

Helena-Lewis and Clark Resource Advisory Committee

PUBLIC MEETING

Sept. 4, 2025 | 02:00 PM – 05:00 PM (ET)

MEETING MINUTES

The meeting was held at the Helena-Lewis and Clark NF Forest Headquarters in Helena, MT and was open to the public to join virtually via Teams webinar.

A *Federal Register* notice was published, providing general information and public participation details for the meeting: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/07/31/2025-14489/helena-lewis-and-clark-resource-advisory-committee>

Committee website: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/r01/helena-lewisclark/working-with-us/committees/helena-lewis-and-clark-resource-advisory-committee>

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ACRONYMS

- **DFO** – Designated Federal Officer
- **RAC** – Resource Advisory Committee
- **USDA** – United States Department of Agriculture
- **PAO** – Public Affairs Officer
- **BMWF** – Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation
- **CDT**- Continental Divide Trail
- **MCC** – Montana Conservation Corps

MEETING AGENDA

Item #	Topic
1.	Welcome
2.	Opening Remarks
3.	Address Public Comments
4.	Deliberation/Voting on Proposed Recommendations
5.	Closing Remarks

MEETING ATTENDENCE

Committee Members			
Name	Represented Industry	Attendance	Attendance Type
AJ Korslein	A	Present	In-person
Jody Cox	A	Present	In-person
Patti Russ	A	Present	In-person
Beth Hill	B	Present	Virtual
Dean Rowland	B	Present	Virtual
Donald Amundson	B	Present	In-person
Cody McDonald	C	Present	In-person
Gerald "Tucker" Hughes	C	Present	In-person
Daniel Pocha	C	Present	In-person
Chris Aune	B	Absent	
Dawnita Sampsel	C	Absent	

USDA Staff			
Name	Position/Title	Attendance	Attendance Type
Chiara Cipriano	RAC coordinator/ PAO	Present	In-person
Matthew Ferrell	Partnership coordinator	Present	In-person
Molly Ryan	DFO	Absent	
Emily Platt	Forest Supervisor/ Acting DFO	Present	In-person
John Hagengruber	Operations Staff Officer	Present	In-person
Linsey Feller	Budget Officer	Present	In-person
Tammy Peterson	Admin Officer	Present	In-person

General Audience	
Name	Position/Title
Clifford Kipp	Executive Director - BMWF
Brad Langsather	Open Lands Manager – City of Helena
Ashley Mazzullo	Director of Youth Programs - MCC
Nate Kopp	Prickly Pear Land Trust
Sierra LaBonte	Local Rep – CDT Coalition
Cliff Sheets	Treasurer – Last Chance Nordic Ski Club
Kevin League	Member of the public
Tim Lawrence	Prickly Pear Land Trust
Adam Hein	MCC

PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comments submitted for this meeting.

MEETING RECORDING

Recap: Helena-Lewis and Clark RAC meeting Thursday, September 4

MEETING MINUTES

Welcome

RAC reached quorum @ 13:59 pm.

Introductions began @ 14:04 pm

Opening Remarks

Chiara Cipriano introduced the ground rules for how partners and partners will interact. RAC members are decision makers. Partners are here to answer questions.

Linsey Feller (FS) requested that the group rank projects because more funding may come available later.

Addressing Public Comments

N/A

Deliberation/Voting

RAC discussed and determined the funding and ranking of projects.

Proposal #1 – Continental Divide Access and Improvements (Montana Conservation

Corps): This project aims to meaningfully improve a trail system through a partnership between Montana Conservation Corps and the Continental Divide Trail Coalition. Work involves access re-routes, erosion control and deferred maintenance. The requested amount from the RAC was \$140,000.

Proposal #2 – Macdonald Pass Cross-Country Ski Trails Access and Safety (Last Chance Nordic Ski Club)-

The objective is to replace equipment kept at Macdonald Pass to assure continued access to National Forest lands for cross-country skiers and provide a reliable means of evacuating injured skiers. Request was for \$36,000.

Proposal #3 – Porphyry Peak Noxious Weed Control (Showdown): The goal of this project is to reduce the presence and spread of non-native and invasive plant species – specifically noxious weeds – along Porphyry Peak Road and Kings Hill Scenic Byways. Requested amount of title II funds: \$21,000.

Proposal # 4 – Porphyry Peak Hiking Trail (Showdown): The goal of this project is to construct a new hiking trail utilizing MCC crews in the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest. The trail would create a route of travel to forest facilities from the Showdown Ski Base and provide educational opportunities along its route. Request amount: \$56,600.

Proposal #5 – Volunteer Stewardship in BMWC (Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation) – This project aims to engage 120 citizen volunteers in as many as 12 priority backcountry stewardship projects in the Scapegoat and Bob Marshall Wilderness. Request amount: \$102,134.90

Proposal #6 – DeFord Trail Improvement Project (City of Helena): This project aims to increase safety for bikers, hikers, and recreators on adjacent City of Helena, USFS, and BLM-managed lands. Request for \$27,240.

Proposal #7 – Road Maintenance on HLF (Forest Service): This project would improve two road segments on the HLF to improve user safety and comfort. Request amount: \$50,000.

Proposal #8 – Helena Youth Corps (Montana Conservation Corps): This project aims to engage 17–18-year-old students with an immersive experience on National Forest System Lands completing meaningful stewardship work. Requested amount: \$83,500.

Proposal #9 – Continuation of South Hills Maintenance (Prickly Pear Land Trust): This project aims to implement on-the-ground trail construction and trail maintenance activities throughout the South Hills Trail System in Helena. Request amount: \$20,000.

Motion for question for full funding of proposal #6. Adopted at 15:33

Motion for full funding #9 the South Hills Trail Maintenance Project. Motion Adopted 15:35

Motion for \$10,000 for Proposal #5. Not adopted yet.

Motion for \$20,000 for Proposal #2. Not adopted yet.

Discussion continued as to the way to proceed with prioritizing projects.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Motion to award Proposal #2: MacDonald Pass Cross-Country Ski Trails Access and Safety \$22,760, Proposal #5: Volunteer Stewardship in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex (Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation) \$20,000, Proposal #6: Deford Trail Improvement Project (City of Helena) at \$27,240, Proposal #9: Continuation of South Hills Maintenance at \$20,000. The motion was seconded and adopted at 16:02pm

RAC moved on to rank remaining projects for funds that may come available in the future (between now and the end of 2026) at:

- Proposal #7: Road Maintenance on the HLF (Forest Service) - \$50,000
- Proposal #5: Volunteer Stewardship in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex (Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation) - \$30,000
- Proposal #1: Continental Divide Access Improvements (Montana Conservation Corps) - \$140,000
- Proposal #4: Porphyry Peak Hiking Trail (Showdown Mtn) - \$56,600
- Proposal #8: Helena Youth Corps (Montana Conservation Corps) - \$83,500

Motion was made, seconded and adopted @ 16:12 pm

Closing Remarks

RAC was thanked for their time.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at approximately 16:15 P.M (MT).

CERTIFICATION

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

/s/ 

Emily Platt (DFO)

Forest Supervisor

/s/ 

Cody McDonald (Chairperson)

Judith Basin County Commissioner