

The Montana Conservationist

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News from Montana's Conservation Community



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Krause Creek Project



Flathead Conservation District teams up to restore and repair a creek channel and riparian corridor.

Flathead Conservation District

Each spring, Krause Creek rages through Don and Mary Garner's property with an unnatural hydrology that is leading to big problems. In the first two weeks of November, volunteers from all over the state laced up their work boots and fueled up with coffee to get underway on a project to restore this local stream.

Krause Creek is a seasonally flowing stream that originates in the Swan Mountains and terminates in Echo Lake just north of Bigfork, in Flathead County. Don and Mary reached out to the Flathead Conservation District for help with a project focused on a 1,600-foot section that flows through their property.

Historically, Krause Creek was shallow and meandering; however, development in the natural floodplain and efforts to channelize flows concentrated powerful flood energy and led to extreme erosion and downcutting. For about three months out of the year a torrent of water flows through this stretch creating significant erosion and incision and transporting large amounts of sediment downstream. This not only creates a barrier to wild-life crossing onsite but threatens water quality and aquatic habitat in Echo Lake.

Right: Flathead CD, River Design Group, and community volunteers employ a technique called *Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR)* to restore the stream channel and simultaneously improve the riparian zone along the stream.



The Flathead Conservation District teamed up with Whitefish-based River Design Group and volunteers from the community on a project to restore the creek channel and repair the riparian corridor to a more natural state. To restore the stream, the project utilized a technique called Low-Tech Process-Based Restoration (LTPBR), a methodology which uses the force of the river to do the work. This approach is more cost-effective than employing the use of heavy machinery and costly engineering. Project materials (i.e., branches and logs) were mostly gathered on site, which provided considerable cost savings and the added benefit of thinning the surrounding forest, reducing forest fuel loads, and allowing for enhanced fire resistance.

When arriving at the project site, staff and volunteers were faced with the steep, canyon-like walls of Krause Creek which drop off over 15 feet in some places. Participants got to work in the channel and built 28 beaver dam analogs and post assisted log structures, pounded 222 posts, and collectively contributed 248 hours of volunteer time to the cause. The 28 wooden structures, resembling beaver dams and log jams, will adjust and redirect the flow of the stream to change the shape of the channel and abate further downcutting. The final goal is to create an inset floodplain which will allow native vegetation to establish and stabilize streambanks to prevent future erosion and restore biodiversity and habitat connectivity within the area. Flathead Conservation District and River Design Group will monitor project success over the coming year. If the project performs well in the spring, the Flathead Conservation District plans to install 20 additional structures in the new year.

Right: Project members use thinned material to create woody debris structures that mimic beaver dams and log jams. This debris will change the shape of the channel and abate further downcutting.



Stay tuned for project updates and future opportunities to get involved with this and other projects to restore and protect natural resources in Flathead County.

To learn more about LTPBR, please visit: <https://lowtechpbr.restoration.usu.edu/>

2022 Envirothon



Register now for the 2022 Montana Envirothon! Hosted by Cascade Conservation District.

Cascade Conservation District, DNRC

The Envirothon is an environmental and natural resource conservation problem-solving, teambuilding and leadership experience and competition for high school students (grades 9-12 or ages 14-19) across North America. Incorporating *STEM* (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) principles, experiential learning and hands-on outdoor field experiences, the Envirothon fosters student learning in the areas of Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Soils and Land Use, Wildlife, and Current Environmental Issues.

Participation in the Montana Envirothon—the state-level competition—is open to all students enrolled in grades 9-12 in public, private, vocational technical or home-school program. Students compete in teams of five. There will be \$500 cash prize given to each team member of the winning team. The top scoring team will also be eligible to compete in the NCF Envirothon hosted in Ohio July 24th through July 30th.

About the Envirothon

It's about challenging our youth!

The Envirothon uses the outdoors as an alternative to classroom learning. In this natural setting, students become aware of the many environmental problems that exist today. Working as a team, they learn to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills to arrive at solutions to specific environmental problems.

It's about making teaching fun!

The Envirothon encourages “hands-on” learning. Students learn many interesting facts, but more importantly, learn to listen to various viewpoints to solve problems.

They also have the opportunity to learn from a variety of environmental education professionals. This offers great opportunities for career counseling “in the field.”

It's about changing attitudes!

The best way to promote positive behaviors is to promote positive attitudes. That's the key to a successful Envirothon. Teaching positive attitudes about the world around us has a ripple effect which spreads through communities and benefits the total environment.

It's about preserving our future!

Today's students are tomorrow's homeowners, consumers, and decision-makers. Teachers are faced with the critical job of preparing students to make the best choices about our natural resources. The Envirothon offers a unique approach to help teachers accomplish this task. Using current information on environmental issues, teachers can prepare students to make educated decisions about the world around them.

2022 Event Details

Cascade Conservation District is now accepting registration for this year's Montana Envirothon Competition. The event will be held April 25th & 26th, 2022 in Great Falls Montana.

This event is a great competition involving Range, Soils, Aquatics, Wildlife and Forestry. There is a written test portion along with an oral presentation to solve this year's current issue: “Waste to Resources”.

Those eligible to compete are students registered in grades 9-12 for the current school. Teams consist of five members from the same school and/or organization/association. No more than two teams may enter from each school or organization.

A \$100.00 fee to cover the costs of materials and meals during the state competition will be assessed. [Financial assistance](#) may be available through your local conservation district.

Awards for the State Envirothon will consist of: Certificates of Participation to all Envirothon competitors. Medallions will be presented to each member of the teams placing 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in the competition and High-Test Score. Station Awards will be awarded to individual teams by each of the station leaders. Team Awards will be given to the State champions 2nd and 3rd Place, High Test Score and High Current Issue Presentation for display in their school or meeting place.

There will be \$500 cash prize given to each team member of the winning team of 5 with the top combined score of oral presentation and test scores. This team will also be eligible to compete in the NCF Envirothon hosted in Ohio July 24th through July 30th. There will also be a \$300 cash prize given to each team member of the winning team of 5 with the top test score.

Learn More about the national competition:

<https://envirothon.org/the-competition/current-competition/>

We look forward to seeing you at this year's competition.

Don't miss the fun!

Registration

If you are interested in registering your team, please contact:

Tenlee Atchisonm, *Cascade CD Executive Director*
tenlee@cascadecd.com

For the registration form, rules and hotel information, please contact:

Teresa Wilhelms, *Cascade CD Administrator*
secretary@cascadecd.com
406-866-0020.

Welcome to the New 2022 Big Sky Watershed (BSWC) Members

Montana Association of Conservation Districts

Big Sky Watershed Corps is an Americorps program that places young professionals in Montana watershed communities where they make a measurable difference in local conservation efforts. BSWC members work throughout Montana with a partner agency referred to as a “host site”.

BSWC began in 2011 and has been a huge success within the state, with members making strides in watershed research, project planning and implementation, watershed education and outreach, and community engagement. BSWC is offered through a partnership of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Montana, the Montana Watershed Coordination Council, and the Montana Conservation Corps.

MACD would like to extend a warm welcome and congratulations to the incoming Big Sky Watershed Corps members. We are excited to see all the valuable work that you do!

Name	Host Site
Alex Amann	Bitterroot Water Forum
Casey Beresznewicz	World Wildlife Fund
Gabriel Bourgeois	Flathead Lake Biological Station
Maggie DeFosse	Montana Conservation Corps
Erin Douglas	Montana Audubon Center
Peter Dudley	Montana Audubon
Sunshine Flamer	Flathead Rivers Alliance
Nell Gehrke	Gallatin Valley Land Trust
Nick Goelkel	Montana Audubon Center
Raeya Gordon	Madison Conservation District
Mariah Hellebrandt	BLM Butte Field Office
Christopher Hobson	BLM Billings Field Office
Lyndsey Holloway	USFS Lolo National Forest Missoula Ranger District, Lolo Watershed Group
Saige Jibben	Lake County Conservation District
Josh Abrahamson	Missoula County Weed District
Lena Kara	Glacier National Park
Claire Kirk	Flathead Lake Biological Station
Emma Korntheuer	Hill County Conservation District
Alli Lloyd	Sheridan Community Land Trust
Ali Mann	Bridger Plant Materials Center
Emma Marchisin	Gallatin River Task Force
Ben Masters	Ruby Valley Conservation District

Name	Host Site
Katie McCahan	Yaak Valley Forest Council
Joko McTeer	Carter County Weed District
Kerri Mueller	Missoula Valley Water Quality District
Leslie Nelson	BLM Billings Field Office
Tess Parker	Gallatin Watershed Council
Jessica Ramirez	Lewis & Clark Conservation District
Kassie Robakiewicz	National Wildlife Federation
Gill Rowe	Gallatin Conservation District
Ben Schleicher	Flathead Conservation District
Bailey Servais	Park Conservation District
Cara Shepard	Clark Fork Watershed Education Program
Gabe Siegel	Missoula County Weed District
Ashley Stepniak	Montana Conservation Corps
Oakley Strausser	Sacajawea Audubon Society
Emma Swartz	Home ReSource
Mackenzie Tenan	City of Missoula Stormwater Utility
Pat Treacy	Yellowstone Ecological Research Center
Ethan Weisgerber	Friends of the Missouri Breaks Monument
Talley Withycombe	BLM Billings Field Office
Amanda Zelnis	Clearwater Resource Council
Jenna Zwanger	BLM Butte Field Office



Water Quality Education & Outreach Mini-Grants

About the Mini Grant Program

The goal of the mini-grant program is to provide support for locally-led education and outreach activities that address nonpoint sources of pollution to Montana's surface waters. A priority of this program is to promote new educational activities, improve community awareness, and engage stakeholders in watershed management.

11+

Years Running

\$245,000+

Awarded Funds

96,000+

People Reached

*Leaving \$430,000+ in
nonfederal match*

Since 2013

Example Projects

Youth Stewardship Education

Stormwater Awareness

Irrigation Education

Drought Management Engagement

Land & Water Management Workshops

Educational Media Development

Septic System Maintenance Awareness

Bank Stabilization Demonstrations

Bioengineering Workshops

Rain Garden Demonstrations

2022 Call for Applications: March 9th - April 15th, 5PM

Annual Spring Call | \$28,900 Available | Up to \$4,000 per Applicant | 40% non federal match required

Eligible Applicants

- Local governmental entity
- Nonprofit organization
- Conservation district
- School
- Local watershed or volunteer group (if a legal entity)
- County
- Extension service

How to Apply

1. Visit <https://macdnet.org/mini-grants/> to see examples of previous projects
2. Read the Call for Water Quality Mini-Grant Applications
3. Download the application form
4. Consult MACD staff to ensure the proposed project is a good fit for the mini-grant program and discuss ways to strengthen your application (optional, but encouraged)
5. Complete and sign your application (only signed applications will be considered for funding)
6. Submit your application and proof of liability insurance to MACD by 5:00 p.m. on April 15, 2022.

learn more:

<https://macdnet.org/programs/mini-grants/>



Funding provided by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality via a grant with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency under Section 319(h) of the Clean Water Act.

Contact

Stephanie Adams | MACD Programs Manager
stephanie@macdnet.org
(406) 443-5711 ext. 1

Welcome to New Conservation District and Partner Staff!

Sarah Busmire

*Administrator
Green Mountain Conservation District*



Sarah Busmire is a graduate of Oregon State University with a Bachelor’s degree in Fisheries and Wildlife Sciences. She worked for 7 years in the dude ranching industry before transitioning to the natural resources field. Hailing originally from North Carolina, Northwestern Montana has been her home for the last 2 years and she looks forward to enjoying the many outdoor activities it has to offer including fly fishing, hunting, hiking and camping. She is excited to take on this new endeavor in a field she is passionate about, while helping to protect and enhance natural resources in western Sanders County.

Airiam Uribe

*Administrator
Toole County Conservation District*



Hi, my name is Airiam Uribe. I’m 32 years old and was born on April 13th. I was born in California, where my father was born and raised, my mother was born and raised in Mexico (I’m Caucasian and Mexican, so I’m bi-racial). I moved to Mexico when I was 8 years old, then moved to Arizona at 12 right after 9/11 (from San Luis Rio Colorado, Sonora, Mexico to San Luis, Arizona/ both are border towns right across from each other}. Another thing I should add is that my mother worked in agriculture as a field worker (broccoli and lettuce) since I was about 11 years old until a year ago. I have to say that I am super proud, honored and amazed at how hard my mother worked in the fields. It took a huge toll on her health, as working in agriculture/farming, etc is super hard labor. I lived throughout Yuma County, Arizona until May of 2021 when my husband, kids (3 kids and 2 dogs) and I moved to Shelby, It has been a huge culture shock and difference, but our goal is to be a positive part of our community.

Stephanie Todd

*Administrator
Mineral County Conservation District*



Stephanie has a B.S. in Geosciences with a concentration in Geology, with a Water Resources Management minor. Research specialty includes Clean Water Act, land application of surface water, Geomorphology and Hydrogeologic field experience. In a addition to my current role as MCCD Administrator, I run a small trail riding business guiding in the Lolo National Forest. Currently reside in St. Regis Montana and enjoy family time on the Bar 6T Ranch.

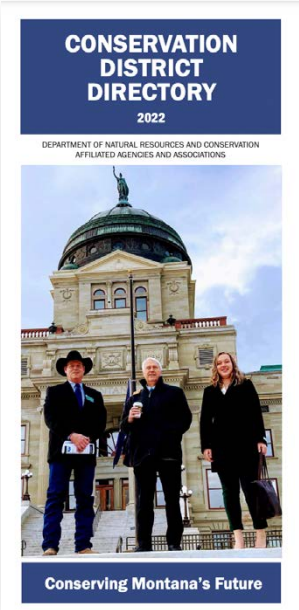
*If we missed someone, please let us know and we will
make sure to feature them in the next TMC!*



Bridger Plant Materials Center 2021 Annual Report

The 2021 annual report presents a brief overview of 2021 activities at the MTPMC within the Montana-Wyoming Plant Materials program and includes links to published Technical Documents on the MTPMC website.

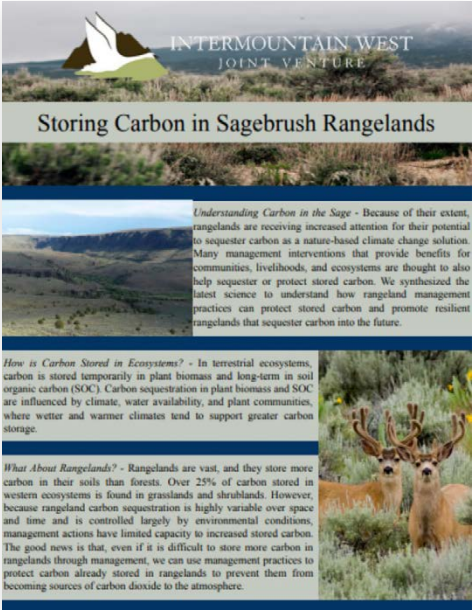
[View PDF](#)



2022 Conservation District Directory

DNRC's 2022 Montana Conservation District Directory Now Available, it can be found on DNRC's website.

[View PDF](#)



Report: Storing Carbon In Western Rangelands

In order to get this important science into the hands of managers and decision-makers, the Intermountain West Joint Venture has produced several resources to help individuals across the west understand how management actions affect carbon sequestration and stored carbon.

[View PDF](#)

Job Opportunities

Admin Assistant

Montana Association of Conservation Districts

The Montana Association of Conservation Districts is seeking and Administrative Assistant in Helena, Montana. The position is part time (10-15hrs per week) and offers a wage of \$16-\$18 an hour DOE.

[Learn More](#)

Piikuni Lands Field Coordinator

Montana Conservation Corps (MCC)

The Field Coordinator (FC) staff position is responsible for the regional coordination and logistical support of all Piikuni Lands Crew (PLC) field-based activities. Primary duties include direct support and mentoring of Crew Leaders and Crew Members, with emphasis on the development and delivery of technical skills training, technical and logistical coordination for crew projects, as well as shared monitoring and implementation of PLC's leadership development program and administrative components. Additional activities will include teaching and modeling fundamental skills to participants, field visitation to help ensure the successful and safe completion of MCC projects, participation in On-Call incident response, and ensuring compliance with MCC policies and procedures. This position is supervised by the Blackfeet Partnerships Liaison, and is expected to maintain good communication between all MCC offices, project partners and crews.

[Learn More](#)

Conservation Grant Manager

Lemhi Soil and Water Conservation District

The Conservation Grant Manager's role is to implement and provide oversight of LSWCD project and project activities by administering contracts, in accordance with project plans and specifications. Advise, coordinate and communicate with LSWCD Supervisors and partner agencies regarding projects.

[Learn More](#)

Upcoming Events

March

Funding Opportunities

Mar 4 <i>10am via Zoom</i>	Soil Corps Discussion Forum MACD has one more opportunity to provide Soil Corps feedback if you missed the Discussion Forums we held in Ennis, Missoula, Great Falls, and Glasgow last month. We had great discussions and wanted to extend a few more days specifically for Areas that we have not heard from Learn More	Mar 4 Financial and Technical Assistance for Forest Landowners USDA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) in Montana were awarded four Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership projects. Private forest landowners located within the priority areas for the following three-year projects can apply for technical and financial assistance
Mar 15, 16 <i>Helena</i>	Water Policy Interim Committee (WPIC) A panel of CD's will give a presentation on river erosion issues on the 16th at 10:30am as part of SJ28 – A study of erosion on the Flathead River. Meeting information	Mar 25 Montana Leopold Conservation Award Seeks Applicants Know a Montana rancher, farmer or forestland owner who goes above and beyond in the stewardship and management of natural resources? Nominate them by for the 2022 Montana Leopold Conservation Award. Nominations may be submitted on behalf of a landowner, or landowners may nominate themselves. Learn More
Mar 16 <i>8:30am in Helena</i>	Section C Interim Budget Committee - Natural Resources The agenda includes quarterly budget updates from natural resource agencies, implementation of the CSKT Water Compact, and an update on the Montana Fire Season and Fire Suppression Fund. Meeting Details	Mar 31 WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program The WaterSMART Cooperative Watershed Management Program Phase I funding opportunity is now available from the Bureau of Reclamation to develop a watershed group, complete watershed management planning activities, and design watershed management activities. Applicants may request up to \$200,000 for projects to be completed within two years. A non-federal cost-share is not required for this funding opportunity. Learn More
Mar 22, 23 <i>Helena</i>	Environmental Quality Council (EQC) As a part HJ27 – A study of conservation district funding – the meeting will include discussion of potential funding sources/ solutions for conservation districts. Read more about HJ27 on the MACD Policy Blog . HJ27 was written and supported by MACD during the 2021 Legislative session. Meeting information	Apr 8 USDA Funding: Climate Smart Commodities (Funding Pool #1) Funding will be provided to partners through the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation for pilot projects to provide incentives to producers and landowners to implement climate-smart production practices, measure/ quantify (GHG) benefits associated with those practices, and develop markets and promote the resulting climate-smart commodities. Learn More
Apr 25-26 <i>Great Falls</i>	2022 Montana Envirothon The Cascade Conservation District is now accepting registration for this year's Montana Envirothon Competition. This event is a great competition involving Range, Soils, Aquatics, Wildlife and Forestry. There is a written test portion along with an oral presentation to solve a current issue. The event will be held April 25th & 26th, 2022 in Great Falls Montana. This year's event current issue is "Waste to Resources". Learn more	Apr 15 2022 Water and Outreach Mini Grants 2022 Water Quality Education & Outreach Mini-Grants open for applications on Mar 9. Applications are due April 15. The goal of the mini-grant program is to provide support for locally-led education and outreach activities that address nonpoint sources of pollution to Montana's surface waters. Apply Calendar Link
May 19 <i>Virginia City</i>	Capacity-Building Workshop with MWCC and Future West Future West and the Montana Watershed Coordination Council invite local conservation leaders to attend an in-person capacity-building workshop on Thursday, May 19, 2022, in Virginia City. We will focus on increasing the sustainability and impact of our work, including building stronger relationships to achieve local conservation goals. Learn More	Apr 29 FY23 Conservation District Administration (CDA) Grants The FY 23 cycle for Conservation District Administration (CDA) grants is now open. For information about the program, eligibility, guidelines, and forms visit DNRC's website Learn More Calendar
May 24, 26 <i>Bozeman</i>	Interdisciplinary Regional Workshop, Toward Convergent Solutions to Water Security The Montana Water Center is hosting a workshop on solutions to Water Security May 24-26, and they're offering to pay for travel for those who participate and apply by Jan. 24. Learn More	May 16 RDG Project Grants For projects that compensate Montana citizens for the effects of exploration and mining on Montana lands and serve the public interest and the State of Montana. Learn More
Jun 14-16 <i>Helena</i>	Spring Board Meeting Meeting Details	May 27 USDA Funding: Climate Smart Commodities (Funding Pool #2) Funding will be provided to partners through the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation for pilot projects to provide incentives to producers and landowners to implement climate-smart production practices, measure/ quantify (GHG) benefits associated with those practices, and develop markets and promote the resulting climate-smart commodities. Learn More
Jun 20 - 26 <i>Bozeman</i>	Pollinator Week Pollinator Week is an annual celebration to raise awareness for pollinators and spread the word about what we can do to protect them. You can celebrate and get involved any way you like! Popular events include planting for pollinators, hosting garden tours, participating in online bee and butterfly ID workshops, and so much more. Learn More	Aug 15 Farm & Ranch Stress Assistance Mini-Grant Opportunity The application for the Farm and Ranch Stress Assistance Network Mini-Grant program is now open! This program was created to address mental health needs in rural communities and the agriculture industry through the use of mental health speakers, workshops and new or expanding trainings that support emotional, psychological, and social well-being. Learn More

Rolling

Training Grants through ARPA

Available through the Montana Grants Application Portal. Nonprofits are eligible: <https://www.covidreliefmt.org/submit>

Conservation District Professional Development Funding

The MWCC Watershed Fund has funding from the Montana DNRC to assist Conservation Districts with expenses for professional development opportunities related to natural resource conservation and watershed health. CDs that receive funding must demonstrate how the opportunity will help them achieve their conservation goals. Funding is available on a rolling basis, depending on availability.

[Learn More](#)

NRCS MT: Applications for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

To learn more, call your [local USDA Service Center](#) or visit www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov. You can also contact: [Allen Persinger](#) for more information.

NRCS MT: Applications for the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program

To learn more, call your local USDA Service Center or visit www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov.

MACD Communications Update

Eric Rannestad

MACD Communications Specialist

In February, MACD's communications were busy promoting the Soil Health Symposium. The event in Billings was a success, with nearly 300 people in attendance. MACD continues to work on the 2022 Annual Report, which will be out next month.

On the legislative front, MACD Executive Director, Rebecca Boslough, has been working hard to keep the [Legislative Policy Blog](#) updated. Visit the blog for all the legislative information relating to the 2023 Legislative Session (and more) that has been posted in recent months.

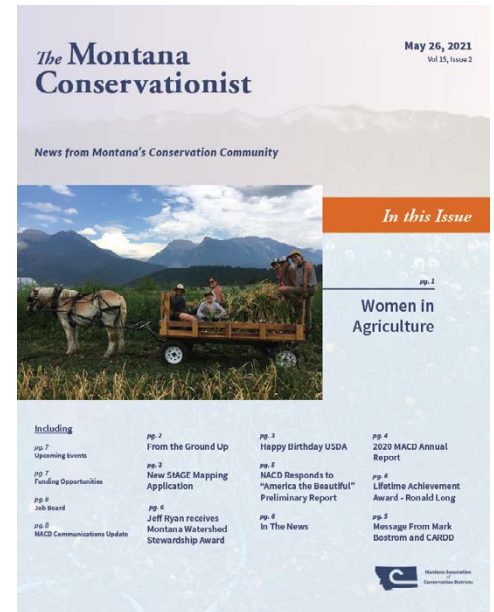
Since the beginning of 2022, the CD Outreach Work Group (CDOWG) has met twice with its newly formed Steering Committee. The steering committee is composed of CD Staff and Supervisors from districts across the state. The group is beginning the process of creating a strategic marketing plan for conservation districts, and as that larger outreach strategy is created, the Steering Committee is brainstorming ways to increase the outreach capacity for Montana CDs.

If interested in submitting a story to *The Montana Conservationist*, please send your proposals to Eric Rannestad (eric@macdnet.org).

Eric Rannestad

MACD Communications Specialist
eric@macdnet.org
860-391-9518

TMC Submissions



To submit your proposal, please email MACD Communications Specialist, Eric Rannestad.

eric@macdnet.org

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