

**MINUTES**  
**MONTANA SENATE**  
**68th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**  
**COMMITTEE ON (S) NATURAL RESOURCES**

**Call to Order:** Chair Sen. Jeffrey Welborn-R, on January 13, 2023 at 2:22 PM, in 303

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:** Sen. Jeffrey Welborn, Chair (R)  
Sen. Shane Morigeau, Vice Chair (D)  
Sen. Walt Sales, Vice Chair (R)  
Sen. Bob Brown (R)  
Sen. Willis Curdy (D)  
Sen. Pat Flowers (D)  
Sen. Bruce Gillespie (R)  
Sen. Mike Lang (R)  
Sen. Ryan Lynch (D)  
Sen. Jason Small (R)  
Sen. Barry Usher (R)

**Staff Present:** Jason Mohr, Research Analyst  
Jacelyn Sterling, Secretary

**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:

SB 17 01/09/2023

Executive Action:

SB 43 DO PASS AS AMENDED  
SB 42 DO PASS AS AMENDED  
SB 72 DO PASS AS AMENDED  
SB 17 DO PASS

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 43 - Revise notice for certain timber sales**

14:24:01 **Motion:** Sen. Shane Morigeau moved that **SB 43 DO PASS.**

14:24:01 **Vote:** Motion failed unanimously by voice vote.

14:24:26 **Motion:** Sen. Willis Curdy moved that **SB 43 BE AMENDED.**

**Discussion:**

14:24:53 Sen. Willis Curdy

14:25:13 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn

14:25:19 Sen. Barry Usher

14:25:48 Sen. Willis Curdy

14:26:11 Sen. Barry Usher

14:26:25 Sen. Willis Curdy

14:26:48 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn

14:26:53 Sen. Bob Brown

14:27:25 Sen. Shane Morigeau

14:28:03 Sen. Mike Lang

14:28:24 Sen. Willis Curdy

14:24:26 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

14:28:59 **Motion:** Sen. Shane Morigeau moved that **SB 43 DO PASS AS AMENDED.**

14:28:59 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 42 - Revise laws related to easements on state lands**

14:29:57 **Motion:** Sen. Shane Morigeau moved that **SB 42 DO PASS.**

14:29:57 **Vote:** Motion failed unanimously by voice vote.

14:30:57 **Motion:** Sen. Walt Sales moved that **SB 42 BE AMENDED.**

**Discussion:**

- 14:31:09 Sen. Walt Sales
- 14:30:57 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.
- 14:32:42 **Motion:** Sen. Walt Sales moved that **SB 42 DO PASS AS AMENDED.**
- 14:32:42 **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 72 - Revise judicial administration of water rights**

- 14:34:08 **Motion:** Sen. Walt Sales moved that **SB 72 DO PASS.**
- 14:34:08 **Vote:** Motion failed unanimously by voice vote.
- 14:34:26 **Motion:** Sen. Walt Sales moved that **SB 72 BE AMENDED.**

**Discussion:**

- 14:34:40 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn
- 14:34:58 Sen. Walt Sales
- 14:36:54 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn
- 14:37:06 Sen. Barry Usher
- 14:37:30 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn
- 14:38:18 Sen. Walt Sales
- 14:41:12 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn
- 14:41:22 Sen. Walt Sales
- 14:42:53 Jason Mohr
- 14:43:26 Sen. Willis Curdy
- 14:44:29 Sen. Walt Sales
- 14:45:17 Sen. Bob Brown
- 14:46:47 Sen. Walt Sales
- 14:47:29 Sen. Bob Brown
- 14:47:42 Sen. Walt Sales
- 14:48:25 Sen. Bob Brown
- 14:48:36 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn

14:48:48 Sen. Walt Sales  
14:52:08 Sen. Ryan Lynch  
14:52:38 Sen. Walt Sales  
14:53:05 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn  
14:53:26 Sen. Walt Sales  
14:55:13 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn  
14:55:18 Sen. Mike Lang  
14:55:58 Sen. Walt Sales  
14:58:24 Jason Mohr  
14:59:09 Sen. Walt Sales  
14:59:15 Sen. Bob Brown  
14:59:42 Sen. Walt Sales  
15:00:02 Sen. Bob Brown  
15:00:33 Sen. Walt Sales  
15:00:46 Sen. Bob Brown  
15:00:59 Sen. Walt Sales  
15:01:40 Sen. Bob Brown  
15:01:45 Sen. Walt Sales  
15:01:51 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn  
15:02:26 Sen. Barry Usher  
15:01:26 Sen. Jason Small left the meeting.  
14:34:26 **Vote:** Motion carried 10 - 1 by roll call vote with Sen. Usher, voting no.  
15:05:11 **Motion:** Sen. Walt Sales moved that **SB 72 DO PASS AS AMENDED.**  
**Discussion:**  
15:05:23 Sen. Ryan Lynch  
15:05:50 Sen. Barry Usher  
15:06:52 Sen. Walt Sales  
15:07:57 Sen. Bob Brown  
15:05:11 **Vote:** Motion carried 6 - 5 by roll call vote with Sen. Brown, Sen. Lang, Sen. Lynch, Sen. Morigeau, Sen. Usher, voting no.

**HEARING ON SB 17 - Revise oversight of stream gauge network**

**Opening Statement:**

15:12:35 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn (R), SD 36, opened the hearing on SB 17, Revise oversight of stream gauge network.

**Proponent Testimony:**

15:15:18 Clayton Elliot, Montana Trout Unlimited

15:17:24 Paul Azevedo, Water Management Bureau DNRC

15:17:53 Krista Lee Evans, Senior Water Rights Coalition, Association of Gallatin Agricultural Irrigators, Montana Farm Bureau Federation

15:18:39 Derf Johnson, Montana Environmental Information Center

15:19:00 Eileen Ryce, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

15:19:34 Mike Murphy, Montana Water Resources Association

**Opponent Testimony:**

None

**Informational Witness Testimony:**

None

**Questions from Committee:**

15:21:05 Sen. Willis Curdy

15:23:00 Sen. Bob Brown

15:23:36 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn-R

15:24:56 Sen. Bob Brown

15:25:03 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn-R

15:25:21 Sen. Ryan Lynch

15:25:35 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn-R

**Closing Statement:**

15:25:52 Sen. Jeffrey Welborn (R), SD 36, closed the hearing on SB 17.

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON SB 17 - Revise oversight of stream gauge network**

15:26:40      **Motion:** Sen. Barry Usher moved that **SB 17 DO PASS.**

15:26:40      **Vote:** Motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 15:27:27

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Jacelyn Sterling, Secretary

Additional Documents: [EXHIBIT\(230113NASaad\)](#)