

Beaverhead Conservation District

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, February 19th, 2026

Call to order

Byron Martinell called to order the regular meeting of the Beaverhead Conservation District at 6:00 pm on February 19, 2026 in the NRCS office.

Roll call

The following persons were present: Byron Martinell, Jerry Meine, Harris Wheat, Tom Miller, Carl Malesich, Marti Laknar, Emma Fullerton, Jess Fields, Matt Jaeger, Dori McNeil, Kelly Rowe, JS Turner, Jason Rose, Tyler Barrus, Rich McEldowney, Miguel Ley, and Jack Bazemore
Absent: Billiette Brooks, Rich Nordquist, and Meg Smith,
Motion to excuse absences by Tom 2nd Jerry, Motion carried

Approval of minutes from last meeting

- *Motion to approve the January minutes by Carl 2nd by Tom, motion carried.*

Summary of Finances.

- *Motion to approve summary of finances for February by Carl 2nd by Tom, motion carried.*

Public Comment on non-agenda items- Limited to 3 minutes Must sign in.

- No public comment.

NRCS – Erin was unable to attend but is working on contracting.

Southwest Montana Sagebrush Partnership – Emma is setting up her work plan for the year, planning spray contracts, and looking into drone mapping cheatgrass.

Beaverhead County Extension – Jack hired a new 4H coordinator. Jack is planning an estate planning workshop/ 3 workshops, the 3 sets include estate planning, wills and probate, estate planning for parents. Many of the board members are interested in this workshop and Jack will send out a flyer.

Range Committee – Meg is at the Range Conference in California and is working on the spring range tour around June.

Education and Outreach – Marti is working on early season planting with kindergarten classes, village play space, and Acadia ag/Stephan's greenhouse. Marti attended the Western Montana Grazing and agriculture conference.

310 Business

Beaverhead – Matt Jaeger

- BCD 2609 Tyler Barrus, Beaverhead River, Phase 2 Bank Restoration

The Board discussed phase 1 and changes that have been made after the site visit in November 2025. The plans submitted do not match all of the updates since phase 1 was completed. Most of these changes pertain to sod and willows as part of the brush matrix. Motion to approve with modifications by Tom, 2nd Carl, motion carried.

- BCD 2611 Lee Martinell Company, Red Rock River, Bridge Abutments
This application did not make the meeting notice deadline so it was not voted on. Deere Creek plans on using concrete blocks to replace the abutments. The contractor and board both agreed that it would be best to view the bridge to get a better idea on what would work best. The site visit will be on March 19th if nothing comes up.

Big Hole - Jim Olsen

- BCD 2541 Violation, Boat Ramp, Big Hole River
Waiting until spring to get better access.
- BCD 2604 Jarrett Dakota Brown, Complaint, Trail Creek/ North Fork Big Hole River, Multiple complaints, Berm next to house along creek, Bridges added and removed, Willow Removal. The violator will be very hard to find.
The property transferred hands in September 2025, and now the realtor says it is under contract. The board would like to know what Jim's thoughts are.
- BCD 2610 Chokecherry Cattle, Big Hole River, 5-year Diversion Maintenance Agreement
Motion to approve Maintenance Agreement for 5 years, by Tom, 2nd Carl, motion carried.

Beaverhead Watershed Grants

- Elkhorn is paused until Forest Service finishes the Environmental Assessment/ Cost Comparison, then we will start working on the startup documents again.
- Is it time to hire someone?
There is money left in the BLM grant for conifer encroachment that should be enough to cover one year of hiring someone and then they will have a good start and can begin planning stream restoration and Watershed Restoration Plan. The board discussed the other options for that money and decided to work with the SMSP to spend that money on projects that are more ready. They determined that the district is not quite ready for a new person.

Administrator Report

- Watercraft Inspection Station 2026 Hiring- Taylor, Sue, Larry, Logan, Jered, Ryan, and Jeff. Our two new inspectors are federal retirees from natural resource fields.

Old Business

New Business

- Board Elections Rich, Jerry, Billiette – File between February 17th – March 4th
- DNRC report- Catey Bauer

- Madison County Planning Board Report

Upcoming Events

- Next meeting date – March 19th 6 pm (Harris will be gone)
- Flexible Grazing Workshop - April 7-8

Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 8:00 pm

Minutes submitted by: Jessica Fields

Approved: Byron Martinell
Byron Martinell, Chairman