



ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY COUNCIL 69th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

Willis Curdy
John Esp
Pat Flowers
Wylie Galt
Forrest Mandeville
Tony Tezak

HOUSE MEMBERS

Paul Fielder
Tom France
Steve Gist
Jedediah Hinkle
Shannon Maness
Joshua Seckinger

PUBLIC MEMBERS

Jim Keane
Mike Mershon
Jon Metropoulos
Richard Roth
Brian Yablonski

COMMITTEE STAFF

Joseph Carroll - Attorney
Jason Mohr - Legislative
Environmental Analyst
Jacelyn Sterling - Secretary

MINUTES LOG

October 22, 2025
Capital Room 317 and Zoom
Helena, Montana

Please note: This document is a Minutes Log and provides annotation of the time elapsed between the beginning of the meeting and the time at which the item was presented or discussed, a motion was made, or a vote was taken. The narrative presented here is provided only as a guide to the audio or video recording of the meeting. The official discussion, motion, or vote is available on the audio or video archive of this meeting. The Legislature does not prepare a transcript of the meeting activities. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion on the audio or video recording of this meeting.

Access to an electronic copy of these minutes and the audio or video recording is provided from the Legislative Branch home page at <https://leg.mt.gov>. From the home page, select the "Committees" drop down menu at the top, then select Administrative or Interim, and the appropriate committee. The written minutes log can be located by expanding the accordion menu for the date of the meeting. Links to the audio/video files can be located by selecting the Video/Audio button on the same page, then the "past/current recordings" button. From there, use the calendar to select the date of the meeting you wish to view/listen to. The written Minutes Log, along with links to the audio and video recordings, is listed by meeting date on the interim committee's web page. Each of the Exhibits is linked and can be viewed by clicking on the Exhibit of interest. All Exhibits are public information and may be printed. Please contact the Legislative Services Division at 406-444-3064 for more information.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Paul Fielder, Presiding Officer (R)
Sen. Willis Curdy, Vice Presiding Officer (D)
Sen. John Esp (R)
Sen. Pat Flowers (D)
Rep. Steve Gist (R)
Rep. Jedediah Hinkle (R)
Jim Keane, Public Member
Rep. Shannon Maness (R)
Mike Mershon, Public Member
Jon Metropoulos, Public Member
Richard Roth, Governor's Designated Representative
Rep. Joshua Seckinger (D)
Brian Yablonski, Public Member

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Sen. Tony Tezak (R)
Sen. Wylie Galt (R)
Sen. Forrest Mandeville (R)
Rep. Tom France (D)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Joseph Carroll, Legal Staff
Jason Mohr, Legislative Environmental Analyst
Rachel Weiss, Research Director
Jacelyn Sterling, Secretary

AGENDA [\(Attachment 1\)](#)

VISITORS' LIST [\(Attachment 2\)](#)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

13:01:32 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM. The committee secretary took roll.

OPENING REMARKS

13:03:30 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder

ADOPTION OF FINAL WORK PLAN

13:05:14 Jason Mohr, Legislative Environmental Analyst, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

[EXHIBIT 1](#)

Motion

13:07:44 Sen John Esp. moved to adopt the Environmental Quality Council workplan for the 2025-26 interim.

Vote

13:08:03 Carried unanimously by voice vote.

[PROXIES](#)

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 62 (STUDY OF WILDFIRE PREVENTION/RESILIENCE)

13:09:20 Jason Mohr, Legislative Environmental Analyst, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

13:10:44 Sen. Tony Tezak joined the meeting.

13:11:02 Wyatt Frampton, Deputy Forestry Administrator, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)

[EXHIBIT 2](#)

Public Comment

13:18:17 Noah Marion, Wild Montana

[EXHIBIT 3](#)

13:20:38 Kelly Pohl, Associate Director, Headwaters Economics
(See Exhibit 3)

Committee Questions / Discussion

13:24:42 Rep. Joshua Seckinger
13:25:18 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:26:11 Sen. John Esp
13:26:33 Kelly Pohl, Headwaters Economics
13:27:17 Sen. John Esp
13:27:50 Jason Mohr, LSD
13:29:02 Rep. Shannon Maness
13:29:36 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:31:23 Jim Keane
13:34:24 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:34:57 Sen. Pat Flowers
13:35:37 Kelly Pohl, Headwaters Economics
13:35:53 Sen. Pat Flowers
13:36:57 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:38:47 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
13:39:30 Rep. Steve Gist
13:41:06 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:41:33 Sen. John Esp
13:42:02 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:42:13 Rep. Joshua Seckinger
13:44:09 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:45:01 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
(See Exhibit 3, Table 12)
13:52:10 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:52:30 Rep. Steve Gist
13:52:59 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:53:23 Brian Yablonski
13:56:51 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:58:16 Richard Roth
13:58:39 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
13:59:35 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
14:04:36 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
14:04:50 Sen. Pat Flowers
14:06:14 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
14:06:36 Mike Mershon
14:07:39 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
14:09:06 Rep. Steve Gist

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 42 (STUDY OF NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL)

- 14:10:20 Jason Mohr, Legislative Environmental Analyst, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 4](#)
[EXHIBIT 5](#)
- 14:12:50 Lizz Lodman, Administrator, Montana Invasive Species Council (MISC)
[EXHIBIT 6](#)
- 14:17:47 Jasmine Chaffee, State Noxious Weed Coordinator, Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA)
 (See Exhibit 6)

Public Comment

- 14:49:35 Dave Burch, Weed Board Chair, Lewis and Clark County
- 14:56:48 Karli Johnson, Montana Farm Bureau Federation
- 14:58:15 Amy Adler, Noxious Weed Coordinator, Rosebud County
- 15:03:07 Amber Burch, Noxious Weed Coordinator, Beaverhead County
- 15:05:37 Becky Kington, Executive Director, Montana Weed Control Association

Committee Questions / Discussion

- 15:07:20 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
- 15:10:22 Amy Adler, Rosebud County
- 15:11:24 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
- 15:12:13 Amy Adler, Rosebud County
- 15:14:20 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
- 15:14:47 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
- 15:15:20 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
- 15:15:48 Jon Metropoulos
- 15:16:12 Jason Mohr, LSD
- 15:17:06 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
- 15:17:26 Sen. John Esp
- 15:20:14 Sen. Pat Flowers
- 15:21:52 Jasmine Chaffee, MDA
- 15:23:42 Sen. Pat Flowers
- 15:24:07 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
- 15:24:14 Mike Mershon
- 15:25:27 Dave Burch, Lewis and Clark County
- 15:29:05 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
- 15:29:20 Rep. Steve Gist
- 15:33:08 Dave Burch, Lewis and Clark County
- 15:33:23 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
- 15:33:35 Jim Keane

15:34:01 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
15:34:35 Jasmine Chaffee, MDA
15:34:52 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder

ADMINISTRATIVE RULE REVIEW

15:36:38 Joseph Carroll, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 7](#)

Committee Questions / Discussion

15:38:42 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
15:38:48 Joseph Carroll, LSD
15:39:22 Sen. Pat Flowers
15:39:49 Emily Cooper, Licensing Bureau Chief, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks (FWP)
15:44:00 Joseph Carroll, LSD

15:44:29 **Recessed**

15:56:44 **Reconvened**

DIRECTORS' REPORT: ANNUAL AGENCY PLAN (2-12-104, MCA), ANNUAL AGENCY PERFORMANCE REPORT (2-12-105, MCA), ADDITIONAL TOPICS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION (DNRC)

15:57:26 Amanda Kaster, Director, DNRC
[EXHIBIT 8](#)
[EXHIBIT 9](#)

Public Comment

16:12:16 None

Committee Questions / Discussion

16:12:39 Rep. Shannon Maness
16:14:49 Dir. Amanda Kaster, DNRC
16:16:08 Jim Keane
16:17:22 Dir. Amanda Kaster, DNRC
16:18:13 Sen. Pat Flowers
16:18:35 Dir. Amanda Kaster, DNRC
16:19:04 Rep. Joshua Seckinger
16:19:37 Dir. Amanda Kaster, DNRC
16:20:16 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
16:20:29 Rep. Joshua Seckinger
16:20:47 Dir. Amanda Kaster, DNRC
16:21:21 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy

16:22:38 Dir. Amanda Kaster, DNRC
 16:22:50 Shawn Thomas, Division Administrator, The Forestry and Trust Lands Division, DNRC
 16:23:41 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
 16:29:44 Shawn Thomas, DNRC
 16:29:56 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
 16:30:02 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
 16:30:24 Rep. Steve Gist
 16:32:32 Shawn Thomas, DNRC
 16:33:35 Dir. Amanda Kaster, DNRC

**DIRECTORS' REPORT: ANNUAL AGENCY PLAN (2-12-104, MCA), ANNUAL AGENCY PERFORMANCE REPORT (2-12-105, MCA), ADDITIONAL TOPICS
 DEPARTMENT OF FISH WILDLIFE AND PARKS (FWP)**

16:34:09 Kristy Clark, Director, FWP

Committee Questions / Discussion

16:40:22 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
 16:40:31 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
 16:41:55 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
 16:42:23 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
 16:42:45 Jim Keane
 16:43:09 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
 16:45:09 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
 16:45:29 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
 16:46:05 Rep. Joshua Seckinger
 16:46:16 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
 16:47:07 Sen. Pat Flowers
 16:47:49 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
 16:48:57 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
 16:49:53 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
[EXHIBIT 11](#)
 16:53:42 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle
 16:55:10 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
 16:55:25 Rep. Joshua Seckinger
 16:57:20 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
 16:57:33 Mike Mershon
 16:58:08 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
 16:58:47 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy

16:59:38 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP
17:00:36 Mike Mershon
17:00:58 Dir. Kristy Clark, FWP

Public Comment

17:01:38 Mark Cooke, Wolves of the Rockies

RECESS UNTIL 10/23/2025

Recess: 17:03:37