



October 7, 2025 SCD Monthly Meeting Minutes

Location: Columbus Fire Hall (944 E Pike Columbus MT)

Meeting called to order by: Bob at 6:05pm

Supervisors: Robert (Bob) Van Oosten (Chairman), Noel Keogh (Vice Chairman), Butch Behrent (Treasurer), Steve Story (Secretary), Dorothy Gallager (Supervisor), Lynda Grande (Supervisor) and Darryl Thompson (Associate Member)

Supervisors Approved Absent:

Staff/Guest/Public: Sharon Flemetis (District Admin), Bryan Giordano (FWP), Colton Shimer (USACE), Scott (FJ) and Associates, Auditor, remote attendee), Kevin Mitchum (Sibanye- Stillwater, remote attendee), Karl Kingery (Hydrometrics Engineer, Stillwater Mine consultant).

Public Comment

** 3 Minute Limit * The Public will conduct themselves in a professional manner or be asked to leave. **

None

REPORTS

Bob Van Oosten – Update from DNRC (admin grant) 25 year Pin Steve, and 10 year Pin for Noel from MACD

Butch Behrent- Update from the watershed on the Pasture Walk

Noel Keogh – No Report

Dorothy Gallager – No Report

Lynda Grande – Update about the Area Meeting

Darryl Thompson – No Report

Sharon Flemetis– Updated the Board on new MACD Legal Services and a discussion on re-mapping the county Conservation Areas to widen the search for the empty seat on the board. Once things slow down, Sharon will do more research into this.

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting - Motion: To approve **September 9, 2025 Meeting Minutes as provided.**

Made by: Butch Behrent Seconded by: Dorothy Gallager Discussion: minutes approved as presented Vote: Motion carried

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Financial Reports -Motion: To approve financial reports as is Made by: Butch Behrent Seconded by: Lynda Grande Discussion: none. Vote: Motion carried

Monthly Warrants- Motion: To approved warrants as presented Made by: Butch Behrent Seconded by: Dorothy Gallager Discussion: Reviewed /accepted - payment of checks. Vote: Motion carried

NEW BUSINESS

FY2023 Federal/State Audit – Motion to table until next meeting: Bob Van Oosten Seconded: Butch Behrent Discussion: Recap of Audit Engagement History explained by Darryl Thompson. -The finance committee (Darryl, Butch, Bob, Sharon) was tasked with hiring an auditor for FY 2023-2025 to meet federal and state requirements due to exceeding \$750,000 in grant receipts. RFP was distributed on May 15, 2025, to ~36 state-approved firms; two responses received. FJ and Associates (Scott's firm) was selected at the July 2025 meeting. Contract executed at the end of July 2025, formalizing engagement between the Stillwater Conservation District, the State of Montana, and FJ and Associates.

Audit Progress and Timeline -FY2023: Delivered by Scott (FJ and Associates) just prior to this meeting for the board's review. Sharon to review and provide feedback. FY2024: Anticipated delivery set for the board's October 28, 2025, meeting. A special board meeting may be called for approval if necessary, but plan is to approve both 2023 and 2024 audits together to avoid redundant meetings. FY2025: Expected for review in late November or at the December board meeting. State deadline: December 31, 2025. Federal deadline for this grant cycle: March 2026.

Discussion & Issues- Material Findings: No material financial errors found for FY2023. Controls and accounting systems are in place. Noted "drastic" changes in cash/cash flow due to increased grant activity in 2023.

Accounting Basis: Transitioned from a cash basis to accrual basis for audit compliance, requiring additional legwork.



Impact of Delays: FY2023 and FY2024 audits are late and are required for the continued flow of grant funds, specifically those withheld by DNRC until completion. Emphasis on submitting audits (especially 2023/2024) prior to the October 31, 2025 deadline. The board can submit partial (annual) audits as they are completed to demonstrate compliance.

Audit Deliverables for Board Review Audit includes comparative finances: FY2022 (unaudited) and FY2023 for side-by-side comparison.

Appreciation and Conclusion Multiple participants acknowledged the extra effort by Sharon and Scott’s team. Scott confirmed all audit timelines remain feasible; any final cleanup will be incorporated ahead of formal submission. **Vote: Approved**

Montana Public Records Policy and Procedure Update: Motion to table: Lynda Grande **Seconded: Steve Story** **Discussion:** Board to review draft policy; final decision tabled until October 28, 2025 meeting. **Vote: Approved**

SCD Office Hours Motion to approve: Steve Story **Seconded: Dorothy Gallagher** **Discussion:** Due to budget constraints, administrative staff (Sharon) proposed new office hours. Board voted to approve the new schedule through December, subject to reevaluation as finances permit. Office closed to public on Wednesday & Thursdays, but administrator available for essential work on an as-needed basis. **Vote: Approved**

Grant research - Motion: Lynda Grande **Seconded: Dorothy Gallagher** **Discussion:** Board authorized continued research and application for grants, especially those that could support administrative continuity and operations. Grant deadline for current application: November 15, 2025. Board authorized chair to sign grant applications if deadlines arise before next meeting. **Vote: Approved**

OLD BUSINESS

None

310 APPLICATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

APPL. #	Name	Stream	Project	Received	Decision
25-022E	Todd & Gina Gahagan	W. Rosebud Ck	Beaver Dam Removal	6/24/25	Motion to table: Steve Second: Dorothy Discussion: on the timeline and review drone footage. Vote: Denied Motion: Butch Second: Lynda Discussion: to go ahead and approve as is Vote: Approved
25-029	Sibanye-Stillwater Mine	Stillwater River	New Bridge		Motion: Steve Second: Butch Discussion: See Below Vote: Approved with recommendation

Bridge project: New full-span bridge over the Stillwater River, just downstream of the existing mine bridge. The new bridge is wider; purpose is to separate light vehicles and heavy (haul truck) traffic for safety. The existing bridge will remain for light vehicles. Technical/Permitting Issues Discussed Plans Accessibility: Current plan drawings are inaccessible due to a locked government building, limiting onsite review. Questions Raised: How will riprap on the upper/east bank be tied in? Concerns about hard edge and riverbank impact. Will the existing bridge be removed? No; the old bridge will remain for light traffic according to Kevin Mitchum. Streambed/fish passage concerns FWP: There’s a minor drop/small waterfall near the new bridge site that could impede fish migration, especially at low water. Suggestion to move a couple of large boulders to soften the drop while heavy machinery is already present (for riprap/armoring). Impacts & Permitting: Bridge design intentionally aims for minimal floodplain and streambed impact: 165-ft clear span, abutments set outside the high-water mark. Only localized riprap armoring at abutments; very minimal direct streambed impact (reported as 0.7 acre per permit application). Nationwide Permit 14 is being utilized for the project, requiring restoration of the streambed to pre-existing conditions after temporary construction impacts (e.g., removal of cofferdam). Any major change (such as moving boulders not part of temporary work) might require additional review or mitigation. Engineer (Karl Kingery) confirmed goal is to restore river as close to pre-construction conditions as possible, but minor shifts (e.g., moving a boulder or two for fish passage) will not constitute non-compliance. Specific Questions from Absent/Mute Participants (Noel): Could the east side footer be excavated deeper for stability? Current plans show an abutment depth of ~14 feet. Further questions were deferred to the design engineer.



COMPLAINTS/VIOLATIONS

#23- 052V & 23-065V -Krone - Discussion: **Court date was set for January for Justice court of contempt of court order**

#25-006CV – Lincoln Ponds on Stillwater River side channel- Discussion: **waiting on 310 Application**

#25-014CV – Lincoln Powers- berm-closing off a side channel - Discussion: **waiting on 310 Application**

SAVE THE DATES:

10/13/25-Holiday Office Closed		
11/11/25& 11/27/25-Holiday Office Closed	12/2/25 Monthly Board Meeting	

MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING: Dorothy Gallager SECONDED: Lynda Grande MEETING ADJOURNED AT: 9:15pm

310 Applications must be received by 12pm seven days prior to the meeting and have been inspected to be reviewed. Agenda items must be submitted to the CD Office by Noon the Monday before the scheduled meeting. Agendas are available at the CD Office upon request and at stillwatercd.org once finalized. All meetings of the CD are open to the public. Once approved the minutes will be available at stillwatercd.org and the County Clerk and Records Office.

All Meetings with SCD will be recorded and the recording is a tool to help the SCDBS or SCDA with the creation of meeting minutes, only. Audio recordings of any meeting with the SCD will to be retained until after the minutes of that particular meeting have been adopted by the SCD Board. This will allow space for future audio recording.

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Sharon Fletmetis

Minutes Approved on 1/13/26 Signed by Bob Van Oosten

Montana Public Records: What is Public vs. Exempt

Authority

MCA Title 2, Chapter 6 – Public Records (esp. §§ 2-6-1002 to 2-6-1006)

Category	Public Information	Exempt / Confidential Information
Employee Compensation	Employee names, positions, and gross pay/salaries (MCA § 2-6-1002(10), § 2-6-1003)	Individual pay stubs with deductions, tax info, or bank info (MCA § 2-6-1003(2)(b))
Financial Records	Budgets, audits, and financial reports of the District (MCA § 2-6-1002(13))	N/A
Meetings & Actions	Board agendas, minutes, and official actions (MCA § 2-6-1006(2))	Draft notes or preliminary documents not used for official action (MCA § 2-6-1002(7))
Contracts & Grants	Contracts, grants, and agreements (MCA § 2-6-1002(13))	N/A
Timesheets	Hours worked and position (public funds accountability) (MCA § 2-6-1002(10))	Personal identifiers such as address, phone number, Social Security number, or medical notes (MCA § 2-6-1003(2)(b))
Personnel Records	N/A	Evaluations, discipline, medical leave, or other confidential personnel information (MCA § 2-6-1003(2)(b))
Legal Records	Final legal agreements or judgments (public record once filed)	Attorney-client communications and records related to pending litigation (MCA § 2-6-1002(7), § 2-6-1003(2)(b))

Sub-Dist, Chair

Stillwater Conservation District

Public Records Access and Request Procedure

The Stillwater Conservation District recognizes the public's right to examine and obtain copies of public records in accordance with Montana Code Annotated § 2-6-1006. To ensure the integrity of District records and the orderly operation of the office, the following procedures apply:

1. Submission of Requests

- All requests for public records must be submitted in writing using the SCD Approved Form
- Requests should reasonably describe the records sought so staff can identify them without undue burden.

2. Processing of Requests

- District staff will acknowledge receipt of the request and respond within a reasonable period of time, as required by law.
- Records will be reviewed to determine whether they are public, confidential, privileged, or exempt from disclosure.
- Copied documents will be estimated per copy as well as time to prepare. An Invoice will be provided for payment to be paid before starting to make copies of documents.

3. Exemptions

- Records subject to attorney-client privilege, pending litigation, personnel records, or otherwise exempt under state or federal law will not be released.
- Partial records may be provided if exempt information can be reasonably redacted.

4. Fees

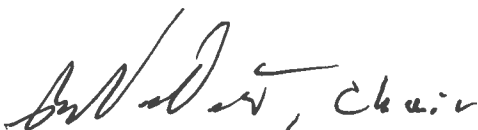
- The District may charge reasonable fees for staff time required to gather and prepare records, as well as for copies, consistent with state law.

Review and Redaction of Records

All public records will be reviewed by District staff before release. Confidential or exempt information, as defined under MCA Title 2, Chapter 6, will be withheld or redacted to protect individual privacy, attorney-client privilege, pending litigation, or other statutory exemptions. The District will provide the non-exempt portions of a record whenever possible, consistent with law.

Personnel Records

- Timesheets: Information related to hours worked, position, and gross wages paid with public funds may be available for inspection. Personal information such as home address, phone number, Social Security number, medical information, or other sensitive details will be redacted.
- Pay Stubs: Individual employee pay stubs are considered confidential personnel records and are exempt from disclosure. Public information is limited to employee name, position, and gross pay or salary, consistent with Montana law.



Bob [unclear], Chair