



**Liberty County
Conservation
District**

LOCAL COMMON SENSE CONSERVATION

**18 Main Street
PO Box 669
Chester MT 59522
Phone: 406-759-5778, ext. 102**

The Liberty County Conservation District Public Meeting November 20, 2025

Present:

Lanny Jones	Megan Hedges	Kurt Matkin	Geoff Osterman
Tyler Jones	Misty Vermulm	Patty Bierma	Diane Roberts

Absent/Excused:

Robert Pugsley	Tyler Streit	Mike Nelson	Rod Oraw
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CALL TO ORDER: Lanny Jones called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

DISTRICT BUSINESS

Motion by Megan Hedges, seconded by Kurt Matkin to approve the minutes of the September 2025 meeting.
Motion carried.

Motion by Megan Hedges, seconded by Tyler Jones to file the Treasurer's Report for September 2025 and October 2025.
Motion carried.

Motion by Kurt Matkin, seconded by Megan Hedges, to pay September 2025 and October 2025 bills.
Motion carried.

**Conservation District
Income
September 2025**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Memo</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
▶ 09/15/2025	Liberty Co.	7350 Special Assessment	317350 · Special Assessment	134 51 ◀
09/15/2025	Liberty Co.	7351 Permissive Health	317351 · Permissive Health	51 92
09/15/2025	Liberty Co.	7352 Regular Assessment	317352 · Regular Assessment	60 11
09/24/2025	State of Montana	FY 26 CD Grant	334000 · State Grant Income	11,441 00
09/30/2025		Interest	371000 · Interest and Dividend Income	145 73
TOTAL				<u>11,833.27</u>

**Conservation District
Income
October 2025**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Memo</u>	<u>Account</u>	<u>Amount</u>
▶ 10/31/2025		Int Oct 25	371000 · Interest and Dividend Income	166 12 ◀
TOTAL				<u>166.12</u>

**Payments
September 2025**

Date	Num	Name	Memo	Account	Paid Amount
09/08/2025	ACH	PERS	Aug 25 PERS Bierma	131 · Retirement	230.79
09/24/2025	273	MACD	2025 MACD Dues	332 · Dues Expense	4,000.00
09/29/2025	274	Patricia A Raudensky...	T & E Area III 09/25/25	370 · Travel	88.58
TOTAL					4,319.37

**Payments
October 2025**

Date	Num	Name	Memo	Account	Paid Amount
10/01/2025	275	Patricia A Raudensky...	September 25 Pay	Net Payroll	992.09
10/01/2025	276	United States Treasury	3rd Qtr 941 taxes July to Se...	141.1 · Federal	1,146.80
10/01/2025	BILL...	HSA Bank	LCCD Contribution	130.1 · LCCD contr...	34.58
10/01/2025	BILL...	HSA Bank	Permissive Medical Levy	130.2 · Permissive ...	529.42
10/09/2025	ACH	PERS	SEPT 25 PERS Bierma	131 · Retirement	259.64
10/09/2025	ach	U-I Contributions	3rd Qtr UI Payment	141.3 · Unemploym...	11.48
TOTAL					2,974.01

NRCS Written Report – Misty Vermulm, (In attendance, see written report below.)

Workload:

- We are back after the recent shutdown!! And now NRCS is doing catch up on program implementation of both EQIP and CSP programs, processing payments, modifications, and field reviews.
- CSP documentation is being reviewed. However our contract program is currently shutdown for maintenance. There seem to have been a few hiccups with the lengthy shutdown which will hopefully be fixed.
- The program batching cutoff deadline of October 31st was during the shutdown so there is expected to be another cutoff deadline announced for programs coming from National office, likely to be early 2026.
- The results for the Food Security Act spot checks have been completed, and there were no issues in Liberty County. The tracts had been flown late September. In recent years, there were water erosion issues, but none were identified this year.

Funding:

- NRCS has funding through Sept 30th such that even if at the end of January a budget is not passed by Congress, we will remain open. No new farm bill, the current one has been extended through this fiscal year.

Personnel:

- Gayle Barry is now the permanent State Conservationist for Montana. She had been Acting in that position for several months but it was recently announced that she is officially in that position. She has stated that she will settle in and start to roll out her vision for Montana NRCS. The CD/ DNRC/ NRCS Memorandum of Understanding , MOU, has been getting pushed back, and likely will again until there is an official selection made for the NRCS State Conservationist.

- While the hiring freeze lifted as of Oct 15th, and as operations get back up to speed, positions will be posted as they can be. Some may be posted internally within NRCS Montana as they try to get offices staffed.

Misty Vermulm
District Conservationist

Extension Report – Jesse Fulbright (not in attendance)

It is the time of year when private pesticide applicator licenses are coming due. The Montana Department of Agriculture has sent out instructions for their new system.

I would encourage growers to let the dust settle for the time being on the new online system.

However, people should be getting their 5-year renewal notice either by e-mail or in the mail. People are encouraged to return those as soon as possible. If people don't have the 6 credits they need yet, they are encouraged to visit me as soon as possible so we can find them some credit opportunities.

In other news, the MDA is requiring category licensure for private applicators starting in 2026. This will affect people who are applying non-soil fumigants primarily. I am going through more training on this on December 11th, but the category license is free and you would test in my office, much like the normal pesticide license.

Have people reach out to me with any questions.

Jesse Fulbright
MSU Liberty County Extension Agent
Office-406-759-5625
Personal Cell-406-399-2092

District Business
LOCAL ACTIVITY

PUGSLEY BRIDGE Future Fisheries Grant Funding:

From Nate Wyatt, PE - Principal Restoration Engineering Team Lead | Whitefish

The Pugsley Bridge Bank stabilization Project has all necessary permits and is ready for construction. This project was put out to bid last month, but due to being late in the season, we only received one bid. The bid we received is from Olympus Technical Services and was about 20k over the existing construction budget. After talking with Peter Brown, we decided to hold off for this fall and put it back out to bid in hopes of getting more competitive bids to build it this spring. When we first put it out to bid, we did not have any definitive rock and wood locations, so the acquisition of these materials was unknown and most likely drove a much higher cost from Olympus. We now have confirmation from the Pugsley's that they can supply the wood, and the rock can be borrowed from a pit that is less than 1 mile away. The new RFP will include this information, which should result in a lower construction cost. I will keep you updated when I put the RFP out and receive responses.

From Peter Brown PhD | Aquatic Habitat Coordinator Fisheries Division
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

Just to add a bit of information, the partners that are providing matching funds are onboard with the delayed timeline.

- *DNRC Administrative Grant check for \$11,441.00 received & deposited 09/24/25*
- *MACD Dues paid for \$4000.00 09/24/25*
- *Discussion of adding program called Citrix to LCCD computer.*
Patty reached out to CD's in the state. She found no CD that uses Citrix, had the app loaded to their computer, or that is planning to do so, unless it is mandated. LCCD will not upload app at this time.
- Question was raised pertaining to Lincoln Oaks Nursery, this was reviewed prior and LCCD will not be ordering this year from them, Big Sioux Nursery Inc. was suggested as an alternative.

ASSOCIATE SUPERVISOR POSITION: Per review and research with Area Directors and High Plains CD, CD can name as many associates as you want. They cannot vote but may be influential in decision making.

SUPERVISOR QUORUM REVIEW: Per review and research with Area Directors and High Plains CD, With a seven member board, you must have 4 present for a quorum. If you only have 4 present, they all MUST vote the same way per district law for the motion to pass. Many believe a simple majority of those present but district law is different. With only 4 present, they all must vote the same way or the motion fails.

REGIONAL AND STATE

A handout was presented as an update from Catey Bauer for October and November 2025.

Next Meeting December 18, 2025

ADJOURNMENT - 7:42 pm


CALENDAR:

Soil Health Symposium | February 2-4, 2026 | Billings

The Montana Envirothon | April 20-21, 2026 | More info to come

Peer to Peer | March 2026 | More info to come


Patricia Raudensky Bierma, Administrator


Lanny Jones, Chairman

District meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month at the USDA Service Center, Chester, 7:00 p.m. unless otherwise noticed.

MISSION: TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS BY PROVIDING LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAMS TO CONSERVE, IMPROVE, AND SUSTAIN OUR NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT.

VISION: Having a community that is economically stable with the natural resources conserved by:

1. providing education and encouraging control of nuisance weeds and eradication of noxious weeds
2. having no soil blowing above their tolerance level—ideally no soil or water erosion
3. sustaining and improving water quality, with rivers and streams running clear.
4. encouraging tree planting for shelterbelts and wildlife
5. encouraging recycling
6. working jointly with all other agencies/organizations to enhance conservation practices within the district.
7. improving the public perception of the Conservation District