

Stillwater Conservation District
Po Box 48 * 334 North 9th Street Columbus MT 59019

April 7, 2026 SCD Monthly Meeting Minutes

Location: USDA Service Center Conference Room (334 N. 9th Street, Columbus, MT)

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

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

Supervisors Approved Absent: 2 vacant seats; Darryl Thompson – absent

Staff/Guest/Public: Sharon Fletmetis (District Admin); Amy Bailey and Pam Schwinn (Carbon Conservation District); Earl Atwood (Resident/Permit Applicant)

Public Comment

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

Amy Bailey and Pam Schwinn – Carbon Conservation District:

- Amy Bailey addressed the board regarding a public records request originally submitted in December 2024 and revised/resubmitted in February 2025. The request sought bid documents, financial records, contracts, invoices, and supporting documentation related to the EWP project for the Town of Fromberg. To date, only a handful of unrelated documents have been received. Multiple follow-up emails to Sharon went unanswered or received unfulfilled promises of delivery. Sharon indicated she has been directed by the attorney and was unclear on what remained outstanding. Board directed that Amy send a detailed list of outstanding documents to Sharon and the district attorney for resolution.
- Amy Bailey personally requested that the board instruct the district administrator to cease making statements to landowners in Carbon and Stillwater counties that Amy broke into the SCD office and hacked NRCS computers. Amy stated the county attorney has confirmed no record of such an incident exists. Amy indicated she will pursue legal action if the statements continue. Board acknowledged the request.

REPORTS

Bob Van Oosten

- Planning Board – Conditional Use Permit application from Moran Mining Company approved with modifications for employee housing (work camp) at a property near Oli's Corner (formerly Lena's Cabins). Facility houses approximately 8 workers. Raised mound septic system was required due to high water table. All requirements met.

Butch Behrent

- 3W's Workshop – June 18th, 4–6pm, Fishtail City Hall. Speakers: Josh Wagner (EDRR), Josh Morrison (Virtual Fence), and Forrest Herman (Encroachment Impacts on Forest Forage Losses throughout Montana).
- Summer Celebration – August 8th at the Ridge (same location as last year). Entertainment not yet finalized.

Noel Keogh

- WLAA (Wildland Assessment) – Zoom meetings on the 21st and tomorrow (April 8) 1:30–2:30pm. Project involves home wildland/urban interface fire risk assessments in Stillwater County in collaboration with DNRC, NRCS, and U.S. Forest Service. An outside Colorado firm conducts 1,000-foot visual assessments and sends questionnaires to households for self-assessment. Results are compared to assess actual vs. perceived risk. Related to increasing pressure from insurance companies in fire-prone areas. Contact Lindsey for meeting link.
- Community meeting – Wednesday, April 22nd at 7pm in Fishtail.
- Range Days – Board noted time is running short to promote scholarships for kids/teams. Approximately \$6,000+ available in a scholarship account from the 1997 Columbus Range Days. Board encouraged outreach.

Steve Story – No Report

Lynda Grande – No Report

Darryl Thompson – Absent

Garrett Larson – Absent

Sharon Fletmetis – No Report

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting **December 2nd, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Motion: Noel Seconded: Butch Discussion: None Vote: Approved

Minutes of the previous meeting **January 13, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

Motion: Steve Seconded: Butch Discussion: None Vote: Tabled

Minutes of the previous meeting **March 3, 2026 Meeting Minutes**

Motion: Steve Seconded: Butch Discussion: None Vote: Tabled

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Financial Reports

Motion: Noel Seconded: Butch Discussion: Year-to-date profit/loss reviewed. Note: tree expense line showing negative due to cash-to-accrual accounting transition; auditors working to correct. Will be cleaned up by next meeting. All bank account balances reviewed as of meeting date. Vote: Approved

Monthly Warrants

Motion: Noel Seconded: Butch Discussion: One check presented for signature. Monthly warrants reviewed and accepted. Vote: Approved

2026–2027 Draft Budget

Motion: Noel Seconded: Steve Discussion: Budget not yet prepared; Tabled to next meeting. Vote: Tabled

2026–2027 Admin Grant Application

Motion: Noel Seconded: Steve Discussion: Cannot submit until budget is complete. Due end of May. Tabled to next month. Vote: Tabled to May meeting

NEW BUSINESS

SCD Board Secretary

Motion: Lynda Seconded: Butch Discussion: Lynda Grande nominated Steve Story. Discussion noted that newly received MACD bylaws have not been formally adopted by the board; board continues to operate under existing bylaws. Under current bylaws, no requirement that a member serve one year prior to serving as officer. Vote: Approved

OLD BUSINESS

None

310 APPLICATIONS AND COMPLAINTS

Appl. #	Name	Stream	Project	Received	Decision
26-004	Woodard Ditch Users / Earl Atwood	W. Rosebud Creek	Repair headgate & remove emergency berm; replace steel components and install new control mechanism	3/27/26	Motion: Bob Seconded: Noel Discussion: Application for work done under December emergency. Contractor Bernie Kelly to remove berm; Brian Young to refabricate steel components. No new materials in or out of river. Vote: Approved
26-005c	Lonney White	Stillwater River	Complaint of Debris	4/3/26	Motion: Noel Seconded: Steve Discussion: Complaint received; site inspection has not yet been conducted. Area near Beehive, neighboring dispute. Police previously involved. Board tabled pending inspection. Vote: Tabled pending inspection
26-007	Cove Irrigation	Yellowstone River	Dredging at diversion to	3/30/26	Motion: Noel Seconded: Lynda Discussion: Army Corps 404 permit

			restore water to ditch head gate		already approved. Island formation has blocked historic water flow. Work to be done post-high water (late July/early August. Project approved as one-year permit only, not a maintenance permit. Board agreed to align with Army Corps timeframe. Vote: Approved with modification – approved as a one-year project permit, not a 10-year maintenance permit
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Complaints/Violations

- **#23-052V & 23-065V – Krone:** Ongoing. No update provided at this meeting.
- **#25-006CV – Lincoln Ponds on Stillwater River side channel:** No update at this meeting.
- **#25-014CV – Lincoln Powers – berm closing off a side channel:** No update at this meeting.
- **Powers/Agency Ditch/Simmons Area (Stillwater River side channel):** Sharon reported Judy Powell (Powers) is still working with Army Corps and engineer on a solution. John Simmons (or wife Marilyn Simmons) submitted an application to stabilize the bank that feeds the Agency Ditch side channel. Application incomplete; full application expected the following day. Site inspection scheduled for April 30th. Board to review at next meeting. Sharon noted the root ball from a recently fallen tree may be incorporated into the bank stabilization effort. Board discussed the ongoing water rights dispute between Powers/Agency Ditch and Simmons, noting the competing interests in channel flow.
- **FWP Juvenile Fish Habitat Improvement Project (Watershed):** Noel reported FWP is progressing toward design work for a side channel restoration project on the Stillwater River aimed at improving juvenile fish habitat. FWP's engineering firm has been engaged. Application to Future Fisheries program anticipated this fall. Conservation district and watershed may be asked to co-sponsor. Board noted potential 25/75 cost-share implications and will monitor.

SAVE THE DATES

May 5, 2026 Board Meeting	June 2, 2026 Board Meeting	July 7, 2026 Board Meeting
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MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING: Noel Keogh **SECONDED:** Steve Story **MEETING ADJOURNED AT:** 7:02pm

310 Applications must be received by 12pm seven days prior to the meeting or otherwise approved to come in late 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 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 Flemetis

Minutes Approved on 5/5/2026 Signed by Bob Van Oosten 