

The Montana Conservationist

IN THIS ISSUE

Meet the L&C CD	1
Wildlife Professor on Ranching as Key to Conservation	1
Grant Opportunities	2
State & Local News	3, 4
Conservation Around the Nation	4
News From MACD	5
July/August Calendar	5



Meet the Lewis & Clark Conservation District

Incorporated in 1948 and encompassing mountains and forests, as well as grassy range and plains and ranging widely in climate, [Lewis and Clark Conservation District](#) incorporates all of Lewis & Clark County except the 1948 incorporated boundaries of Helena and East Helena. Current Board Members are: Chairman Stan Frasier ~ Helena, Vice Chairman Scott Blackman ~ Craig, Treasurer Ron Schatz ~ Helena, Mike Cobb ~ Augusta, Gary Murphy ~ Wolf Creek, Bob Bushnell ~ Lincoln, and Steve Granzow, East Helena (also on MACD's Board of Directors).

The Lewis & Clark Conservation District meets on the 2nd Thursday of every month. From October through April meetings are held in He-

lena in the USDA Service Center Conference Room at 1 p.m. May's meeting is located in Augusta at the USFS Conference Room at 1 p.m. June through August the Board meets at the Dearborn Community Center on Hwy. 434 outside of Wolf Creek at 8:30 a.m. and in September the Board meets in Lincoln at Lambkin's Restaurant's meeting room at 9 a.m. Headquarters for the district is 790 Colleen Street in Helena (406-449-5000, x 112 or lccd@mt.net).

Chris Evans, District Administrator, has been with the Conservation District since April of 1999. Prior to that time, she worked for NRCS for about 7½ years doing preparation of soils information for publishing. Having earned a BS from Montana State University

in Earth Science with a Major in Geography and a minor in Geology, Evans has been interested in conservation type efforts since she was a child growing up outside of Choteau on the Front Range of the Rocky Mountains. That interest was furthered through many trips into the National Forest and the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

Lewis & Clark Conservation District faces many challenges, but probably the most troubling one is that of Urban Sprawl, especially along the Missouri, Dearborn, Blackfoot and Sun Rivers and the smaller tributaries. Urban sprawl in the Helena Valley is eating up historical agricultural land as well causing ranches and farms to be sold off for subdivision.

(Continued on page 2)

Leading Wildlife Professor—Ranching as Key to Conservation

Dr. Richard Knight will present a slide show and talk entitled "*Ranchers as a Keystone Species in a West that Works.*" at the **Phillips County Museum in Malta** at 6:30 PM on Thursday, July 24. This event is open to the public, free of charge, and homemade treats and refreshments will be served.

Renowned author and professor of wildlife conservation at Colorado State University, Dr. Knight researches the ecological effects associated with the conversion of the Old West to the Next West. In a book titled "*Homeland: Ranching and a West that Works,*" Dr. Knight points out that, "A secure homeland is not simply based on military might. Home, land, and security also come together when urban people realize that ecologically sustainable food production is possible and that rural cultures matter, and when urban people are prepared to compensate farmers and ranchers for a healthy food product as well as for protecting open space, wildlife habitat, and watersheds through husbandry and stewardship. Equally important to this winning equation are rural people who acknowledge the importance of urban areas and offer a friendly handshake to their urban neighbors."

L&C CD

(Continued from page 1)

Another on-going activity for the District is their continuing fire recovery efforts of both the Cave Gulch area and Bucksnot Weed Management Area which burned in 2000. This large weed management area encompasses the Spokane Hills east of Helena and into Broadwater County, with landowners ranging from two acres to thousands of acres, including private, state and federal lands.

Projects for the next year include:

- the normal 310 workload as well as working on entering old permit information into the new 310 Database

- supervisor tours on different projects sponsored by the District either through grants or other funding sources
- re-vamping the Annual Dinner Meeting
- coordinate a 2nd Annual Flood Awareness Day at East Valley Middle School in East Helena in May, following up on 2008's incredible day
- continuing publications of the quarterly newsletter, *The Explorer*
- continuing development of the Heritage Lands Workgroup
- continual updates of the District's website at www.lccd.mt.nacdn.org
- operation of the Shelterbelt Program; available to landowners in the County
- administration and coordination of the grants and projects sponsored by the District
- attempt to repeal the long-standing and very outdated Sediment and Erosion Control Ordinance
- Continue working with the active watershed groups
- work on an as-needed basis with the Legislative Session

Grant Opportunities

DEQ is Seeking Applications for 2009 319 Funds: The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) issued a Call for Grant Applications under Section 319(h) of the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) for Fiscal Year 2009. Section 319(h) funds for projects are distributed competitively to support the most effective and highest priority projects. There are three categories for competitive projects:

- Watershed Restoration
- Ground Water Protection / Restoration
- Education and Outreach

Visit [DEQ's website for a full description of eligible applicants and application deadlines.](#)

CSREES Accepting Applications for SCRI Grants: The Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) is now requesting appli-

cations for the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI) to solve critical industry issues through research and extension activities. Specialty crops are defined as fruits and vegetables, tree nuts, dried fruits and nursery crops including floriculture.

Applications must be received by close of business (5 p.m. Eastern Time) on August 14, 2008. Please read the Request for Application (RFA) completely before applying. If you have questions regarding the RFA, please contact: Dr. Tom Bewick at:

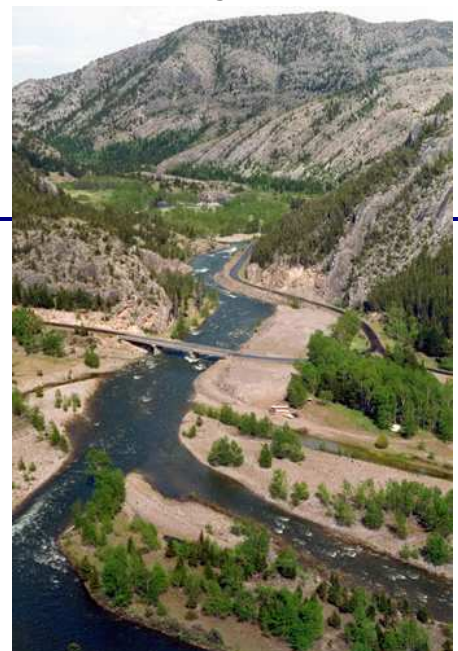
tbewick@csrees.usda.gov, or

Dr. Dan Schmoltdt at dschmoltdt@csrees.usda.gov.

Questions regarding the application packet may be directed to the CSREES Help Desk:

electronic@csrees.usda.gov,

202-401-5048 Monday through Friday between the hours of 7:00 am - 5 pm ET, excluding Federal holidays.



Please follow the links noted below to access grant information.

CSREES Grant Application Information: http://www.csrees.usda.gov/funding/application_info.html

Grants.Gov Application Package: <http://apply.grants.gov/apply/UpdateOffer?id=12786>

Grants.gov Help: <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>

Grants.gov Help: <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>

STATE & LOCAL NEWS

Panel Postpones Talks On Carbon Sequestration:

As reported in an article from the July 17, 2008 edition of the Independent Record, lawmakers have backed away from plans to address carbon sequestration during the up-coming legislative session. Carbon sequestration is the process of capturing carbon dioxide, one of the main gases behind global warming, and injecting it underground where it cannot cause further warming. Legislators feel they need more information on a topic with too many unknowns.

The Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee has been studying the issue for the past 13 months, and produced a comprehensive report on the topic, along with preparing two draft bills for the 2009 Legislature. During this process, however, the complexities of carbon sequestration caused legislators to pause in their efforts. Several issues, from ownership of the injection site to the classification of carbon dioxide itself will require resolution before carbon sequestration becomes a fact of Montana life.

For more information please visit the [Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee website](#).

Wind Farm Is Taking a Toll on Bats and Birds:

As reported in an article from the July 21, 2008 edition of the Independent Record, a study reflects wind turbines at the Judith Gap Wind Farm killed an estimated 1,200 bat migrating through Montana between July 2006 and May 2007. That same study estimated that turbines also killed 406 birds. "While the bird fatalities are similar to those of other

wind plants operating in the US, the number of bat fatalities was higher." Montana's Fish, Wildlife & Parks native species biologist, Allison Puchniak Begley said "It does seem to be a bit of a bat highway." Invenergy, the owner of the wind farm, conducted an environmental assessment prior to the wind farm becoming operational in January of 2006. Their director of wind-asset manager, Frank Pizzoleo, said the number of bats killed was higher than indicated by the assessment, and that the company is working with a technical advisory committee, state and federal



wildlife regulators, and conservation groups to determine what steps to take.

Blackfoot River Gives Up "Sinker" Logs:

When the old Milltown Dam was breach in March of 2008, the Blackfoot and Clark Fork rivers combined flows for the first time in a century, lowering the water levels in both rivers and changing their flow

patterns to historic conditions. The changes revealed thousands of "sinker" logs that once floated down the Blackfoot River to the old Boner sawmill. More than 2,000 logs may be scattered over several miles and will need to be removed to prevent danger to recreationists, bridge piers and construction workers at the Milltown Superfund site. Some of the logs will be sold and others used for on the Clark Fork River restoration project for stream-bank stabilization.

Ag Secretary approves emergency status in 5 Montana counties:

Ranchers and farmers in five drought-stricken Montana counties will be able to use their Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) land for emergency haying and grazing, thanks to a high-level phone call from Senator Jon Tester. CRP land is land that ranchers and farmers set aside to restore wildlife and water habitat, in exchange for compensation from the federal government.

In response to Tester's call, U.S. Agriculture Secretary Ed Schafer approved emergency haying and grazing on CRP land in Richland, Blaine, Dawson, Glacier and Phillips Counties. Tester added he will urge Schafer to make additional exceptions for other drought-stricken Montana counties as well.

While traveling the Hi-Line earlier this month, Tester heard firsthand from many Montanans about the need for emergency haying and grazing on CRP land. He vowed to follow up when he returned to the Senate.

"Sometimes it just takes a phone call to the top to ask, 'What's going on here?'" Tester said. "This

CONSERVATION AROUND THE NATION

From Toilet To Basin To Tap:

California's Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District intends to make the San Gabriel Valley nearly droughtproof by converting waste water into drinking water by developing a treatment plant that turns waste water into drinking water and stores it in the San Gabriel Basin. The facility would be similar to an Orange County Water District groundwater replenishment plant that opened in January.

The ongoing drought, climate change and the decline in the imported water from Northern California has forced water officials in Southern California to urge water conservation and increase attention on developing a local water supply. This plan will aid in that effort. The District is already working with the Los Angeles County Sanitation District to recycle some waste water and use it for watering public and private lawns at places such as parks and cemeteries.

Illinois CD plans to Construct a "Green" Training Center:

Vermilion County Conservation District Foundation in Danville, Illinois is planning for a \$4 million, 33,000-square-foot education center to be built at Kennekuk County Park using a variety of "green" technologies.

The timber-frame building will



not only enhance the district's educational programs but also serve as the national headquarters for the area's only national scenic river, the Middle Fork, and provide a venue for large meetings and conferences.

25x25 Urging Move Toward National Energy Plan: Gasoline prices nation-wide over \$4 a gallon, concerns about changes in the earth's climate, the depletion of the world's petroleum resources and the search for sustainability are all factors driving calls from many arenas for a

comprehensive national energy plan. While most agree that a strategy must be developed to bring energy costs under control and combat climate change, regional differences and the energy resources they represent are making consensus difficult.

The *25x25 Action Plan: Charting America's Energy Future* is a document offered to congressional leaders last year that provides 35 policy recommendations that will accelerate renewable energy research and development, and begin the nation's reclamation of its own energy future. This plan outlines a comprehensive strategy that reduces American dependence on foreign oil, provides a boost to the economy, particularly in rural areas, and enhances the environment by relying on low-carbon or no-carbon power sources,

For more information about the 25x25 Initiative, go to www.25x25.org. To read and download a copy of the 25x25 Action Plan, go to www.25x25.org/actionplan.

State & Local News

(Continued from page 3)

is a common sense result that comes from putting partisanship aside and working together. We have an emergency drought situation on ranches and farms across Montana, and now folks need all their land to keep their livestock—and their livelihoods—on track."

Manure Management Planner (MMP):

This computer program, developed at Purdue University, creates manure management plans for crop and animal feeding operations, helping allocate manure on a monthly basis for a

specified length of the plan, up to 10 years.

MMP is also useful for identifying changes that may be needed for a non-sustainable operation to become sustainable, and determine what changes may be needed to keep an operation sustainable if the operation expands.

MMP currently supports 34 states, including Montana, by automatically generating fertilizer recommendations and estimating manure N availability based on each state's Extension and/or NRCS guidelines.

For more information, click on

a topic:

- [What is Manure Management Planner?](#)
- [What's new in MMP version 0.25?](#) (as of **02-June-2008**)
- Status maps of [MMP development](#) and [custom tools](#)
- [Getting Started with MMP](#) (Word doc - **updated 25-Apr-2008**)
- [Frequently Asked Questions about MMP](#)
- [Technical documentation](#) (updated **24-Aug-2006**)
- [Download the MMP software \(SetupMMP.exe is 10,009,300 bytes\)](#)

**Calendar:
July & August**

- [July 20 thru 25](#) ~ 22nd Annual Montana Natural Resources Youth Camp, Lubrecht State Forest (east of Missoula)
- July 21 thru 25 ~ NRCS Range Health Training, Miles City Area
- July 24th ~ New Administrator Training, Helena
- July 26 thru 30 ~ [2008 SWCS Annual Conference](#) in Tucson, Arizona
- July 28th ~ MACD Executive Committee Conference Call
- July 28 thru August 3 ~ National Envirothon Competition, Flagstaff, AZ
- August ~ CD Resolutions due to Area Meeting Hosts
- August date TBD ~ RCAC Meeting (223 Grant Review)
- [August 4 thru 8](#) ~ Montana Youth Range Camp, Hysham
- [August 7, 8 & 15](#) ~ Forest Stewardship Workshop, Yellow Bay on Flathead Lake, contact 243-2773
- August 11 ~ MACD Board Conference Call
- August 14 & 14 ~ Montana Chapter SWCS summer meeting & tour, Flathead Indian Reservation, registration form and details available at <http://www.mtswcs.org>
- August 15 thru 17 ~ Montana Cowboy Poetry Gathering, Lewistown

News From MACD

- Per MACDs By-laws, each CD should have a representative serving on the various MACD committees; MACD will be sending out a memo with the committee information requesting assignments from the CDs
- The MWCC Letter of Cooperation regarding their fiscal agent status has been signed and returned to MWCC
- The 310 Permit Applications were redesigned to be more user friendly and have been distributed to the Districts
- MACD representatives are bringing a draft letter to NACD’s Legislative Conference in Washington addressing its stand on Senator Tester’s watershed bill; and will also be discussing FSA and NRCS consolidation and River Council issues
- The Annual Convention Committee is “chasing celebrities” for keynote speakers and working with NRCS on technical breakout sessions.
- Interesting facts and figures about Montana’s CDs were mentioned during the monthly teleconference; of the 58 CDs, 22 produce a monthly newsletter with 5 having commercial sponsors, 30 send meeting minutes to MACD, and 17 have websites
- MACD has asked to be a Cooperating Agency along with BLM with regard to the EIS for Billings and Pompeys Pillar RMPs. Don MacIntyre will review the MOU establishing that relationship and submit it to the Executive Committee for approval.
- MACD is again asking for comments regarding the new outreach efforts and make-up of its publications—send comments to jtiberi@macdnet.org

GO
GREEN



Montana Association of Conservation Districts

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Please send your thoughts as to how to improve *The Montana Conservationist* to jtiberi@macdnet.org

Unless specifically requested, *The Montana Conservationist* is not sent to CD Supervisors. MACD relies on District Administrators to forward *The Montana Conservationist* to the Board Chair, Supervisors, Associate Supervisors and CD Staff. Thank you.