



## Resolution 23-03

*Resolution type: Legislative Directive*

***Failed to pass as amended at MACD 2023 Annual Convention***

### Irrigator Water Rights

Submitted by: Roosevelt CD

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#### 1. BACKGROUND DESCRIBING ISSUE \*

*Please clearly describe for Committee and MACD Board discussion.*

- This may be used as background information for “whereas” statements in drafted legislation.
- Please note that after a legislative directive is passed by membership at the Convention, MACD will work with legislative sponsors, the sponsoring CD, legislative staff, and MACD Legislative and Resolutions Committee members to formally draft legislation.

The State of Montana used the authority of Montana’s Conservation Districts to reserve water for future irrigation development. Potential projects were identified and water quantified and reserved for future development.

Most of Montana’s Conservation Districts don’t have the resources or the expertise to administer water rights.

Landowners developing irrigation may be deterred from using Conservation reserved water due to local politics and personalities. And some uncertainty of making a large investment based on future local administration of reserved water.

\*Water right for irrigation use only

#### 2. LANGUAGE TO BE INCLUDED IN LEGISLATION DRAFTED BY MACD \*

*Please clearly and concisely, using active verbs, state the specific action(s) that this legislation will direct or impact.*

- THIS IS GENERALLY WHERE A "THEREFORE" STATEMENT WOULD GO.
- The background information above and information here will be used to write the body of the legislation.

- Please note that the MACD Legislative and Resolutions Committee, MACD Staff, MACD Board, Legislative Staff, or the legislator sponsoring this bill may recommend or implement changes. The sponsoring district and MACD membership will be kept informed of this.

That MACD will work towards a process that would allow Montana's Conservation Districts to transfer reserved surface water rights to regular Montana State water rights once a project is complete and water has been put to beneficial use if the district chooses.

**3. SPONSOR(S) ACTIONS TO DATE \***

What has been done to address the issue, which agencies and organizations have also addressed this?

Discussions have been held at board meetings and MRCDC board meetings

**4. HOW WILL YOUR DISTRICT CONTINUE TO SUPPORT, BE INVOLVED WITH, AND TRACK THIS RESOLUTION BEFORE AND DURING THE UPCOMING LEGISLATIVE SESSION? \***

We will research, educate, support, and testify

**5. ARE THERE ANY EXISTING MACD POLICIES THAT THIS WOULD IMPACT OR INTERACT WITH? \***

n/a

**6. HOW WOULD THIS LEGISLATIVE DIRECTIVE IMPACT MACD? \*** (budget, staff time, political capital, partnerships, legislative capacity, etc)

It will require staff time, partnerships, and legislative capacity.

**7. WOULD THIS POLICY STATEMENT IMPACT THE STATE BUDGET? IF SO, HOW? \***

There is a potential impact to lobbying funds to support this resolution.

**8. MEETING AND DATE ADOPTED BY SPONSORING ENTITY \***

August 1st, 2023

**AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE(S) AND TITLE(S) \***

Please type your name and title

Buzz Mattelin, RCCD Board Member