



Western Montana Conservation Commission Agenda

February 7 - 8, 2024

PURPOSE

WMCC serves as a convening body to facilitate close cooperation and coordination between federal, state, provincial, tribal, and local resource managers to monitor the condition of aquatic and natural resources across western Montana.



WHY

WMCC was created during the 2023 Montana Legislative Session and effectively combines and replaces the roles and jurisdiction of FBC and UC3.

Wednesday, February 7 - 11:30 AM to 4:30 PM

LOCATION: KwaTaqNuk Resort
49708 US-93, Polson, MT 59860

For virtual attendees: <https://tinyurl.com/WMCC-Feb7-8>
or scan QR Code



11:30 AM

Lunch

Please join us for lunch (provided) and socializing!

12:30 PM

Call to Order and Roll Call

Overview of agenda

12:40 PM

Indigenous Lands Welcome

12:45 PM

Commission Business

New staff introductions
Financials
Executive Committee update
Staff updates
November Meeting Minutes

Action: Vote on Amended Budget

Action: Vote on November Meeting Minutes

1:30 PM

Administrative Attachments 101

2:00 PM

Break

2:15PM

Strategic Visioning

Action: Vote on Strategic Vision

4:15 PM

Public Comment

4:30 PM

Adjourn Meeting

Join us for social hour!



Western Montana Conservation Commission Agenda

February 7 - 8, 2024

Thursday, February 8 - 8:30 AM to 1:00 PM



8:30 AM

Call to Order and Roll Call

Light breakfast items provided

8:45 AM

Commission Member Spotlight

Randy Brodehl

9:00 AM

Onsite Wastewater Treatment Panel

Conrad Eckert Patriot Pumpers

Beth Norberg Environmental Program Supervisor, Lewis & Clark County

Nanette Nelson Research Economist, Flathead Lake Biological Station

10:00 AM

Commission Logistics

Overview of draft by-laws

Action: Vote on By-Laws

Overview of project request process

Action: Vote on Project Request Process

Meeting structure survey results

11:15 AM

Break

11:30 AM

Committee Conversation

Discussion on structure and topics of committees

Action: Vote on Committees

12:30 PM

Wrap up and Next Meeting

12:45 PM

Public Comment

1:00 PM

Adjourn Meeting

Join us for lunch (provided)

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting/ Project Name:	Western Montana Conservation Commission (WMCC)		
Date of Meeting:	Wednesday February 7, 2024	Time:	11:30 AM-4:30 PM
Minutes Prepared By:	Stephanie Murphy	Location:	Hybrid: KwaTaqNuk or Zoom/Call In

List of Acronyms

AIS	Aquatic invasive species	FBC	Flathead Basin Commission
BOR	US Bureau of Reclamation	FLBS	Flathead Lake Biological Station
BPA	Bonneville Power Administration	FWP	Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
BSWC	Big Sky Watershed Corps (AmeriCorps)	GNP	Glacier National Park
CEMIST	Central Eastern MT Invasive Species Team	MACD	MT Association of Conservation Districts
CFC	Clark Fork Coalition	MCDEE	Missoula County Department of Ecology & Extension
CRB	Columbia River Basin	NPS	Nonpoint Source Pollution
CRC	Clearwater Resource Council	NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
CSKT	Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes	UC3	Upper Columbia Conservation Commission
DEQ	Department of Environmental Quality	UCLN	Upper Columbia Lakes Network
DOI	Department of the Interior	USACE	US Army Corps of Engineers
DOT	Department of Transportation	USDA	US Department of Agriculture
DNRC	Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation	USFS	US Forest Service
eDNA	Environmental DNA	USFWS	US Fish & Wildlife Service
E & O	Education & Outreach	WLI	Whitefish Lake Institute
EPA	US Environmental Protection Agency	WRDA	Water Resources Development Act
EQC	Environmental Quality Council (Interim)	WRP	Western Regional Panel

1. Welcome & Introductions

Call to Order Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mike Koopal called the meeting to order. 2. Mike Koopal presented an overview of the agenda and meeting structure.
Roll Call Attendance	<p><u>WMCC (voting members underlined):</u> Casey Lewis, Emilie Henry, Kelly Hendrix, Stephanie Murphy, Heidi Fleury, Kristen Jordan, Krista Lammers, Clarissa Orton, Mark Bostrom, <u>Onno Wieringa</u>, <u>Lech Naumovich</u>, Mike Koopal, <u>Rich Janssen</u>, <u>Arthur Potts</u>, <u>Duane Braaten</u>, <u>Sandy Beder-Miller</u>, <u>Randy Brodehl</u>, <u>Josh Letcher</u>, <u>Scott Rumsey</u>, <u>Rae Lynn Hays</u> (virtual), <u>Tracy Campbell</u>, <u>Julie Spencer</u>, <u>Matt Peterson</u>, <u>Phil Matson</u>, <u>Ron Pifer</u> (virtual), Mike Cuffe, Janet Ellis (virtual), Neil Duram, Tom France, Lindsey Krywaruchka (virtual), Jim Ferch, Tom Woolf, Tom Martin (virtual), Galen Steffens (virtual), Melissa Schaar (virtual), Chris Savage (virtual), Jim Elser (virtual), Sara Edinberg, Martin Charlo, Heidi McMaster (virtual), Peter Brumm (virtual)</p> <p><u>Absent members:</u> Gregg Hoffman, Kate Wilson</p> <p><u>Partners & Guests:</u> In-person: Willis Curdy, Will Meyer, Bill Dykes, Russ Hartzel, Taylar Templin, Katie Finley, Margarite Thomas, Tom Bansak, Caroline McDonald, Mayre Flowers; Virtual: Kate Heston, Paul Kusnierz, Hailey Graf, Sophiane Nacer, Anna Connerton, Vicki Watson, Amy Seaman, Jared Glass, Sheena Pate, Janelle Housman, Tiffany Lyden, Amanda Knuteson, Sam Barret, Brett Slaugter, Maggie Sain, Stephanie Criswell, Liz Lodman, Megan Gilmore, Michelle Cox</p> <p><u>Quorum established</u></p>

<p>Indigenous Lands Welcome Martin Charlo</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WMCC recognizes that we live and work on the ancestral lands of the Séliš, Q́íspé, & Ksanka people. We honor the path they have shown us in caring for these landscapes for generations to come. 2. Martin Charlo provided an acknowledgement of the history and people of the CSKT, and their generational care for water resources. He thanked our hosts at the KwaTaqNuk.
<p>2. Agenda</p>	
<p>Presenter</p>	<p>Topic/Discussion</p>
<p>Commission Business Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair</p> <p>Casey Lewis, WMCC Executive Director</p> <p>Stephanie Murphy, WMCC Communications Coordinator</p> <p>Kristen Jordan, WMCC Grant Program Specialist</p> <p>Emilie Henry, WMCC Program Coordinator</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mike Koopal called for comments on the November Meeting Minutes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion was made by Onno Wieringa to approve the minutes; seconded by Sandy Beder-Miller • Motion passes 2. Mike Koopal invited a new commission member, Ron Pifer, to introduce himself, as well as other commission members that had not attended the first meeting. 3. Casey Lewis invited new WMCC staff to introduce themselves: Kristen Jordan, Heidi Fleury, Krista Lammers, and Clarissa Orton. 4. Casey Lewis provided an overview of WMCC staff roles and responsibilities. 5. Mike Koopal provided updates from the Executive Committee: new staff hiring process, building framework of strategic vision, proposing committee structures, establishing executive committee structure, and preparing for meeting today. The Executive Committee’s next meeting is February 13, 2024. 6. Stephanie Murphy presented an overview of recent staff updates and projects including onboarding new staff, commission foundation building work, presenting at the Water Policy Interim Committee (WPIC), responding to media requests, meeting with partners, and planning future workshops. She provided a preview of WMCC’s website-in-development. 7. Kristen Jordan presented an overview of EPA Grant progress: new staff reviewing extensive background of grant and grant requirements, attending grant kickoff meeting with EPA, and beginning to build programs. 8. Casey Lewis provided an update on financials. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of grant funding: 2 BOR Grants (still awaiting funds for 2nd award); EPA Grant • Update on Contracts: Windfall & Conservation Media 9. Casey Lewis presented an overview of the approved budget and proposed modifications. 10. Mike Koopal called for comment on amended budget. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion was made by Onno Wieringa to approve amended budget; seconded by Arthur Potts • Motion passes 11. Emilie Henry presented an overview of lodging and travel policies of WMCC/DRNC: reimbursement policy and processing, and lodging.
<p>Administrative Attachments 101 Mark Bostrom, CARDD Administrator, Montana DNRC</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mark Bostrom provided an overview of Montana State Administrative Attachments policy and WMCC’s role with the DNRC. 2. Mark Bostrom introduced WMCC’s Conflict of Interest (COI) form for commission members. 3. Mark Bostrom presented pros and cons of WMCC in a role of grantor or grantee for DNRC grants.

<p>Break</p>	
<p>Strategic Visioning</p> <p>Lech Naumovich, Principal and Ecologist at Greater Than Image, LLC</p> <p>Casey Lewis, WMCC Executive Director</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Casey Lewis provided an overview of strategic visioning process and exercises. 2. Emilie Henry facilitated strategic vision discussion in small groups. 3. Lech Naumovich closed out the discussion. 4. Mike Koopal called for comments on strategic vision. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion was made by Lech Naumovich to table this discussion until staff have reviewed the feedback and updated the strategic vision draft; seconded by Randy Brodehl. • Motion passes.
<p>Public Comment</p> <p>Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mike Koopal called for public comment. 2. Vicki Watson, Professor Emeritus of University of Montana, requested WMCC to consider taking on tasks from the Clark Fork Kootenai River Basins Council, previously called the Clark Fork Task Force, including the Watershed Restoration Plan for the Central Clark Fork. 3. Mayre Flowers from Citizens for a Better Flathead requested WMCC to provide letter of support for the Coalition for Clean CFAC’s petition of the US EPA and MT DEQ to pause and provide additional analyses before moving forward with clean-up plan of the Columbia Falls Aluminum Company Superfund site. She also requests WMCC to consider more effective waste treatment in Flathead especially during tomorrow’s Onsite Wastewater Panel. 4. Senator Willis Curdy commended Randy Brodehl and Senator Mike Cuffe for their efforts in supporting AIS funding during legislative sessions. He commended Tom Woolf, the CSKT, the Blackfeet, and Conservation Districts for their partnership supporting AIS work, and the electric co-ops for funding programs. Senator Curdy reminded the commission of the termination date for section 6 of Montana HB0411 that provided funding for AIS programs and requested support for extending or eliminating the sunset date. Senator Curdy thanked WMCC for speaking at the Water Policy Interim Committee (WPIC) and asks WMCC to support legislation, assist Montana communities with septic issues, and recommends reading the Montana State Drought Management Plan. 5. Sara Edinberg, WMCC member and Assistant Research Hydrogeologist for Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, shared information about the next Montana American Water Resources Association Conference in Whitefish, Montana October 9-11, 2024. She requested ideas for field trips in the Whitefish area for the conference. 6. Seeing no further comments, Mike Koopal closed public comments.
<p>Wrap up & Next Steps</p> <p>Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mike Koopal provided an overview of tomorrow’s agenda.
<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Motion to adjourn by Phil Matson; seconded by Lech Naumovich 2. Motion passes 3. Next part of this meeting is Thursday, February 8 from 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM.

Meeting/ Project Name:		Western Montana Conservation Commission (WMCC)	
Date of Meeting:		Time:	8:30 AM-1:00 PM
Minutes Prepared By:		Location:	Hybrid: KwaTaqNuk or Zoom/Call In
1. Welcome & Introductions			
Call to Order Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mike Koopal called the meeting to order. 2. Mike Koopal presented an overview of the agenda and meeting structure. 3. WMCC recognizes that we live and work on the ancestral lands of the Séliš, Qíispé, & Ksanka people. We honor the path they have shown us in caring for these landscapes for generations to come. 	
Roll Call Attendance		<p>WMCC (voting members underlined): Casey Lewis, Emilie Henry, Kelly Hendrix, Stephanie Murphy, Heidi Fleury, Kristen Jordan, Krista Lammers, Clarissa Orton, <u>Onno Wieringa</u>, <u>Lech Naumovich</u>, <u>Mike Koopal</u>, <u>Rich Janssen</u>, <u>Arthur Potts</u>, <u>Duane Braaten</u>, <u>Sandy Beder-Miller</u>, <u>Randy Brodehl</u>, <u>Josh Letcher</u>, <u>Scott Rumsey</u>, <u>Rae Lynn Hays</u> (virtual), <u>Julie Spencer</u>, <u>Matt Peterson</u>, <u>Phil Matson</u>, <u>Ron Pifer</u> (virtual), Mike Cuffe, Janet Ellis (virtual), Neil Duram, Tom France, Lindsey Krywaruchka (virtual), Jim Ferch, Tom Woolf, Tom Martin (virtual), Galen Steffens (virtual), Melissa Schaar (virtual), Chris Savage (virtual), Jim Elser (virtual), Sara Edinberg, Martin Charlo, Heidi McMaster (virtual), Peter Brumm (virtual), Kate Wilson</p> <p>Absent members: Gregg Hoffman, <u>Tracy Campbell</u>, Jim Ferch</p> <p>Partners & Guests: Presenters: Conrad Eckert, Beth Norberg, Nanette Nelson; In-person: Will Meyer, Bill Dykes, Jennifer Tipton, Mayre Flowers, Durae Belcer, Cassie Roberts, Mayre Flowers, Katie Finley, Rachel Malison, Janelle Housman, Margarite Thomas, Jan Swanson, Bill Hendrix, Rebecca Hendrix; Virtual: Willis Curdy, Sophiane Nacer, Amanda Knuteson, Madeline Caye, Russ Hartzell, Tiffany Lyden, Hailey Graf, Autumn Coleman, Soleil Osgood, Sam Barrett, Sarah Halvorson, Liz Lodman, Amy Seaman, Anna Connerton, Marian Addison, Michelle Cox</p> <p>Quorum established</p>	
2. Agenda			
Presenter		Topic/Discussion	
Commission Member Spotlight Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mark Koopal invited WMCC member Randy Brodehl to speak. 2. Randy Brodehl provided an overview of his work history and role as Flathead County Commissioner, and provided updates on the Flathead County Regional Septage Treatment Facility. 	
Onsite Wastewater Treatment Panel Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair Conrad Eckert, Patriot Pumpers Beth Norberg, Lewis & Clark County		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mike Koopal introduced the panel: Conrad Eckert, Beth Norberg and Nanette Nelson; and provided information about the Septic Risk Map project previously undertaken by the Whitefish Lake Institute and the Flathead Basin Commission. 2. The Onsite Wastewater Treatment Panel discussed septic system challenges and supporting programs and research in Montana. 3. Mike Koopal called for questions from the commission and the public for the panel. 4. Mike Koopal concluded the discussion. 	

<p>Nanette Nelson, Flathead Lake Biological Station</p>	
<p>Commission Logistics</p> <p>Casey Lewis, WMCC Executive Director</p> <p>Kelly Hendrix, WMCC Program Coordinator</p> <p>Emilie Henry, WMCC Program Coordinator</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Casey Lewis presented the final, updated draft of WMCC’s By-Laws and called for comment. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion was made by Arthur Potts to approve the By-Laws with the following amendments: 1) executive committee officers can be removed from their position by a 2/3 vote, 2) include a limit on public comment time length, and 3) committee chairs are appointed by the Commission Chair; seconded by Onno Wieringa • Discussion on the motion: public comment is protected by a constitutional right to know and participate in Montana • Arthur Potts withdrew original motion; seconded by Onno Wieringa • Motion was made by Onno Wieringa to approve the By-Laws with the following amendments: 1) executive committee officers can be removed from their position by a 2/3 vote, and 2) committee chairs are appointed by the Commission Chair; seconded by Randy Brodehl • Motion passes 2. Kelly Hendrix provided an overview of the Draft Project Request Process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion was made by Onno Wieringa to continue developing the Project Request Process; seconded by Arthur Potts • Motion passes 3. Emilie Henry provided an overview of results from the commission meeting structure survey
<p>Break</p>	
<p>Committee Conversation</p> <p>Kelly Hendrix, WMCC Program Coordinator</p> <p>Casey Lewis, WMCC Executive Director</p> <p>Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Kelly Hendrix proposed a Committee Structure strategy that includes a Committee-in-Development Phase with a Development Lead to establish committee expectations and goals that can then be approved by the commission for committee formation. 2. Mike Koopal presented an overview of WMCC staff and Executive Committee recommended committees-in-development: Education & Outreach, AI, and Resource Monitoring/Coordination 3. Casey Lewis provided an overview of potential future committees: stormwater, septic, and additional based on commission interest. 4. Kelly Hendrix led the committee brainstorm exercise. 5. Mike Koopal called for Development Lead volunteers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kate Wilson volunteered for Education & Outreach • Lech Naumovich volunteered for Monitoring & Coordination • Tom Woolf volunteered for AIS, and Phil Matson volunteered to assist. • Mike Koopal volunteered for Septic & Stormwater • Matt Peterson noted interest in a Stormwater Committee 6. Mike Koopal called for a vote on the following committees-in-development: 1) AIS, 2) Monitoring & Coordination, 3) Education & Outreach, and 4) Septic & Stormwater. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motion made by Onno Wieringa to approve all the above committees in development; seconded by Phil Matson • Motion passes

<p>Wrap up & Next Meeting</p> <p>Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair</p>	<p>1. Mike Koopal called for ideas for the next Commission Meeting location.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A poll will be sent by staff with optional dates.
<p>Public Comment</p> <p>Mike Koopal</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mike Koopal called for public comment. 2. Amanda Knuteson, public member of WPCAC, shared appreciation for this interactive meeting and inclusion of the public in discussions. She asked for clarification if Executive Committee meetings are open to the public. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WMCC staff confirmed Exec Comm meetings are always open to the public. 3. Heidi McMaster, Regional Hazmat & IPM Coordinator of Columbia-Pacific Northwest Region 9 for the US Bureau of Reclamation and WMCC member, announced this will be her last meeting on the commission as she starts a new position with BOR. 4. Seeing no further comments, Mike Koopal closed public comment.
<p>Adjourn</p> <p>Mike Koopal, WMCC Chair</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Motion to adjourn made by Onno Wieringa; seconded by Phil Matson 2. Motion passes: meeting adjourned.