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# Montana Association of Counties

*Serving Montana Counties Since 1909*

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www.mtcounties.org

## MEETING MINUTES

### MACo PUBLIC LANDS COMMITTEE

Virtual Meeting Via Zoom | September 30, 2020

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#### Members

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Greg Chilcott, Chair, Ravalli    | <input type="checkbox"/> Charles Hinkle, Granite               | <input type="checkbox"/> Mark Peck, Lincoln               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Todd Devlin, Vice Chair, Prairie | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Jim Hodgskiss, Teton       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sig Pugrud, Petroleum            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jerry Bennett, Lincoln                      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pam Holmquist, Flathead    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tom Rice, Beaverhead  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Scott Blain, Carbon                         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Miles Hutton, Blaine       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dan Sager, Powell     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dean Blomquist, Golden Valley    | <input type="checkbox"/> Craig Iverson, Petroleum              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carl Seilstad, Fergus |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Carol Brooker, Sanders           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Laurie Johnston, Mineral   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dennis Teske, Prairie |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ross Butcher, Fergus                        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Cory Kirsch, Jefferson     | <input type="checkbox"/> Herb Townsend, Meagher           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> John Carnahan, Phillips                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bob Lee, Rosebud           | <input type="checkbox"/> Jane Weber, Cascade              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bruce Christofferson, Phillips              | <input type="checkbox"/> Mikel Lund, Daniels                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Kellieann Morris, MWCA Rep.      |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> John Fahlgren, Valley            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Ralph "Rem" Mannix, Powell |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Donna Giacometto, Powder River              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mike McGinley, Beaverhead  |   |

#### 1. Roll Call & Introductions

Chair Chilcott called the meeting to order, and Jason Rittal, MACo Deputy Director, conducted roll call.

**Guests:** Tammi Fladager, Daniels County Clerk of Court & School Supt (speaking for Commissioner Mike Lund); Steve Kimball, MT DNRC Local Government Forest Advisor; Cody Ferguson and Rebecca Shaw, MT Department of Commerce; John Hagengruber, US Forest Service liaison to State of Montana; Leslie Robinson, Sonny Capece, Casey Collins, and Tory Scribner, Congressman Gianforte's Office

#### 2. Approval of Minutes: February 10, 2020

Commissioner Lee made the motion to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Rice seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

#### 3. Review Assigned Resolutions

NOTE: Resolutions become legislation and policy statements guide staff regarding MACo's action on other legislation. The Committee was tasked with reviewing their assigned resolution and making a recommendation to drop (do not pass), amend, carry forward as is (do pass), or incorporate into policy statements (do not pass; incorporate into policy).

The committee discussed their two assigned resolutions and made recommendations to the membership:

- Local Government Special District Revenue, sponsored by Prairie County (District 2)  
Purpose: Allow dedicated federal revenues to be directed towards special districts by a governing body.  
Committee Recommendation: Do Pass
- Public Land Use Sustainability, sponsored by Daniels County (District 1)  
Purpose: Authorize the State to reimburse counties for lost property taxes as a result of the acquisition of real property or property held in trust by either the State or Federal government.

Committee Recommendation: The committee’s “Do Pass” recommendation failed on a 7-10 vote, thereby making the resolution a “Do Not Pass” recommendation. MACo Staff clarified that resolutions could be segregated for reconsideration at the membership meeting.

**4. Review/Approve Committee Policy Statements**

The committee amended several of their policy statements:

- #1 – MACo believes the most basic principle that must be followed in all actions by state and federal agencies is early consultation, cooperation, and coordination with local county officials, as well as municipal and tribal officials, who have been elected to represent the concerns of those directly affected by public land management decisions WITHIN EACH OFFICIAL JURISDICTION.*
- #2 – MACo believes that environmentalAL issues must be balanced with socioeconomic issues to achieve a policy, which allows not only a high degree of environmental protection, but also preserves and enhances local community sustainability. County officials and their constituents are keenly aware of the historical, economic, and aesthetic values of their local environment and they are certain of the need to prepare for a sustainable future to assure the viability of their communities. Therefore, it is imperative that the federal and state governments work cooperatively with county and other local governments on such policies.*
- #25 – MACo supports the reorganization of Forest Service Management to reduce the layers ~~upon~~ layers of the organizational structure from four to three and supports clearly defining the Forest Service mission to ~~get~~ ENCOURAGE more “boots on the ground” projects.*
- #36 – ~~MACo calls for full funding of federal payments for Secure Rural Schools (SRS), Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes (PILT), Taylor Grazing, and Refuge Revenue Sharing programs to counties.~~*
- #37 – ~~MACo supports the full funding of the PILT program and Refuge Revenue Sharing at its yearly authorized level and believes that all federal holdings should be included in the program.~~*
- #38 – ~~MACo believes that shared natural resource payments to counties from activities such as timber sales, mineral leasing, grazing, and others are absolutely vital to county and school budgets.~~*
- #39 – ~~MACo strongly opposes any effort to reallocate federal land payments to schools or the State of Montana as has been proposed in previous state legislation.~~*
- #40 – ~~MACo supports “round table” discussions between Montana’s Congressional Delegation, Montana Counties, and the National Association of Counties to review the current PILT formula and to propose changes to the PILT formula that would benefit Montana counties in a more equitable fashion.~~*
- #36 – MACO SUPPORTS, ON A BASIS EQUITABLE TO BOTH THE FEDERAL AND LOCAL TAXPAYER, TO PROVIDE FOR PAYMENTS TO COMPENSATE STATES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS FOR BURDENS CREATED AS A RESULT OF THE IMMUNITY OF FEDERAL LANDS FROM STATE AND LOCAL TAXATION; EXAMPLES OF PAYMENT PROGRAMS INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO REFUGE REVENUE SHARING, SECURE RURAL SCHOOLS (SRS), PAYMENT-IN-LIEU-OF-TAXES (PILT), TAYLOR GRAZING, BANKHEAD-JONES, AND THE TAYLOR GRAZING ACT.*
- #37 – MACO BELIEVES THAT ADDITIONAL PAYMENTS SHOULD BE MADE TO COUNTIES FOR FEDERAL NATURAL RESOURCE EXTRACTION AND USE DUE TO ADDITIONAL IMPACTS ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE. FURTHERMORE, MACO SUPPORTS MONETARY COMPENSATION TO COUNTIES FOR THE LACK OF NATURAL RESOURCE USE OR EXTRACTION WHEN DEMAND FOR THE RESOURCE EXISTS.*

**5. Other Business**

The committee had no further business.

**6. Adjourn**

The committee had no further business.