.00
DNRC / MISC AIS Grant: Fall 2021 Grant App	\$2,500.00		\$2,500.00
Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund Grant: 2022 App	\$1,500.00		\$1,500.00
DRNC 223 Grant via Gallatin Conservation District	\$10,000.00		\$10,000.00
Montana Native Plant Society	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00
Gallatin County	\$1,750.00		\$1,750.00
Madison County	\$1,750.00		\$1,750.00
Montana Invasive Species Council: In kind	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks: In kind	\$500.00		\$500.00
Custer Gallatin National Forest: In kind	\$500.00		\$500.00
Total Income	\$53,200.00	\$13,700.00	\$37,500.00

Expenses			
Custom Contractor Trailer: fully insulated, rear ramp, doors and flip up vendor windows on each side, tv and cabinet, 2 storage benches, & solar panels	\$30,000.00		\$30,000.00
Design work for trailer exterior wrap	\$1,600.00		\$1,600.00
In kind design work	\$1,400.00	\$1,400.00	\$0.00
Design work for trailer interior	\$960.00		\$960.00
In kind design work	\$1,240.00	\$1,240.00	\$0.00
Exterior wrap	\$6,000.00		\$6,000.00
Interior custom floor	\$3,500.00		\$3,500.00
Interior features	\$4,000.00		\$4,000.00
Cover for winter storage	\$800.00		\$800.00
Insurance: First year	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00
Project Management (60 hours @ \$45/hour)	\$2,700.00		\$2,700.00
Total Expenses	\$53,200.00	\$2,640.00	\$50,560.00



Education Trailer

Photos are of the Southwest Area & Powell County trailers.



✓ interactive learning space

✓ mobile office

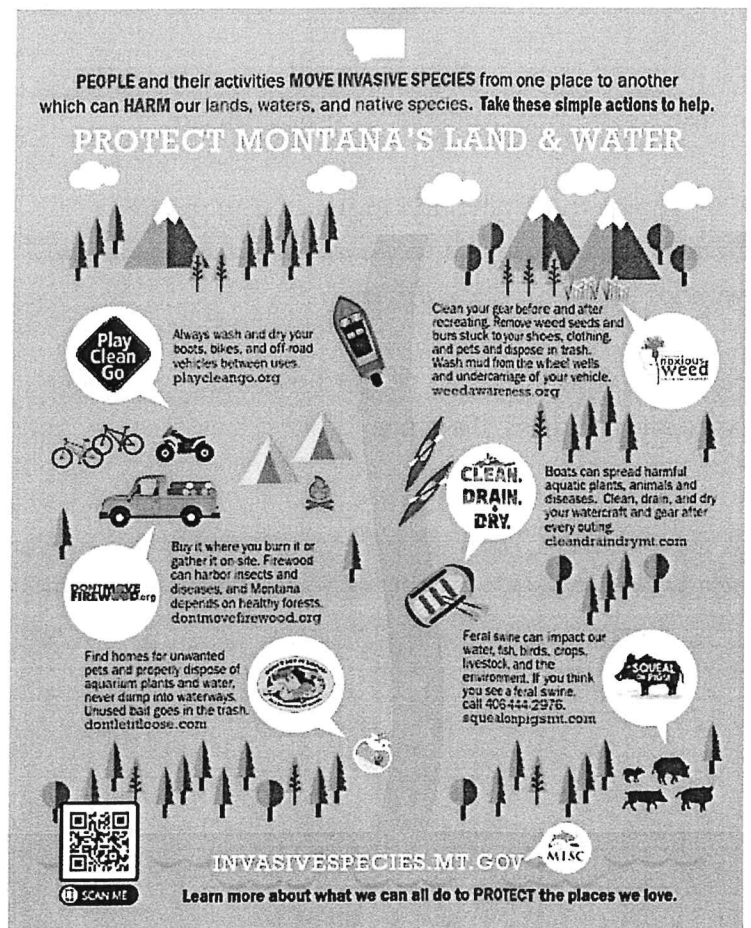
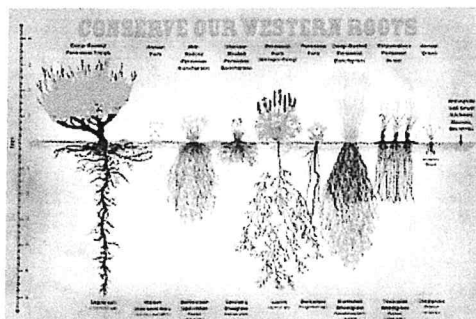
✓ storage unit

✓ nomadic billboard



The interactive education trailer will include information / graphics / materials on:

- 1) Terrestrial & aquatic invasive species
- 2) Clean recreation practices
 - Clean.Drain.Dry. and PlayCleanGo
 - *we'll customize the graphic on the right
- 3) Crail Garden / Grow Wild
 - Landscaping with native plants



This education trailer will help us better serve the community at:

- **Youth education events**, like our annual second grade field trip with Ophir students
- **Big Sky Farmers Market**, where you've come to us for plant identification and noxious weed management information
- **Community events**, where the draw of an interactive trailer will help us engage with and educate all who live, visit and recreate in Big Sky
- **Crail Gardens**, where the trailer will help us haul materials and enable us to expand our annual native plant sale

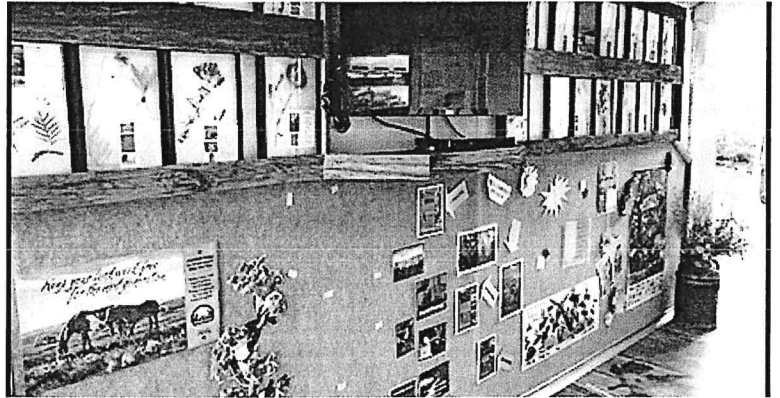
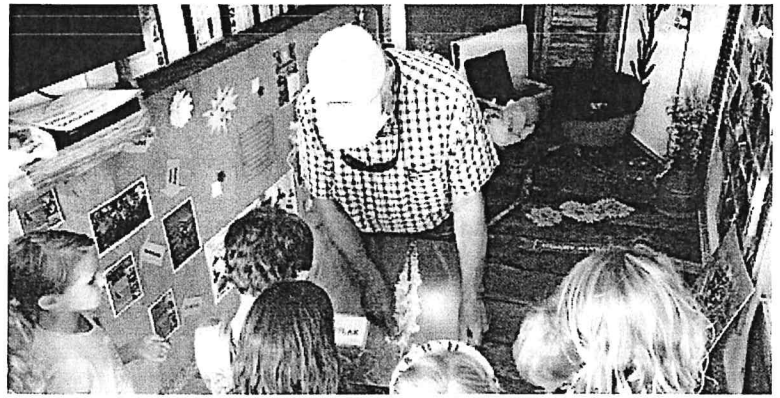


All project funders will have their logo on the exterior of the trailer in recognition of their support.

Our goal is to only include logos of agency and foundation partners as to elevate the extraordinary work of conservation partners.

However, if we fall short of our fundraising goal, we will need to revisit this plan.

The education trailer will match the growing needs of the community while greatly expanding our ability to reach and engage with the public.



Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
P.O. Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-1601

Effective September 2013, conservation districts may now submit to DNRC an annual mill levy verification form that will be effective from September 1 through August 30 of each year. The original form will be kept on file at DNRC. When a conservation district applies for a 223 grant or an administrative grant, a copy of the form can be attached to the application, rather than requesting a county verification for each 223 submission. The form will only be effective for applications submitted between the dates described above. (A CD may continue to seek verification for each application if it so chooses.)

Conservation District Annual Mill Levy Verification

- 1) Name of District: Gallatin Conservation District
- 2) Has the district levied the maximum county mills allowed for the current fiscal year? No X Yes
- 3) Mill Levy = \$ 314,590 (total amount)
- 4) Number of Mills Levied: 0.91
- 5) Mill Levy verification Marion Gadow Deputy Treasurer 09/14/21
Name Title Date

This form must be signed by a county commissioner, treasurer, or clerk and recorder.

STATE OF MONTANA

Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
Conservation Districts Bureau
Box 201601
Helena, MT 59620-1601

For Department Use

Received by _____
Date _____
Application No. _____
Annual Budget Submitted _____

Conservation Districts Grant Program
HB 223 Grant Application

Please fill out application completely.

1. Name of District: Valley County Conservation District
2. Name of Project: Land and Legacies
3. Amount Requested: \$3750
4. Total Project Cost: \$27,000.00
5. Has the district levied the maximum county mills allowed for the current fiscal year?
No _____ Yes X Mill Levy = \$ 23,191 (amount)

Mill Levy Verification	<u>Brenda Anderson</u>	Treasurer	<u>3-5-2021</u>
	Name	Title	Date

Note: Acceptable signatures verifying a county mill levy includes the county commissioner, treasurer, finance officer, or clerk and recorder. Also acceptable is the annual mill levy verification form.

6. Has this project been identified in a conservation district plan? (Projects must be part of a CD plan).
Yes, The District approved to help the RSA with this event
7. Give a brief statement of need, including why the project cannot be financed from present sources of funding. **(If the district has not submitted a budget to DNRC for other financial assistance programs for the current fiscal year, a current CD budget must be attached).**
Valley County has upcoming projects and events that we are helping with or putting on. Not all of them will have grants. This grant would help the District by helping fund an education event.
8. Conservation District's contact person's name, address, and telephone number:
Brittany Johnson
54059 US HWY 2 W, STE; Glasgow MT 59230
9. This application was approved by the Valley Conservation District Board
of Supervisors meeting on the January 12, 2022

Revised 2019

Bene Brumada, Chair
Authorized Signature

Project Statement

Describe the project using no more than three sentences. Be concise and describe the objective of the project, the action(s) required to complete it, and the accomplishments that will be delivered.

Statement Narrative:

The objective of the project is to increase the proportion of successful farm and ranch ownership transitions to the next generation in our community. The primary deliverable is two full-day workshops with Elaine Froese, a renowned transition coach, to work intensively with 30-50 local families navigating transitions. We will also produce three videos as case studies of local transition stories for increased impact and outreach to those unable to attend.

Examples

The objective of the project is to educate 400 4th graders in Silver Bow County about natural resources and conservation. Students will learn about soils, water, fire, and rangeland health. The deliverable will be an all-day event at the civic center.

The objective of the project is to control salt cedar along 15 miles of the Yellowstone River between Laurel and Park City. The salt cedar will be killed by hand spraying and using an excavator to remove larger plants. At the completion of the project, 15 miles and 60 acres of salt cedar will be controlled.

The objective of this project is to conduct a feasibility study in four drought-afflicted counties to determine if cover crops will improve moisture retention. At the completion of this project data will be available to help make future decisions about soil health.

Project Details

1. What is the purpose of the project? How many people or acres will benefit from this project?

The purpose of the project is to provide information and support to farm and ranch families navigating generational transitions. We hope to impact at least 30-50 families through our workshop, and even more through outreach and sharing video content. Given the average size of a farm or ranch in Valley county (2,926 ac in 2017), the impact of this project could reach 87,780-146,300 acres.

2. Where is the project located?

The workshops will be held in Glasgow and Malta. If this grant is successful, funding would be applied to to make the Glasgow (Valley County) event possible in addition to the Malta event.

3. What is the conservation district's role in this project?

Valley County CD would be playing a supporting role in this project. If this proposal is successful, we would contribute funding to help make the Glasgow event possible, in addition to the Malta event, bringing the benefits to our county. We would assist where possible with coordination, outreach and promotion of the event and help to increase attendance of representatives from Valley County agricultural operations.

4. What are the conservation benefits?

The loss of agricultural land to investment or development buyers can have significant impacts on local ecology. The loss of grazing management and associated stewardship by local managers typically increases invasion by non-native grass species and erodes soil health. Subdivision or other development can impact wildlife habitat and movements.

5. What are the public benefits?

For livestock businesses, less than 1/3 of planned generational transitions are actually successful (Ranch Management Consultants, unpublished data). Increasing this rate-- getting and keeping young people on the land-- is critical for the future of our rural community in terms of population, tax base and resilience to change. Only by successfully navigating these vulnerable transitions will our local, multi-generational farms and ranches persist in Valley County.

6. How will this project be executed and who will do the work?

Ranchers Stewardship Alliance (RSA; www.ranchstewards.org) is leading the coordination of the overall project and the Malta event. They will enter into a contract with the speaker/coach, and coordinate registration and outreach. They have a part time project leader, financial administrator and office administrator that will be responsible for the bulk of the work, and will contract to produced video content. In Valley County, a local planning team will be organized include representatives of partner organizations and the VCCD to help with local logistics such as venue, food and outreach.

7. What specific tasks, and outcomes will be accomplished?

Two, full-day workshops will be hosted on March 1-2 in Malta (March 1) and Glasgow (March 2). We hope to have attendance by members of 30-50 local farm and ranch families at each event, representing roughly 100,000 acres of private agricultural land in each county. Three or four videos will be produced highlighting generational transition stories in the local communities. These will be used in the events as case studies, and shared more widely to increase awareness about the importance of succession planning for multi-generational family operations.

8. Identify the partners who will participate in this project? **(Do not list the cash or in-kind contributions under this question—those dollar amounts will be required on the Total Budget Page)**

Partner	Task Performed
Ranchers Stewardship Alliance	Sponsor, coordination, outreach
Farm Credit Service	Sponsor
First Community Bank Glasgow	Sponsor
Montana Livestock Ag Credit	Sponsor
The Nature Conservancy	Sponsor

9. When will this project start and when will it end?

The workshop will be held for two days, March 1-2, 2022. Videos will be used for promotion and outreach for a longer period of time.

10. How will it be known if the project has been successful? **(Guideline #7 states: Applications must include a plan to monitor the effectiveness of the project.)**

RSA staff will conduct post-event surveys with all attendees. These will include questions about whether and how their individual operation's transition planning was affected. From these responses, our partnership will produce a summary report about the effectiveness of the workshop format, and estimate the impact of the project across the county.

11. How will the district or sponsoring organization inform or educate the public about the project?

(Guideline #7 states: All grantees must write and disseminate a press release to local newspapers. The CD and DNRC's names must be mentioned as a source of funding. Conservation districts are also encouraged to publish articles in their newsletters, if available, but this may not take the place of a newspaper article).

Ranchers Stewardship Alliance will coordinate outreach to promote attendance of the event and communicate about event outcomes as well as ongoing continuing education. This will include electronic newsletters, social media and radio as well as traditional print. As part of this project, they will commit to writing and disseminating a press release to local newspapers in Valley and Phillips county to promote and/or summarize outcomes of the event. If this grant is successful, they will fully acknowledge the role of the Valley County CD and DNRC in making the event possible.

223 Application Requirements for Equipment, Irrigation and Weed Projects

An application to purchase equipment must include a maintenance plan that includes: rental fees, user deposit (if applicable), funding repair and maintenance, and long-term lease options of equipment (if applicable). Please describe.

NA

For irrigation projects, including community garden sprinkler or drip irrigation grant requests must have a 50:50 cash match. On the Total Budget Page under column two, please specify the cash contributions of the partners.

Applications for weed projects must first demonstrate that funding was sought through the Noxious Weed Trust Fund at the Montana Department of Agriculture. Applications for aquatic invasive species projects must first demonstrate that funding was sought through the DNRC Aquatic Invasive Species Program. All weed projects must be coordinated with local weed districts—especially for the purchase and application of chemicals.

Status of Current DNRC Grants

List the status of **current** CARDD grants (all grant reports must be current before new grant funds will be disbursed). We have two grants for MRWA one grant is 30E-20-355 and the second is RD-VCD-657.

223 Grant Budget

Provide a detailed budget indicating how grant funds will be used. Irrigation projects require a 50:50 cash match. Any project request exceeding \$20,000 must have a 50:50 cash match. Education grants cannot exceed \$10,000. Transfer all information in column one and two to the total budget table on page 6.

Item/Task Description	HB 223Funds	Explanation
Salaries (number of hours; hourly rate + benefits; type of work)Hours for admin to do grant, \$15/hr * 17 hours	250	Going to Chairs house to get signed, typing all the information, Helping with the event
Contracted services (identify services to be contracted) Elaine Froese speaker fees	3500	Funds will be transferred to Ranchers Stewardship Alliance to contribute towards Elaine Froese speaker fees for the Glasgow event
Per diem & travel expenses		
Communications & printing costs		
Materials & supplies (identify)		
Equipment costs (identify)		
Miscellaneous (identify)		
Sub Total of Expenses	3750	
Administration (based on a percentage of the total expenses, not to exceed 10 percent)		
TOTAL (expenses & administrative fee)	3750	

Total Project Budget

Provide a detailed budget for the entire project including funding and in-kind contributions. In column one list the partner(s) and describe the task; in columns two through four only dollar amounts will be accepted.

Item/Task Description	223	Partner \$	Partner \$	Partner \$	In-Kind \$	Total
Salaries (number of hours; hourly rates + benefits; type of work)	250					250
Contracted services (identify services and professional/labor costs)	3500	13000		3500		20000
Per diem (\$23/day) & travel (.58/mile) expenses		1000				1000
Communications & printing costs			4500			4500
Materials & supplies (identify)						0
Equipment costs (identify)						0
Miscellaneous (identify)		1500				1500
Sub-Total of Expenses	3750	15500	4500	3500	0	27250
Administration (based on a percentage of the total expenses not to exceed 10 percent)						0
Total (expenses & administration fee)	\$ 3750	\$ 15500	\$ 4500	\$ 3500	\$ 0	\$ 27250



Applicant: Gallatin Conservation District (GCD)
Project Name: Invasive Species Education Trailer
Grant Type: 223

Amount Requested: \$10,000
\$43,200 Big Sky resort tax, Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance, private donation

Total Project Budget: **\$53,200**

Amount Recommended: **\$10,000**

Project Summary: The objective of this project is to build an education trailer project to help inform the greater community (landowners, recreationalists, visitors to the area, etc.) about terrestrial & aquatic invasive species, clean recreation practices, and the value of native plants and native ecosystems. Once purchased and built out, the education trailer will greatly increase our ability to engage, educate, and inspire the community to protect our natural resources. The deliverable will be an education trailer, with exterior and interior educational features, that will be used at community events, youth education events, farmers markets, and more by us and our partners for years to come.

Project Tasks and Deliverables: The primary deliverable is the completed trailer. Use of the trailer will increase education and outreach of invasive species at youth events, farmers markets, and other community events and festivals. This mobility of the trailer will be highly visible and also serves as continuous advertising throughout the year. As a project partner, GCD will be able to use the trailer for its own events. GCD's role in the project is to provide funding for exterior and interior materials for the trailer.

Project Budget:

Item	Description	223 Grant Amount	Match Amount	Total
Task 1: Materials	Exterior and interior signs, features and materials.	\$10,000	\$43,200	\$53,200
Totals		\$10,000	\$43,200	\$53,200

CDB Review Comments/Questions:

- There is no available funding for invasive species, other than AIS and terrestrial weeds. This funding will allow the trailer to include other invasive such as feral swine and emerald ash-borer.
- Project graphics that will be utilized were developed by MT Invasive Species Council and partners, so messaging and campaigns will be consistent and reinforced with .

Current DNRC Grants: GCD in good standing

Constraints and Stipulations:

- MOU between district and Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance for project that includes GCD usage of trailer



Applicant: Valley County Conservation District (VCCD)
Project Name: Land and Legacies
Grant Type: 223

Amount Requested: \$ 3,750
\$23,500 Ranchers Stewardship Alliance, Farm Credit Service, First Community Bank Glasgow, Montana Livestock Ag Credit, The Nature Conservancy
Total Project Budget: **\$27,250**

Amount Recommended: **\$ 3,750**

Project Summary: The purpose of this project is to provide information and support to farm and ranch families navigating generational transitions. The objective is to increase successful farm and ranch ownership transitions to the next generation in Valley County. Given the average size of a farm or ranch in Valley County (2,926 ac in 2017), the impact of this project could reach 87,780-146,300 acres.

VCCD will play a supporting role working with Ranchers Stewardship Alliance (RSA). VCCD will contribute funding for the workshops and assist with coordination, outreach, and promotion of the event to increase attendance.

Project Tasks and Deliverables: The primary deliverable is two full-day workshops with Elaine Froese, a renowned transition coach, to work intensively with 30-50 local families navigating transitions. Through this grant there will be 2 full-day workshops: Malta (March 1) and Glasgow (March 2). Three to four videos will also be produced and feature case studies of local transition stories for increased impact and outreach to those unable to attend. RSA will provide a report about the effectiveness of the workshop and estimated impact of the project.

Project Budget:

Item	Description	223 Grant Amount	Total
Task 1: Personnel	Salaries (number of hours; hourly rate + benefits; type of work)Hours for admin to do grant, \$15/hr * 17 hours	\$250	\$250
Task 2: Contracted Services	Ranchers Stewardship Alliance for part of Elaine Froese speaker fees for the Glasgow event	\$3,500	\$3,500
Totals		\$3,750	\$3,750

CDB Review Comments/Questions:

- How will the video be promoted and distributed after the workshops?
- Are there other workshops being held with another project funding source? Application refers to impact across the county.
- Will the workshops be recorded and available to other Districts?

Current DNRC Grants: VCCD in good standing

Constraints/Stipulations: MOU with RSA

HB 223 District Development Grants Ranking Criteria Sheet

Reviewer's Name						
Conservation District Name	Valley County CD			Gallatin CD		
Project Name	Land and Legacies			Invasive Species Education Trailer		
Amount Requested	\$3,750			\$10,000		
Rank Each Category Between 0 and 10 (except where noted)						
	Proposal Rating	Presentation Rating	Combined Total	Proposal Rating	Presentation Rating	Combined Total
Financial Need Demonstrated						
Conservation Benefits						
Public Benefits						
Project Management						
Project Goals and Outcomes						
Project Methods and Protocols						
Project Tasks and Outcomes						
Project Support						
Budget						
Overall Application						
Match Funding (Y/N)						
Past Performance (P/F)						
TOTAL (max. 100 pts.)						
	Notes			Notes		

**HB 223 District Development Grants
Ranking Criteria Sheet**



223 PROJECT SCORING CRITERIA GUIDELINES	SCORING RANGE
<p>Applicant has demonstrated financial need for the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Proposed project is included in plan and need is demonstrated. • 5 = Proposed project is included in plan and need is somewhat demonstrated. • 0 = Proposed project is not in district plan and/or need is not demonstrated. 	0-10
<p>To what degree does the proposed project promote or result in conservation benefits?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Proposed project significantly promotes or results in conservation. • 5 = Proposed project moderately promotes or results in conservation. • 0 = Proposed project does not directly promote or result in conservation. 	0-10
<p>To what degree does the proposed project have public benefits?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Proposed project has significant direct benefit to many people and/or acres. • 5 = Proposed project has some direct benefits. • 0 = Proposed project has no direct benefits. 	0-10
<p>Does the project team have the collective experience, education and capacity to lead the proposed project to a successful outcome?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = The team has documented their experience, education, and capacity to lead the project successfully. • 5 = The team has some experience in leading projects regarding invasive species management. • 0 = The project team has no experience in leading projects regarding invasive species management 	0-10
<p>Are the proposed project goals and outcomes clearly stated?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = The proposed project has clearly stated project goals and the objectives and methods are appropriate to achieve the objectives. • 5 = The proposed project has identified goals and objectives, but the methods are not completely described. • 0 = The proposed project lacks clear goals and objectives and the methods are not described. 	0-10
<p>Are the proposed project methods and protocols appropriate for accomplishing the goals and objectives?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = The project design is clear and employs acceptable methods and/or established protocols. • 5 = The project is plausible, but it is unclear whether the goals can be accomplished using the proposed methods. • 0 = The project design is unclear or does not include appropriate methods. 	0-10



<p>Are the proposed project tasks adequately described?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Task descriptions are clear, and it is evident what they will accomplish and the related expenses that will require reimbursement under an agreement. • 5 = Tasks are adequately described, but not all information requested was provided in the application. • 0 = The task information provided lacks detail and it is unclear how the task will accomplish project goals and objectives. 	0-10
<p>Is there a demonstrated level of support and commitment for the project?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 = Level of support is clearly documented through past efforts and current letters of support. • 5 = Level of community support is somewhat documented through past efforts OR current letters of support. • 0 = Level of community support is not documented through past efforts nor does the application contain any letters of support. 	0-10
<p>Is the budget reasonable, clear, and complete? Consider cost of similar projects.</p>	0-10
<p>Overall, the grant application was presented well, and the information provided in the application demonstrates a strong likelihood of success.</p>	0-10
<p>The proposed project includes matching funds and/or required cost share.</p>	Y/N
<p>Past performance (if applicable). The applicant has previously received 223 funding, and successfully completed the project, met project goals, and administration/management of the grant was acceptable.</p>	P/F



Resource Conservation Advisory Council (RCAC) By-Laws

RCAC Bylaws:

Adopted:

ARTICLE I: Name and Purpose

Section 1 – Name. The name of this organization shall be the Resource Conservation Advisory Council, and advisory council for the Conservation Districts Bureau, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.

Section 2 – Purpose. The purpose of the Resource Conservation Advisory Council is to advise and assist the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, hereinafter called the “Department,” on all programs and advise activities relating to conservation entities, including programs and activities relating to formation, organization, and operation of districts; control and prevention of soil erosion; conservation, development, utilization and disposal of all water resources; prevention of floodwater and sediment damage; conservation, protection, restoration, and proper utilization of soil and vegetative resources of the state; and cooperation with other state, federal, and local agencies and citizen groups, in land uses related to natural resources and the environment.

Section 3 – Objectives. The objectives of this Council shall be to:

- a. Advise and assist the Department in approving applications for assistance under PL 566 (Watershed Act) prior to submission to the Department.
- b. Recommend changes, if necessary, in existing state or federal laws or regulations to protect and conserve soil, vegetation, and water resources of the state.
- c. Provide a liaison between the Department, conservation districts, grazing districts, the Montana Association of Conservation Districts, and the Montana Association of State Grazing Districts.
- d. Advise and assist the Department in reviewing grant guidelines and applications to qualify conservation districts under the conservation district grant program.
- e. Serve as Soil Survey Advisory Committee in accordance with Section 2-15-3306, MCA. The director of the Department shall serve as chair when the Council serves in this capacity.
- f. Advise on other issues as deemed necessary by the Council or as requested by the Department.



ARTICLE II: Membership

Section 1 – Member appointments. RCAC shall include 8 members. The composition of the Council representing conservation districts shall be seven (7) members with one (1) from western Montana, one

(1) from south central Montana, one (1) from northwestern Montana, two (2) from eastern Montana, and two (2) from north central Montana.

The director of the following department or designees: Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

Section 2 – Ex-officio Members. Ex-officio members may be recommended by consensus of the Resource Conservation Advisory Council. Ex-officio members could include representatives of federal entities, local government organizations, tribal governments, Montana universities and private and for-profit organizations with an interest in the wellbeing of Montana conservation efforts.

Section 3 – Terms. Council members shall serve 2-year terms ending and beginning July 1 every other year.

Section 4 – New appointments. At least two months prior to the expiration of appointed member terms, the presiding officer and Office of the Governor shall invite nominations from the Resource Conservation Advisory Council and other parties for new members or renewal of appointees.

Section 5 – Resignation and removal. Resignation from the Council must be in writing and received by the presiding officer. An appointed member may be removed for excess absences or other reasons by a majority of the voting members.

Section 6 – Incomplete terms. When an appointed member vacancy occurs through resignation or removal before the term expires, the members shall, by majority, vote to recommend a new member representing the position vacated. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Governor for consideration.

ARTICLE III: Administration

Section 1 – Administration. The council is renewed and submitted according to Montana Code Annotated 2-15-122 guiding the creation of Advisory Councils by Agency Directors.



Section 2 – Officers. The officers of the Resource Conservation Advisory Council shall be a presiding officer (chair) and a vice chair. Other officers may be nominated and elected by a majority vote as deemed necessary.

Section 3 – Chair. Members of the Resource Conservation Advisory Council shall appoint the presiding officer (chair), who shall serve in that capacity for a 2-year term.

Section 4 – Vice chair. One voting member will serve as vice-chair elected by a majority vote of the Council, who shall serve in that capacity for a 2-year term.

Section 5 – Appointments. If an appointed member chooses to resign prior to the expiration of their term, the members shall recommend a new member representing a similar interest by a majority vote. The recommendation will be forwarded to the Governor for appointment.

Section 6 – Quorum. A majority of the membership of the council constitutes a quorum to do business. A favorable vote of at least a majority of all of the members is required to adopt any resolution or approve a motion, or to make any other decision. Dissenting votes will be recorded.

Section 7 – Duties of the presiding officer. The presiding officer shall plan and preside over regularly scheduled meetings. Conservation District Bureau staff will assist with planning meetings, developing agendas, and logistics. Meeting agendas will be provided in a timely manner prior to meetings. The presiding officer may appoint a facilitator as necessary to guide council decision-making.

Section 8 – Duties of the vice chair. The vice chair will assist the presiding officer's completion of duties and will preside over meetings in the presiding officer's absence.

Section 9 – Council Administration. Staff of the Conservation Districts Bureau will administer the operation and functions of the RCAC.

Section 10 – Reporting. The council shall report on its activities to the Governor, the Director of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation as needed. The presiding officer and the director of the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation shall serve as the council's liaisons to the Governor's Office.

Section 11 – Payment. The council members will receive a stipend of \$50 per meeting. Unless otherwise provided by law, each council member is entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses pursuant to 2-18-501 through 2-18-503.



ARTICLE IV: Meetings

Section 1 – Regular Meetings. Regular meetings shall be held at least two times each year. The schedule of regular meetings shall be set by the Council.

Section 2 – Notice. Notice of each regular meeting shall be given to each voting member at least ten days before the meeting. Notices of regular meetings shall also be published in accordance with the Montana Open Meeting Law MCA Title 2, Chapter 3.

Section 3 – Special Meetings. Special meetings may be called by the presiding officer or a majority of voting members. Two days prior notice shall be required before all special meetings or conferences.

Section 4 – Minutes. Minutes from each Council meeting shall be provided to voting members at least ten days before the next meeting. Minutes must be approved, with any necessary changes, by the quorum at the next regular meeting.

ARTICLE V: Amendments to the Bylaws

Section 1 – Amendments. These Bylaws may be amended when necessary by a favorable majority of the quorum. Proposed amendments must be submitted to the presiding officer.

ARTICLE VI. Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure Newly Revised shall govern the organization in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order the organization may adopt.

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned hereby certifies that the is a true and correct copy of the Bylaws adopted by the Resource Conservation Advisory Council on the ____ day of _____, 2021.

By: _____

Presiding Officer

Date



Vision

Our vision is for Montana's Conservation Districts to be the local leaders for voluntary natural resource conservation throughout Montana.

Mission

MACD mission is to support, represent, and connect Montana's conservation districts in promoting and maintaining a landscape where soil, water, and other natural resources are conserved and utilized for the benefit of all Montanans in cooperation with landowners, state, federal agencies, and other partners.

"Supporting and representing Montana's Conservation Districts"

CURRENT Values from 2018-2022 Plan

Teamwork and Engagement: Promote an environment where we work together and support one another in a solution oriented manner, incorporating flexible and innovative approaches.

Transparency: Conduct activities with integrity and honesty through open communications and accountability.

Respect: Forge mutual respect among MACD, districts, partners, and public officials.

Excellence in Stewardship: Foster responsible, efficient, and thoughtful use of all resources – financial, human, and natural

Our 2027 Strategic Vision

By 2027 MACD will have:

- created operational sustainability;
- unity and collaboration among all conservation districts and MACD;
- strengthened its partnerships and relationships;
- and increased the engagement and ability of Montana's Conservation Districts to have local impact by developing and providing a suite of valued services, programs, educational opportunities, and advocacy work.

We will do this by:

- having an active, engaged, and empowered board focused on MACD governance;
- valuing robust district and employee engagement within a culture of respect, transparency, and teamwork;
- reinforcing and building strong and productive partnerships;
- creating consistency through the development and implementation of operational and board policies, processes, and plans;
- developing a reputation for accountability and strong financial management and oversight;
- expanding and strengthening conservation districts' ability to impact locally through grant-making, programming, tech support, education, and advocacy;
- generating new revenue opportunities and funding streams for conservation districts and MACD;
- consistently promoting the importance and impact of conservation districts to public welfare and quality of life; and,
- growing MACD's staff capacity and satisfaction to provide excellent service and value.

2025 GOALS AND STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE OUR 2027 VISION

(Three year plan)

BOARD AND GOVERNANCE

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have an active, revitalized board of directors with infrastructure and systems in place to meet government required fiduciary responsibilities.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Review and approve MACD's vision, mission, and values.
- Review and modify board processes and operations for engagement and to encourage "the next generation" of board members.
- Develop and use an annual board governance calendar.
- Develop a committee structure, based on nonprofit best-practices (Executive, Finance, Governance/Board Development) to help the board meet its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
- Create advisory councils to increase member engagement.
- Develop an executive director goal-based annual evaluation system.
- Create a written board job description and expectations of engagement.
- Strengthen new board member onboarding and orientation process.
- Create policy directing district engagement, based on currency of dues payment.
- Rethink director communication and outreach to their areas.
- Reach out to Tribal Conservation Districts and identify how MACD could be of value to them and engage them in membership and governance.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL: In three years, MACD will have strengthened our operational structure by creating written policies and procedures to provide consistency in board, staff, and organizational operations.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Complete merge of financial records and information.
- Revise, clarify, and organize the current committee system to ensure meaningful participation of district supervisors and employees.
- Review and simplify the resolution process to ensure follow-through and tracking of initiatives.
- Review and/or modify current operating manuals or procedures and create those that are needed.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have implemented financial structures and oversight to strengthen our financial recordkeeping, budgeting, transparency, and management reporting systems.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Develop and activate a Finance Committee.
- Develop financial policies and procedures, including a policy and procedure for drafting annual budgets.
- Outline an annual financial calendar to make sure all reports and filings are completed on time.
- Create systems to ensure compliant grant management and reporting.
- Review fiscal sponsorship and accounting checks and balances for Bridger Plant Materials Center process and procedures and modify as needed.

GRANTS, PROGRAMMING & TECHNICAL SERVICES.

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have strengthened and expanded our value and support to conservation districts through grant-making, programming, and operational administrative and technical support.

Grant-making. We do this to streamline funding for conservation districts by providing easy access to state, federal and other monies.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Create a title for all funding MACD receives and distributes.
- Develop policies regarding fund acceptance, distribution, MOUs, and reporting structure.
- Develop next five-year MCPI agreement, starting 10/2022, focusing on increasing capacity through project

funding with a component for CD staff time.

- Investigate other revenue sources for Conservation District benefit.

Programming. We do this to support conservation districts and partners in implementing conservation strategies and programs in their areas.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Collaborate with partners to leverage capacity and resources to increase district services, programming, and implementation of on-the-ground conservation.
- Host a meeting with key partners to discuss programming overlap and distinction.
- Define the purpose and scope of work for the Programming Committee.
- Review current programs, services, and partnerships to determine real and perceived value by CD's. Revise any/all to maximize value or eliminate programs.
- Identify new programs adding value to CDs, including review and feasibility of Soil Corps Program through 1-year AmeriCorps Planning Grant.

Operational Administration and Technical Support. We do this to assist conservation districts in expanding and leveraging their ability to do their work effectively and efficiently.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Develop more cooperative resource programming such as TechSoup Software purchases and shared Zoom accounts.
- Identify additional areas where MACD can support CDs with human resource capacity and develop services to leverage districts' ability to function effectively.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have developed educational opportunities for conservation districts that provide for professional growth, increased competencies, and effectiveness.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Develop a plan for district sharing of programs and information (peer-to-peer learning).
- Coordinate training resources and opportunities provided to districts by partners to ensure needs are met, including the creation of a training calendar.
- Collaborate with partners to identify and provide professional education classes for conservation districts.

ADVOCACY

GOAL: In three years, MACD will have created relationships, systems, and partnerships, to effectively influence conservation efforts through education and advocacy of policy makers, conservation districts, and the public.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Engage Legislative Committee year-round to monitor federal actions that will influence conservation districts in Montana, and engage in policy issues from the local to national levels when needed.
- Develop process to prioritize policy and advocacy action for MACD, based on resolutions, time-sensitive issues, relevance, and the political landscape.
- Clarify how policy decisions are made when there is not a resolution/policy already in place.
- Better engage conservation districts in advocacy and policy work.
- Develop plan and strategies for 2023 legislative session that include a process for gaining legislative support to appropriate stable funding to conservation districts (examples: mill levies and state transaction fees).
- Review current communications with policy makers/legislator's feedback and modify to ensure valuable content.

COMMUNICATIONS

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have developed communication strategies and structures that support transparency, strong relationships, and engagement with conservation districts, partners, and the public.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Review all communications and re-organize for efficiency, value, and expediency.
 - Review district feedback and modify MACD communications to ensure valuable content and best use of

MACD financial and staffing resources

- Review website content and create policy on what will be posted on site and what is available upon request.
- Strengthen engagement and connection with CDs
- Review overall technology strategy, with particular focus on vulnerabilities and long-term viability of the WordPress multi-site.
- Develop literature that clearly articulates the value MACD provides to districts.
- Develop a more defined process for districts to give feedback to MACD.
- Review current communications with partners and modify to ensure valuable content.
- Develop a statewide public campaign, including updating/creating promotional materials about CDs, who they are and what they do. Target newspapers and other media.

REVENUE DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have improved current funding streams and developed new sources of revenue through expanded grant opportunities, corporate and private support, and increased capacity of local conservation districts to raise money.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Develop new MACD programs to support conservation districts' effectiveness and income streams.
- Develop annual fundraising goals and plans that include appeals, website giving, and individual and corporate sponsors.
- Review MACD's website and update for donor convenience.
- Develop a written donor thank-you system.
- Implement contact and funder management system.
- Build capacity to develop funds by hiring a FT fund development staff person.

MACD STAFFING

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have maintained a positive and supportive work environment in the MACD office through the creation of job descriptions, infrastructure, and sufficient qualified, trained, and competitively compensated staff to administer programs and manage the organization.

Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:

- Develop current and future staffing charts outlining hiring priorities.
- Review, update, and/or develop job descriptions.
- Review and/or modify current operating manuals or procedures and create those that are needed.
- Develop a staff annual evaluation process.
- Research salary ranges for comparable job positions and then develop strategies to secure income to provide competitive salary and benefits and retain outstanding staff.
- Budget funds to provide training for staff to improve their job competencies.

2022 Operational Plan DRAFT [1/10/2022]



1. BOARD AND GOVERNANCE

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have an active, revitalized board of directors with infrastructure and systems in place to meet government required fiduciary responsibilities.

<i>Operational Objectives / Actions</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Status Report</i>
Review and approve MACD's vision, mission, and values.	Board (+Becca)	
Develop and use an annual board governance calendar.	Becca	Draft version available, need to combine with Terry's
Develop a committee structure, based on nonprofit best-practices (Executive, Finance, Governance/Board Development) to help the board meet its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.	Board task force, Becca, Terry	Meeting planned for Lewistown on January 5 th and 6 th
Create advisory councils to increase member engagement. Ex Consideration of EO Advisory Council.	Board approval (+Becca, Terry)	
Develop board onboarding process that includes a "job description" and board orientation	Becca + Board workgroup	
Develop an executive director goal-based annual evaluation system	Executive Committee (+Terry)	
Review Operation Outreach Policy and determine renewed/refined process for Board engagement of districts	Board, Becca (+Terry)	
Create policy directing district engagement	Board	

2. ORGANIZATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

GOAL: In three years, MACD will have strengthened our operational structure by creating written policies and procedures to provide consistency in board, staff, and organizational operations.

<i>Objectives / Actions</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Status Report</i>
Update QuickBooks	Melissa (and contractor)	
Have special meetings regarding committee structure and resolution process. Outline new plan for effectiveness and internal operations.	Board task force, Becca, Terry (with input from all staff)	Postponed due to weather - Potentially the end of January in Helena?
Find current manuals and policies and outline what is in place and what policies are still needed	Staff	
Start a Google Drive based policy folder for organization and easy access	Staff	

3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have implemented financial structures and oversight to strengthen our financial recordkeeping, budgeting, transparency, and management reporting systems.

<i>Objectives / Actions</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Status Report</i>
Develop an active Finance Committee, populating it with at least three board members	Board, Terry, Becca	
Board approve policy for regular financial oversight by committee, outlining specific documents and frequency for review	Board, Terry, Staff	
Develop and board approve financial policies (including fundraising and fiscal sponsorship policies). Include policy on budget preparation and timeline.	Board, Terry, Staff	
Outline an annual financial calendar	Becca	

Review grant management systems. Document processes.	Melissa, Steph	
Review Fiscal sponsorship and MOU with Bridger Plant Materials Center	Steph	

3. GRANTS, PROGRAMMING & TECHNICAL SERVICES

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have strengthened and expanded our value and support to conservation districts through grant-making, programming, and operational administrative and technical support.

Grant-making. We do this to streamline funding for conservation districts by providing easy access to state, federal and other monies..		
Objectives/Actions	Who	Status Report
Meeting with programs committee and partners to discuss/determine a name for all funding that MACD receives and distributes (Soil and Water Fund, Conservation District Fund, etc)	Steph	
Finance Committee (with help of Programs Committee) create fund acceptance policy for approval by the board	Becca (lead) with other staff	
Maintain communications with NRCS on new agreement	Melissa	
Develop and approve agreement with NRCS	Melissa	
Direct Program Committee to begin investigating other revenue sources for conservation district benefit.	Program Committee, Steph	
Programming. We do this to support conservation districts and partners in implementing conservation strategies and programs in their areas. <i>Key strategies for accomplishing this goal include:</i>		
Objectives/Actions	Who	Status Report
Work with EO to determine roles, responsibility, and mutual support as they become a 501(c)3	Becca (and Terry)	Meeting January 26th
Work with DNRC through their strategic planning process to determine overlap and distinction	Becca (and Terry)	
Develop a summary of MACD impact through programs, services, advocacy (Annual Report)	All staff	In process

Solicit district and partner feedback, host discussion forums, and make final determination on feasibility of Soil Corps program	Shay	District and partner surveys complete. Discussion forums in January and February. Partner Advisory Committee in place.
Identify any upcoming program opportunities or district funding related to soil health and/or infrastructure funding	Programs Committee, staff	
Define purpose and scope of the Programs Committee within changing committee structure	Steph, Becca, Board, Terry	
Review current programs, services, and partnerships to determine real and perceived value by CDs.	Programs Committee, Staff	
Operational Administration and Technical Support. We do this to assist conservation districts in expanding and leveraging their ability to do their work effectively and efficiently.		
Objectives/Actions	Who	Status Report
Review cooperative resources available to districts and what gaps/needs still exist (and if MACD can help fill them)	With Partners (DNRC, NRCS, EO, etc)	
Identify one or two key areas/services that can be provided to CDs	Staff	

4. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have developed educational opportunities for conservation districts that provide for professional growth, increased competencies, and effectiveness.

Objectives/Actions	Who	Status Report
Consider currently available peer-to-peer learning (Roundtables, etc) and opportunities for expansion or improvement (online discussion forum, supervisor peer-to-peer, centralized resource library, etc).	Becca, Eric, Partners	
Convene another meeting of MACD, DNRC, EO, and NRCS to create a training calendar for 2022	Becca or Steph	
Add all trainings to the online District Calendar	Eric	

5. ADVOCACY

GOAL: In three years, MACD will have created relationships, systems, and partnerships, to effectively influence conservation efforts through education and advocacy of policy makers, conservation districts, and the public.

<i>Objectives /Actions</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Status Report</i>
Restart LAHC meetings at the beginning of 2022 and set standing meeting times leading up to 2023 session	Becca	First LAHC Meeting on Jan 27 th at 7am
Develop a policy process (prioritization etc) to recommend to the board	Legislative Committee	
LAHC invites and policy updates will go out to admin and supervisor listservs regularly, as well as in DD and TMC.	Eric, Becca	Ongoing
Restart use of policy blog	Becca, Eric	Restarted in Dec. 2021
Develop legislative strategy for 2023 session through work with the LAHC and discussion with legislators and key partners	Becca	

6. COMMUNICATIONS

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have developed communication strategies and structures that support transparency, strong relationships, and engagement with conservation districts, partners, and the public.

<i>Objectives/Actions -</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Status Report</i>
Work with DNRC on the communications structure and support to CDs - strategize and identify needs and potential changes to communications specialist focus	Eric, Steph, DNRC	
Develop a one-page summary of MACD Impact for districts, partners, etc.	Eric with support from all staff	
Begin development of a statewide public campaign for CDs	Eric, CDOWG, ++	

7. FUNDING

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have improved current funding streams and developed new sources of revenue through expanded grant opportunities, corporate and private support, and increased capacity of local conservation districts to raise money.

<i>Objectives/Actions</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Status Report</i>
Add a donation button to the website	Eric	
Review available donor management systems	Becca and Terry	
Assist board in raising at least \$5k in sponsorships for Spring Board Meeting	Staff	
Create fundraising plan with marketing materials <i>(Partially dependent on WMG)</i> <i>(Task forces are better than standing committee)</i>	Staff, Terry	

8. MACD STAFFING

GOAL: In three-years, MACD will have maintained a positive and supportive work environment in the MACD office through the creation of job descriptions, infrastructure, and sufficient qualified, trained, and competitively compensated staff to administer programs and manage the organization.

<i>Objectives/Actions</i>	<i>Who</i>	<i>Status Report</i>
Update Job descriptions, include consideration of what titles are appropriate and any necessary reorganization	Executive Committee, Becca	All staff have compiled job descriptions for their positions.
Hire part-time admin asst	Melissa	
Develop a staff annual evaluation process	Becca and Terry	
Acquire funds for staff training	All Staff (Becca Lead)	In 2022, this will be done through application to the Dept. of Commerce for ARPA training funds
Review and update employee manual	Becca, Melissa, Executive Committee	

