

## **LINCOLN CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

### **ANNUAL WORK PLAN 2020**

#### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of the Lincoln Conservation District is to promote sustainable resource management of all natural resources in the county.

#### **MISSION:**

To promote and protect the natural resources of Lincoln County, Montana. Lincoln Conservation District will continue to educate the public and work to foster better understanding between all parties concerned with the protection of our natural resources.

#### **DISTRICT BOUNDARIES:**

Lincoln Conservation District covers all of Lincoln County, except within the 1947 city limits of Libby and Troy.

#### **I. District Operations:**

##### **A. Administration of the Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act (310 Law)**

1. Process 310 applications, perform site visits, provide technical assistance and perform follow-up inspections according to state law and district policies and procedures.
2. Investigate 310 violation complaints and take appropriate actions following state law and district policies and procedures.
3. To the extent as possible, initiate follow-up inspections on closed 310 permits, especially sensitive projects, including bridge and culvert construction and bank stabilization projects from the previous calendar year.

##### **B. Fiscal Management**

1. Develop and manage an annual budget that balances the annual revenue with the operating costs of the district.
2. Keep apprised of funding opportunities; provide grant administration services and administrative assistance while following all pertinent legal requirements.
3. Annually file all appropriate tax documentation and reports of the districts financial activities.
4. Keep apprised of payroll expectations and responsibilities and file all quarterly, tax documentation and reports required by State & Federal agencies.

##### **C. Public Relations**

1. Maintain a positive working relationship with the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and efficiently use their technical and financial assistance programs.
2. Maintain a positive working relationship with Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), Conservation Districts Bureau and Kootenai River Network (KRN) and utilize their technical support and financial services.
3. Maintain membership and support of the following organizations; Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) and National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD).
4. Maintain a positive working relationship with the Soil & Water Conservation Districts of Montana (SWCDM).
5. Provide board member representation for the Lincoln County Planning Board.
6. Provide district representation and/or assistance to local watershed groups.
7. Attend the Area 5 MACD Meeting.
8. Attend the MACD Annual Meeting/Convention.
9. Provide board representation and/or assistance to state committees when appropriate.
10. Promote Lincoln Conservation District (LCD) activities to the public and our elected officials and educate them on the accomplishments of LCD.
11. Support the activities of the Lincoln County Weed Board.
12. Provide support for Glen Lake Irrigation District (GLID) in water conservation and fish screening practices.

13. Support the activities of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS), U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Montana State University Cooperative Extension Service (CES) and other agencies when we have mutually beneficial interests.
14. Maintain website for posting LCD meeting notices and promoting public awareness of conservation district activities.
15. Monitor and maintain highway signs at our borders.
16. Provide age/grade appropriate educational programs for school children that increases their awareness of the concept of conservation as a whole. Present educational programs to schools within the county on an ongoing basis.
17. Continue to build positive working relationships with the County Commissioners and the Towns of Eureka, Rexford, Libby and Troy in a positive and informational manner.
18. Support the Forest Stewardship Workshop.

#### **D. Conservation Education**

1. Coordinate with the County Extension Service land stewardship educational programs.
2. Coordinate a small landowner and realtor workshop.
3. Support the recycling program in Lincoln County.
4. Provide educational materials on voluntary Best Management Practices (BMP's) that protect soil and water quality.
5. Provide educational materials on noxious weed management and prudent use of herbicides and chemicals.
6. Provide educational opportunities for LCD Board Supervisors and staff to keep them apprised of pertinent conservation practices and changing requirements in law and statutes and build their leadership skills.
7. Provide educational materials to irrigators that improve their water and nutrient management efficiencies.
8. Promote educational mini-grants for youth educational programs.
9. Support student participation in the Natural Resources Youth Camp, and other youth education programs.
10. Work with all high schools within Lincoln County to promote team(s) for the Montana State Envirothon.
11. Promote the use of the Rolling Rivers watershed trailer.
12. Provide educational materials and supplies for youth education programs.
13. Set up a booth and participate in the Lincoln County Fair in Eureka to promote implementation of the 310 law and educate the public regarding the permitting process under the law. This may be done in conjunction with the County Weed Control or as a stand-alone booth.
14. Continue to distribute the Rural Living Handbook to introduce current and prospective rural landowners to resources for country living and land stewardship. Maintain the Rural Living Handbook on the district website.

### **II. Conservation Priorities and District Activities:**

#### **A. Water Quality and Quantity**

1. Provide technical assistance for implementing Best Management Practices for related to 310 projects.
2. Provide assistance on irrigation water management that improves water use and delivery system efficiencies.
3. Provide assistance for the implementation of stream restoration projects within impaired streams in Lincoln County.
4. Promote the use of fish screening structures and in-stream structures that address fish passage needs.
5. Utilize the Rolling Rivers Trailer to demonstrate land management activities and their relationship to water quality and stream bank stability.
6. Assist in the promotion of conservation activities that address TMDL issues.
7. Increase public knowledge of TMDLs and the role of watershed groups in watershed planning.
8. Support initiatives to prevent the introduction of aquatic invasive species in Montana waters.

## **B. Forest Management**

1. Provide information and education regarding the implementation of Cost Share Programs.
2. Promote the use of low impact fuels reduction equipment that reduces fire danger while protecting soil and water resources.
3. Participate in Forestry/Conservation Workshops scheduled in Lincoln County.
4. Assist NRCS with EQIP projects for promotion of forest management practices that improve the defensible space around homes and create a fire resilient forest.
5. Review and comment on State and Federal timber supply issues and proposals and promote a sustainable supply of timber to local forest producers.
6. Promote forest stewardship on small private lands in Lincoln County.
7. Participate in school forestry tours.
8. Collaborate with USFS, DNRC and private landowners and provide assistance for the purpose of reducing wildfire risk in priority areas.
9. Provide tree seedling sales for reforestation and shelterbelts through conservation nurseries.
10. Support initiatives for value-added manufacturing and small diameter wood utilization for Lincoln County's small forestland owners.
11. Promote programs that provide a quantifiable improvement of wildlife habitat.
12. Support community forests and/or conservation easements in Lincoln County.

## **C. Dryland Farming, Grazing Lands and Small Acreage Management**

1. Provide assistance in noxious weed management, mitigation and prevention.
2. Promote North Lincoln County weed-sprayers for the Lincoln County Weed Board.
3. Assist the County Weed Board in providing pesticide applicator training.
4. Provide technical assistance to current and prospective landowners in the management of small acreage.
5. Support initiatives for value added products for Lincoln County's small agricultural producers.
6. Provide assistance in wildlife habitat including shelterbelt construction, erosion control measures and riparian habitat improvements.
7. Initiate demonstration projects that promote land use conservation practices and promote the visibility of Lincoln Conservation District to the public.

## **D. Land Use Planning**

1. Work with County Commissioners and participate on the Lincoln County Planning Board in reviewing land use proposals to help maintain the integrity and sustainability of Lincoln County natural resources.
2. Collaborate with watershed and basin groups in coordinating overlapping projects.