

Beaverhead Conservation District

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 21st, 2026

Call to order

Byron Martinell called to order the regular meeting of the Beaverhead Conservation District at 6:05 pm on May 21, 2026 in the NRCS office.

Roll call

The following persons were present: Byron Martinell, Harris Wheat, Jerry Meine, Rich Nordquist, Carl Malesich, Jack Bazemore, JS Turner, Jess Fields, Matt Jaeger, Kelly Rowe, Erin Paddock

Absent: Tom Miller, Meg Smith, Marti Laknar, Emma Fullerton, and Dori McNeil

Motion to excuse absences by Jerry 2nd Rich, Motion carried

Approval of minutes from last meeting

- *Motion to approve the April minutes by Harris 2nd by Carl, motion carried.*

Summary of Finances

- *Motion to approve summary of finances for May by Jerry 2nd by Harris, motion carried.*

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

- No Public in attendance

NRCS – NRCS – Erin is swamped with contracts, three times the normal number of contracts for 15 contracts total. Getting a college intern for 10 weeks as soon as housing is determined.

Southwest Montana Sagebrush Partnership – Emma was unable to attend. Emma has started vegetation monitoring on last year's treatments, put out 4 requests for bids with more coming later in the year.

Beaverhead County Extension – Jack is hosting a strategic plan listening session and local extension listening session on June 2nd at 7 pm at the 4H building.

Range Committee – Meg and Dori were unable to attend but Meg sent a range tour update. The Range tour has been moved back to next year because of the drought, it's simply not a good time to talk about water in the Big Hole Valley.

Education and Outreach – Marti was unable to attend but send an update. Marti is working on the Shared Bloom, the good food network has started a ton of plants, we have 5th grade outdoor school coming up, wildlife speaker series, and farmers market.

310 Business

Beaverhead – Matt Jaeger

- BCD 2532 and 2535 Travis Welborn, Rattlesnake Creek, Bridge and Culvert, Permit Extension.
Motion to extend with original conditions by Jerry 2nd Carl, Motion Carried
- BCD 2620 Double C Ranch Holdings, Pond Liner, Wilsow Creek
Geosynthetic clay liner or application of a bulk bentonite mix – USACE said no to an impermeable liner. The Board would like to see what USACE would approve before weighing in. Both options are hard to install and hardly ever work the Bentoliner tries to float if it gets any holes in it from cows drinking.
- BCD 2621 Ridgeline Excavation – Danny Kelly, Red Rock River, Headgate Cleanout
This headgate hasn't been cleaned out in 5 years and probably won't need it for another 5 years but the landowner will consider a maintenance agreement if it needs cleaned out more often.
Motion to approve pending modifications by Harris, 2nd Carl, Motion Carried
- BCD 2622 Mark Bergstrom, Shambow Creek, Headgate made by hand
This "headgate" is all made by hand and has very little effect to the stream but the application is already filled out so it would be best to just do a 10-year maintenance agreement because the headgate gets taken out every fall.
- BCD 2623 Matador Ranch and Cattle, Long Creek, Beaver Dam Removal
These beaver dams are on DNRC land, Matt is checking with DNRC before deciding which way to go. The landowner did not know about this work and was pretty disappointed in the ranch hand that did it.
- Matt would like to have a Dam turnover meeting with the engineers that did the study on the dam a while back, the timeline would be August through September at the 4H Building, Jess would like the conservation District to host said meeting.
- Jim and Matt would like to present their findings on the fish population changes and model, should take about 15 minutes at the next meeting and their will be a PowerPoint.
- The Tash soil lift project that BCD did a few years back has failed, Matt would like to look into redoing it differently with grant money because it is such a publicly visible project. Jess and Matt will work on Grants.

Big Hole - Jim Olsen

- BCD 2541 Violation, Boat Ramp, Big Hole River
Jess has talked to John, the landowner, he would like to meet to discuss next steps. No action since last meeting.

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.
- Jess has completed the BLM conifer encroachment amendment and it has been approved. Jess will continue to work with Sean Claffy to get the projects started.

Administrator Report

- Watercraft Inspection Station – 797 Inspections, 103 High Risk, 4 Mussel Boats
- One of our new inspectors would like less hours than he's currently getting along with more longer vacations, Haylee was hiring to fill in the gaps and the other inspector has been cut down to very part time.

Old Business

- Open Board Position – Lacy Decker's mom might be interested and so is Vic Hager.

New Business

- BOR WaterSmart grant to fund water quality program and build the web-hosted interactive clearinghouse to host all the data – The board would like to have Brian Wheeler present this project at a board meeting before deciding.
- DNRC Update – Catey Bauer

Upcoming Events

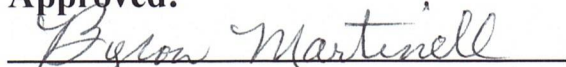
- Next meeting date – June 18th 6 pm
- Poindexter Weed Pull – May 26th 3 pm
- 5th Grade Outdoor School – May 27th
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Adjournment

Meeting Adjourned at 8:00 pm

Minutes submitted by: Jessica Fields

Approved:



Byron Martinell, Chairman