



Resolution 25-02

Resolution type: Policy Statement

Requirement to Adhere to MACD Resolution Process

Submitted by: Lewis and Clark Conservation District

BACKGROUND DESCRIBING ISSUE *

In 2025, a conservation district proposed state legislation (SB 472) without first submitting the proposal through the established MACD resolution process. The bill had the potential to impact all conservation districts in Montana, yet no opportunity was provided for input or consensus from other districts. This unilateral action undermined the collaborative nature of MACD's policy development framework and placed other districts—such as the Lewis and Clark Conservation District—in difficult positions with state agency partners. It created the appearance that multiple districts had supported or initiated the bill, damaging trust, straining relationships, and resulting in an embarrassing and politically harmful rift within the conservation district community.

SPONSOR(S) ACTIONS TO DATE *

To date, no formal action or response has been taken to address the situation. The conservation district in question pursued state-level legislation (SB 472) that impacted other conservation districts without engaging in the MACD resolution process. No punitive measures or official review were conducted, and the matter highlighted a gap in MACD's ability to enforce procedural accountability.

ACTUAL POLICY STATEMENT TO BE INCLUDED IN MACD POLICY BOOK IF ADOPTED *

If a Conservation District in Montana initiates, promotes, or authors legislation at the state level that has implications for any Conservation District other than their own, and does so without first submitting the proposal through the established Montana Association of

conservation districts (MACD) resolution process, MACD shall not support the legislation unless the MACD Board determines it to be an emergency issue.

In such cases, the authoring conservation district shall be ineligible to receive MACD support, excluding basic services such as website and email hosting, for a period of one calendar year.

An emergency issue is defined as a matter arising at the state legislative level that poses an immediate and substantial threat to the legal authority, operational capacity, or core funding of all or a majority of Montana's conservation districts, and for which action through the normal MACD resolution process is not feasible. Determination of an emergency issue shall be made by a vote of the MACD Board of Directors.

HOW WILL YOUR DISTRICT CONTINUE TO SUPPORT AND BE INVOLVED WITH THIS POLICY STATEMENT/STANCE? *

The Lewis and Clark Conservation District will continue to actively participate as a member of MACD and remain committed to following the established resolution process when proposing legislation that may affect other conservation districts. We will also advocate for adherence to this process among our peers to uphold transparency, accountability, and unity within the statewide network.

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

None currently identified. This resolution reinforces the importance of the existing MACD resolution process but does not conflict with or amend any known existing MACD policies.

HOW WOULD THIS POLICY IMPACT MACD? * (budget, staff time, political capital, partnerships, legislative capacity, etc)

This policy would create greater predictability for MACD's lobbying efforts and reinforce unity among member districts when engaging in statewide legislative advocacy. By requiring the use of the established resolution process, it would help MACD conserve political capital, maintain consistent messaging, and ensure that staff and board resources are directed toward initiatives with broad member support.

**WOULD THIS POLICY STATEMENT IMPACT THE STATE OF MONTANA BUDGET? IF SO,
HOW? ***

No. This policy statement pertains solely to internal MACD procedures and member district conduct. It does not propose or require any changes to the State of Montana's budget or state agency operations.

MEETING AND DATE ADOPTED BY SPONSORING ENTITY

Lewis and Clark Conservation District Board of Supervisors Regular Meeting, held August 14, 2025.

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE(S) AND TITLE(S) *

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeff Ryan", is written over a horizontal line.

Jeff Ryan, Chair

August 14, 2025
Date