



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

Christian Bray
Jim Keane
Mike Mershon
Jon Metropoulos
Brian Yablonski

COMMITTEE STAFF

Joseph Carroll - Attorney
Jason Mohr – Legislative
Environmental Analyst
Casey Pallistr - Staff
Jacelyn Sterling - Secretary

MINUTES LOG

March 24, 2026
Room 317 & Zoom
Helena, Montana

Minutes logs provide an annotation of the time elapsed between the beginning of a meeting and the time at which a topic is presented or discussed, a motion made, or a vote taken. The time designation may be used to locate the referenced discussion in the video. The minutes log is only a guide to the video of the meeting. The official record of the meeting is the video. Minutes logs can be accessed at <https://committees.legmt.gov> and videos can be accessed at <https://media.legmt.gov>.

For more information, please contact:

The Legislative Services Division at 406-444-3064 for policy committees;
The Legislative Fiscal Division at 406-444-2986 for fiscal committees; or
The Legislative Audit Division at 406-444-3122 for the Legislative Audit Committee.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Paul Fielder, Presiding Officer (R)
Sen. Willis Curdy, Vice Presiding Officer (D)
Sen. John Esp (R)
Rep. Jedediah Hinkle (R)
Jim Keane, Public Member
Sen. Forrest Mandeville (R)
Rep. Shannon Maness (R)
Mike Mershon, Public Member
Rep. Joshua Seckinger (D)
Sen. Tony Tezak (R)
Brian Yablonski, Public Member

MEMBERS EXCUSED:

Christian Bray, Public Member
Sen. Pat Flowers (D)
Rep. Tom France (D)
Sen. Wylie Galt (R)
Rep. Steve Gist (R)
Jon Metropoulos, Public Member

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT:

Joseph Carroll, Legal Staff
Jason Mohr, Legislative Environmental Analyst

MONTANA LEGISLATIVE BRANCH MANAGEMENT: JERRY HOWE, LEGISLATIVE SERVICES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR • ANGUS MACIVER, LEGISLATIVE AUDITOR • AMY CARLSON, LEGISLATIVE FISCAL ANALYST • TODD EVERTS, LEGAL SERVICES DIRECTOR • DALE GOW, CHIEF INFORMATION OFFICER • RACHEL WEISS, RESEARCH DIRECTOR • ANGIE CARTER, FINANCIAL OFFICE DIRECTOR • KELLY DASILVA HR DIRECTOR

Casey Pallister, Committee Staff
Jacelyn Sterling, Secretary

AGENDA ([Attachment 1](#))

VISITORS' LOG ([Attachment 2](#))

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

13:00:32 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM. The committee secretary took roll.

MEETING OVERVIEW

13:02:16 Jason Mohr, Legislative Environmental Analyst, Legislative Service Division (LSD)

13:05:05 Sen. Wylie Galt joined the meeting via zoom.

ADMINISTRATIVE RULE REVIEW

13:05:24 Joseph Carroll, Legal Staff, Legislative Services Division (LSD)
[EXHIBIT 1](#)

UPDATE FROM ENERGY AND TECHNOLOGY INTERIM COMMITTEE (ETIC)

13:08:28 Griffin Burns, Lead Staff, ETIC, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

13:13:19 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder

13:13:29 Griffin Burns, LSD

Public Comment

13:17:23 None

Committee Questions / Discussion

13:17:41 Sen. Pat Flowers

13:19:32 Griffin Burns, LSD

13:20:52 Sen. Forrest Mandeville

13:21:21 Griffin Burns, LSD

13:21:46 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder

13:22:59 Griffin Burns, LSD

Update from Water Policy Interim Committee (WPIC)

13:23:32 Toni Henneman, Lead Staff, WPIC & Deputy Research Director, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

Public Comment

13:28:40 Clayton Elliott, Montana Trout Unlimited

Committee Questions / Discussion

13:29:33 None

13:30:16 **Recessed**

13:38:14 **Reconvened**

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 42 (STUDY OF NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL) – Panel Discussion

13:38:57 Jason Mohr, Legislative Environmental Analyst, Legislative Services Division (LSD)

[EXHIBIT 2](#)

13:42:34 Bryce Christaens, Director, Department of Ecology and Extension, Missoula Co.

[EXHIBIT 3](#)

13:47:25 Christian Bray joined the meeting.

Public Comment

13:54:25 Dave Brink

13:54:34 Bryce Christaens, Missoula Co.

Committee Questions / Discussion

13:54:52 Sen. John Esp

13:55:32 Bryce Christaens, Missoula Co.

13:55:49 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder

13:57:54 Bryce Christaens, Missoula Co.

13:58:03 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder

13:58:22 Mike Mershon

13:58:53 Bryce Christaens, Missoula Co.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 42 (STUDY OF NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL) – Panel Discussion – Continued

13:59:45 Dave Brink, Weed Coordinator, Mineral Co. MSU Extension Agent

14:07:23 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder

14:08:19 Bryce Christaens, Missoula Co.

Public Comment

14:09:10 Amy Adler, Weed Coordinator, Rosebud Co

14:10:51 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder

Committee Questions / Discussion

14:12:14 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder

14:14:24 Sen. Forrest Mandeville

14:14:31 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder

14:14:46 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy

14:15:44 Dave Brink, Mineral Co.
14:20:34 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
14:20:49 Rep. Jedediah Hinkle

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 42 (STUDY OF NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL) – Panel Discussion – Continued

14:21:14 Jason Mohr, LSD
14:22:04 John Hart, Deputy County Attorney, Missoula Co.
14:23:22 Jon Metropoulos joined the meeting.

Public Comment

14:35:02 Amber Burch, Weed Coordinator, Beaverhead Co.
14:37:21 Bryce Christaens, Missoula Co.

Committee Questions / Discussion

14:38:33 Rep. Shannon Maness
14:38:58 Bryce Christaens, Missoula Co.
14:39:36 Sen. John Esp
14:40:44 Rep. Shannon Maness
14:41:05 Amber Burch, Beaverhead Co.
14:43:02 Rep. Shannon Maness
14:43:51 Jim Keane
14:46:31 Sen. Forrest Mandeville
14:47:17 John Hart, Missoula Co.
14:49:05 Jon Metropoulos
14:50:48 John Hart, Missoula Co.
14:51:59 Sen. John Esp
14:52:51 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
14:54:59 Bryce Christaens, Missoula Co.

[EXHIBIT 4](#)

Public Comment

15:06:31 Karen Laitala, Powell Co.
15:12:24 Liz Lodman, Administrator, Montana Invasive Species Council (MISC)

Committee Questions / Discussion

15:15:32 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
15:17:24 Liz Lodman, MISC
15:17:36 Mark Bostrom, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
15:19:37 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
15:20:48 Mark Bostrom, DNRC

15:21:53 Shawn Thomas, Forestry Trust Division, DNRC
15:22:48 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
15:23:22 Shawn Thomas, DNRC
15:24:13 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
15:24:35 Mike Mershon
15:27:52 Bryce Christaens, Missoula Co.

15:28:53 **Recessed**
15:36:59 **Reconvened**

DIRECTOR'S REPORTS

15:37:42 Amanda Kaster, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
[EXHIBIT 5](#)
15:54:23 Sonja Nowakowski, Director, Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ)
16:06:11 Presiding Officer Paul Fielder
16:10:04 Jim Keane
16:10:25 Dan Walsh, Air Mining Division Administrator, DEQ

Public Comment

16:11:23 None

Committee Questions / Discussion

16:11:34 Jim Keane
16:12:09 Sen. Pat Flowers
16:15:48 Dir. Amanda Kaster, DNRC
16:16:28 Sen. Pat Flowers
16:16:42 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
16:19:23 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
16:20:17 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
16:22:19 Dir. Amanda Kaster, DNRC
16:23:48 Jim Keane
16:25:17 Dir. Amanda Kaster, DNRC
16:25:40 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
16:27:11 Jim Keane
16:28:44 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
16:28:56 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
16:29:43 Wyatt Frampton, DNRC
16:30:31 Vice Presiding Officer Willis Curdy
16:30:57 Rep. Joshua Seckinger

16:33:19 Dir. Sonja Nowakowski

ADJOURNMENT

Adjournment: 16:34:32