

**MINUTES**  
**MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**68th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**  
**COMMITTEE ON (H) NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Call to Order:** Chair Rep. Steve Gunderson-R, on January 11, 2023 at 3:00 PM, in 172

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Rep. Steve Gunderson, Chair (R)  
Rep. Steve Gist, Vice Chair (R)  
Rep. Marilyn Marler, Vice Chair (D)  
Rep. Jill Cohenour (D)  
Rep. Ross Fitzgerald (R)  
Rep. Tom France (D)  
Rep. Jedediah Hinkle (R)  
Rep. Jonathan Karlen (D)  
Rep. Marty Malone (R)  
Rep. Russel Miner (R)  
Rep. Gary Parry (R)  
Rep. Sue Vinton (R)  
Rep. Kenneth Walsh (R)

**Members Excused:** Rep. Rhonda Knudsen (R)  
Rep. Marvin Weatherwax (D)

**Staff Present:** LJ Jennings, Secretary  
Joe Kolman, Research Analyst  
John Olson, Attorney

**Audio Committees:** These minutes are in outline form only. They provide a list of participants and a record of official action taken by the committee. The link to the audio recording of the meeting is available on the Legislative Branch website.

**Committee Business Summary:**

Hearing & Date Posted:

HB 34 12/28/2022  
HB 114 12/28/2022

Executive Action:

HB 34 DO PASS AS AMENDED  
HB 54 DO PASS  
HB 114 DO PASS  
HB 122 DO PASS  
HB 141 DO PASS

15:02:17 Vice Chair Marler assumed position of the Chair

**HEARING ON HB 34 - Exempt certain DNRC grants from MEPA**

**Opening Statement:**

15:02:18 Rep. Steve Gist (R), HD 25, opened the hearing on HB 34, Exempt certain DNRC grants from MEPA.

15:03:53 Autumn Coleman, Resource Development Bureau Chief, Dept. Natural Resources and Conservation, (DNRC)

[EXHIBIT\(230111NAHa1\)](#)

**Proponent Testimony:**

15:15:49 Kelly Lynch, Montana League of Cities and Towns (MTLCT)

15:17:10 Jason Rittal, Montana Association of Counties (MACo)

15:17:48 Clayton Elliott, Montana Trout Unlimited

15:19:16 Mike Murphy, Montana Water Resources Association

15:20:17 Lieutenant Governor Kristen Juras, Governor's Officer

15:20:45 Krista Lee Evans, Senior Water Rights Coalition and Agriculture

15:21:07 Raylee Honeycutt, Montana Stock Growers Association (MSGA)

15:21:39 Rebecca Boslough-King, Montana Association Of Conservation Districts

15:22:44 Rachel Cone, Montana Farm Bureau Federation

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

15:23:56 Rep. Marilyn Marler

15:24:00 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle

15:24:09 Rep. Steve Gist-R  
15:24:34 Autumn Coleman, DNRC  
15:25:22 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle

**Closing Statement:**

15:27:00 Rep. Steve Gist (R), HD 25, closed the hearing on HB 34.  
15:27:59 **Recessed**  
15:45:05 **Reconvened**  
15:45:08 Chair Gunderson assumed position of the Chair.

**HEARING ON HB 114 - Revise timelines for water right permit and change process**

**Opening Statement:**

15:45:30 Rep. Sue Vinton (R), HD 56, opened the hearing on HB 114, Revise timelines for water right permit and change process.

**Proponent Testimony:**

15:48:53 Lieutenant Governor Kristen Juras, Governor's Office  
15:52:06 Anna Pakenham-Stevenson, Water Administrator, Dept. Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)  
[EXHIBIT\(230111NAHa2\)](#)  
16:02:36 Cory Shaw, Executive Director, Montana Building Industry Association (MBIA)  
16:04:30 John Tietz, Self  
16:07:38 Julie Merritt, Water Rights Consultant  
16:14:27 Madison Grady, Montana Association of Realtors (MAR)  
16:15:03 Kelly Lynch, Montana League of Cities and Towns (MTLCT)  
16:15:28 SK Rossi, on behalf of Missoula and Bozeman  
16:15:58 Clayton Elliott, Montana Trout Unlimited

16:17:05 Rhonda Wiggers, Montana Water Well Drillers Association

16:18:22 JM Peck, Self

16:20:23 Kurt Dykema, President, Association of Gallatin Agriculture Irrigators (AGAI)

16:21:08 Krista Lee Evans, Association of Gallatin Agriculture Irrigators (AGAI) and Senior Water Rights Coalition (SWRC)

16:22:19 Rachel Cone, Montana Farm Bureau Federation

16:23:44 Mike Murphy, Montana Water Resources Association

16:24:51 Raylee Honeycutt, Montana Stock Growers Association (MSGA)

16:26:21 Rebecca Boslough-King, Montana Association of Conservation Districts

16:27:10 Rachel Prevost, Montana Farmers Union

16:27:54 Eugene Graf, Self

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

16:29:50 Rep. Steve Gunderson

16:29:52 Rep. Jill Cohenour

16:30:06 Krista Lee Evans, AGAI and SWRC

16:31:53 Anna Pakenham Stevenson, DNRC

16:33:21 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle

16:36:53 Rep. Marty Malone

16:39:50 Rep. Tom France

16:42:05 Rep. Steve Gist

16:43:05 Rep. Gary Parry

16:44:14 Rep. Ross Fitzgerald

16:48:47 Nate Ward, Water Rights Bureau Chief, Dept. Natural Resources and  
Conservations (DNRC)

**Closing Statement:**

16:52:53 Rep. Sue Vinton (R), HD 56, closed the hearing on HB 114.

16:55:36 **Recessed**

17:14:04 **Reconvened**

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 34 - Exempt certain DNRC grants from MEPA**

17:14:43 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 34 DO PASS.**

**Discussion:**

17:14:48 Rep. Steve Gunderson

17:14:56 Joe Kolman

17:15:53 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 34 BE AMENDED.**

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

17:16:45 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 34 DO PASS AS AMENDED.**

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 54 - Revise laws related to petroleum brownfields**

17:17:49 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 54 DO PASS.**

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 114 - Revise timelines for water right permit and change  
process**

17:19:00 **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 114 DO PASS.**

**Discussion:**

17:19:15 Rep. Jill Cohenour

Chair Steve Gunderson

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 122 - Revise solicitation requirements for water projects**

17:20:47      **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 122 DO PASS.**

**Discussion:**

17:21:10      Rep. Jill Cohenour

17:21:45      Joe Kolman

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 141 - Revise Blackfoot mitigation fund laws**

17:22:55      **Motion:** Rep. Steve Gist moved that **HB 141 DO PASS.**

**Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 17:25:02

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LJ Jennings, Secretary

Additional Documents: [EXHIBIT\(230111NAHaad\)](#)