

Helena-Lewis and Clark Resource Advisory Committee
SUMMARY OF MEETING

June 26, 2024

The Helena-Lewis and Clark RAC convened for its first meeting at 1 p.m. on June 26, 2024, at the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest supervisor's office in Great Falls, Mont. HLF RAC Coordinator Chiara Cipriano introduced the acting DFO for the meeting, Michael Munoz.

Members of the public were invited to attend the meeting during its scheduled time between 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. Microsoft Teams was also utilized to provide hybrid access to the meeting.

Committee members present:

- Patti Russ (A)
- Alan 'AJ' Korslein (A)
- Jody Cox (A) – Arrived late.
- Beth Hill (B)
- Dean Rowland (B)
- Donald Amundson (B)
- Chris Aune (B)
- Daniel Pocha (C)
- Cody McDonald (C)
- Gerald "Tucker" Hughes (C)
- Dawnita Deichmann-Sampsel (C) – Present on Microsoft Teams

Staff of the US Forest Service attending, in addition to Chiara Cipriano and Mike Munoz, were:

- Matthew Ferrell, partnership coordinator
- Tammy Petersen, admin officer
- Mandy Alvino, Helena Ranger District
- Barb Long, Rocky Mountain Ranger District
- Jacob Hoppe, Belt Creek-White Sulphur Springs
- Forest Moulton, Lincoln Ranger District
- Arian Randal, deputy forest archeologist

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND ITEMS OF INTEREST

This was the first time the HLF Resource Advisory Committee had convened in person since the Missouri River and Central Montana RACs merged earlier in 2024. RAC members introduced themselves to one another and shared their affiliations. Prior to the meeting, RAC members had ranked the project proposals on a 1-10 scale so that the projects ranked highest rose to the top of the list and could be more easily recommended.

BUDGET

The committee had a total of \$739,543.25 to award and 27 project proposals to review that collectively requested over \$1.4 million. The RAC committee members considered which counties had put funding in the pot and in total it was determined that there was \$339,275.62 available from the Judith Basin and Meagher counties and \$434,553.82 available from Lewis and Clark, Broadwater and Teton counties. Following sequestration, the total remaining in the two pots totaled to \$739,543.15.

COMMITTEE-INITIATED DISCUSSION

The committee quickly moved to approve projects that scored highest and considered projects that improved watershed health and trails and roads in the respective counties. There were some informal sidebars that took place about the methodology of the Smith River weed treatment project (#9) and what would be the most effective way to eradicate the weeds. In the end, the committee agreed to fund that project. There was also a sidebar about whether purchasing another UTV would be the best way to monitor illegal Jeep activity. In the end, the committee decided not to fund that project (#20).

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interests between committee members and those submitting projects was identified.

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

In total, committee members reviewed the 27 project proposal applications. The applications included: 10 internal submissions from Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest staff, 2 proposals from the Montana Discovery Foundation, 2 from the Montana Conservation Corps, 2 from Preserve Montana, 2 from Sheriff Everett Misner, and individual submissions from the Helena Climbers Association, Last Chance Nordic Ski Club, City of Helena, Prickly Pear Land Trust, Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation, Last Chance Backcountry Horsemen, Montana Bicycle Guild, Sheriff Jon Lopp, and the Alpine Ecosystem Research Institute. A total of 19 project proposals were recommended to move forward.

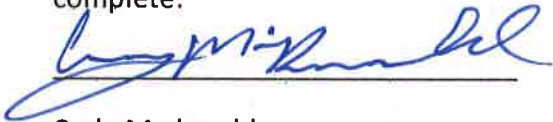
ELECTION OF RAC CHAIR

The next item of business was electing a Chair of the HLF committee. Cody McDonald was nominated and agreed to serve in that leadership role. There was unanimous support from the RAC committee members. Cody will now serve as the HLF RAC chair til the end of his four-year term on 8/10/2026, unless changed at a meeting before then.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 P.M.

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge, the foregoing minutes are accurate and complete.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cody McDonald', is written over a horizontal line.

Cody McDonald

HLF RAC Chair

These minutes will be formally considered by the Council at its next meeting, and any corrections or notations will be incorporated in the minutes of that meeting.