Missoula Board of County Commissioners

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES COVER SHEET

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 06, 2025 – 2 PM

Hybrid meeting – Missoula County Courthouse Annex Sophie Moiese Room/Microsoft Teams

Click here to view the meeting recording.

Time stamps (in green) correspond to meeting recording above. Please click to the time stamps listed to view a particular item in the meeting.

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present:
Chair Juanita Vero
Commissioner David Strohmaier

Staff Present:
Cheryl Hartman, Administrative Assistant, Commissioners' Office
Vincent Pavlish, Civil County Attorney, County Attorneys' Office
Karen Hughes, Director, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Tim Worley, Senior Planner, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Kyla Lenhnerz, Office Manager, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Jill Johnson, Administrative Assistant, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Analeshia Rodriguez, Administrative Assistant, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Matt Heimel, Planner/Floodplain Administrator, Planning, Development, and Sustainability
Kyle Crapster, Environmental Health Specialist, Environmental Health

1. **CALL TO ORDER** *[Time stamp – 0:00]*

2. **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** *[Time stamp – 0:04]*

3. **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT** *[Time stamp – 0:18]*
   Missoula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people.

4. **PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS** *[Time stamp – 0:25]*
   a. Closed Captioning
   b. Proclamation: National American Heritage Month
   c. Proclamation: Operation Green Light

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA** *[Time stamp – 6:00]*

6. **CURRENT CLAIMS LIST** *[Time stamp – 5:36]*
Claims received as of October 16, 2025 to October 27, 2025 by the Commissioners' Office total $1,592,486.64.

7. **HEARINGS**
   a. **Resolution: Missoula County Consolidated Land Use Board** *[Time stamp – 06:40]*
   Karen Hughes, Director, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

   Commissioner Strohmaier made the motion that the Board of County Commissioners of Missoula County hereby adopt the Resolution to create the Missoula Consolidated Land Use Board.

   Commissioner Vero seconded.

   [Motion Passed 2-0.]

   [Resolution 2025-096 Book: 1121 Page:637]

   b. **Stephenson Family Transfer** *[Time stamp – 13:38]*
   Kevin Dantic, Planner, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

   Commissioner Strohmaier made the motion that the Missoula Board of County Commissioners approve the request by Jeffrey E. Stephenson to utilize the family transfer exemption to create and transfer a 3.85-acre tract, as presented in the exemption application and affidavit.

   Commissioner Vero seconded.

   [Motion Passed 2-0.]

   [Letter 2025-186 was sent to Jeffrey Stephenson.]

   c. **Big Bear Addition Subdivision Amendments** *[Time stamp – 26:06]*
   Tim Worley, Senior Planner, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

   Commissioner Strohmaier made the motion that the Missoula Board of County Commissioners approve the Big Bear Addition condition amendment/covenant amendment request as detailed in the staff analysis, and subject to the amended condition of approval.

   Commissioner Vero seconded.

   [Motion Passed 2-0.]

   [Letter 2025-185 was sent to Phyllis Sauter.]

8. **OTHER BUSINESS**

   a. **Floodplain Map Update Consultation Coordination Officers Meeting**
   Matt Heimel, Planner/Floodplain Administrator, Planning, Development, and Sustainability

9. **ADJOURN**
Chair Vero– Called the meeting to adjourn at 3:18 p.m.

BCC Public Meeting November 06, 2025 – Transcription

This transcription was produced by transcription software. There may be discrepancies between this transcription and meeting dialogue. You can view the recording of the meeting on the county's YouTube channel: https://www.youtube.com/c/missoulacounty or contact the commissioners' office to obtain a copy.

Dialogue in the transcription attributed to "Sophie Moiese Room" is for all speakers that attended the meeting in person. Attendees that participated virtually are labeled individually.

0:04
I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

0:17
Thank you.

0:18
And Missoula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kriste people.

0:25
We have closed captioning.

0:32
Thank you, Cheryl.

0:35
Hello, everyone.

0:35
If you're joining us for this meeting virtually today, instructions for turning on closed captioning or on your screen.

0:41
If you're joining us in person, we'll have closed captioning on all the screens here in the Sophie Louise room.

0:46
Just a reminder, there will be multiple chances during the meeting for public comment virtually and in person during those times.

0:53
If you'd like to speak, we ask that you use the Raise hand feature.

0:56
If you're Microsoft Teams, this is the hand, the small hand button at the top of the screen.

1:01
If you're calling in on the phone, you'll need to hit *5 to raise your hand.

1:05
Once called upon, you'll need to hit *6 to unmute.

1:08
If you have any questions, please come find me during the meeting.

1:11
Thank you.

1:12
Thanks so much.

1:13
And we have a couple of proclamations to read.

1:15
So Commissioner Stromar, would you like to read 1 and I'll read the other?

1:20
Certainly the first proclamation is related to Native American Heritage Month.

1:25
Whereas, Missoula County is located within the homelands of the Confederated Salish, Upper Kalispell and Kootenai Tribes.

1:32
And WHEREAS, in October 1891, United States government forcefully removed the Salish people from their Bitterroot homeland and further impose European concepts of land ownership by authorizing the appropriation of land within the boundaries of sovereign nations through the purchase of non-native people by the through the purchase by non-native people.

1:53
And WHEREAS, we acknowledge the ongoing impacts of systemic racism and intergenerational trauma that have resulted from historical injustice directed toward Indigenous populations.

2:05
And WHEREAS, Missoula County continues to strengthen relationships with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, enhancing trust and understanding and developing policies and practices that will aid in closing equity gaps and honor Indigenous roots and history in our communities.

2:24
And whereas American Indian Heritage Month was first proposed in 1990 by U.S.

2:29
House Joint Resolution 577 and later changed to Native American Heritage Month in 1991 by George HW Bush.

2:40
And WHEREAS this proclamation serves as a reminder of Missoula County's commitment to honor our relationship with sovereign nations and Indigenous peoples and to uphold trust treaty responsibilities, now, therefore, be it resolved, we, the Missoula County Commissioners, do hereby proclaim November as Native American Heritage Month to value the history and rich cultures of Indigenous peoples as we recognize their pride, resilience and determination and patriotism for this country.

3:10
Signed today, this 6th day of November, by your Missoula County Board of County Commissioners.

3:18
Thank you.

3:18
Is there anyone who'd like to add anything to this or speak to this?

3:27
OK, our second proclamation.

3:29
Whereas the residents of Missoula County have respect, admiration and gratitude for all citizens who have served in the armed forces.

3:37
And whereas, the contributions and sacrifices veterans have made in service to their country and communities are significant and commendable.

3:44
And whereas, Montana is home to approximately 85,000 veterans and 8000 of whom live in Missoula County.

3:52
And WHEREAS Missoula County seeks to honor the veterans who have placed themselves in harm's way in service to their country and appreciates the sacrifices of our United States military personnel and wishes to grant them specific recognition.

4:04
And WHEREAS, veterans continue to serve our community in the American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars, religious groups, Civil service, and other community organizations.

4:13
And whereas, approximately 200,000 service members transition to civilian communities annually.

4:20
And whereas, there will be a 20% increase in the number of service members transitioning to civilian life in the near future.

4:27
And whereas, studies indicate that 44 to 72% of service members experience high levels of stress during transition from military to civilian life.

4:36
And WHEREAS active military service members transitioning from the military service are at a high risk for suicide during their first year after military service.

4:45
And WHEREAS, the National Association of Counties encourages all counties, parishes and boroughs to recognize Operation Green Light for veterans.

4:55
AND NOW THEREFORE, we, the Missoula Board of County Commissioners in the State of Montana, do hereby proclaim November 11th, 2025 as a time to honor the service and sacrifice of our citizens in uniform transitioning from active service.

5:09
Be it for the resolve that in the observance of Operation Green Light, Missoula County encourages its residents to honor all those who have made immeasurable sacrifices to preserve freedom by displaying a green light in a window of their home or business.

5:22
Dated the 6th day of November, 2025.

5:25
Your Missoula County Board of Commissioners, any comments or anyone to speak to Operation Green Light?

5:36
OK, Our current claims list as of October 16th, 2025 to October 27th, 2025 by the Commissioner's Office totals $1,592,486.64.

5:52
We have 3 hearings today so we'll begin.

5:55
Oops, I'm rushing us.

5:59
I'm so sorry.

6:00
Is there any public comment on items not on the agenda?

6:07
If anyone has public comment on items not on the agenda, come on up.

6:17
Anyone online?

6:26
OK, folks are muted online if someone's trying to speak.

6:35
OK, our we will go to our three hearings.

6:40
Our first one is with the Missoula County Consolidated Land use for Karen Hughes.

6:48
Good afternoon commissioners.

6:49
This is a request from our office, Missoula County Planning Development Sustainability, to create a new board to review development proposals and land use activities.

7:02
It would be a consolidated land use board that would serve the functions of a board of Adjustment, a planning board, a zoning Commission, and should the should Missoula County enter into it, the under the Montana Land Use Planning Act, they could also serve as a Planning Commission.

7:20
Back in the 2021 legislative session, 2023 legislative session, the legislature enacted Senate Bill 1:30, which allowed for local jurisdictions to create consolidated land use boards and combine these boards together into one functioning board.

7:42
And then in and also in that legislative session, the they passed the Montana Land Use Planning Act

which created a new form of planning and zoning law that created a Planning Commission concept the City of Missoula has proceeded under.

7:59
They are required to follow the Montana Land Use Planning Act and they are moving ahead with creating a municipal Planning Commission and will no longer need the Missoula Consolidated Land Consolidated Planning Board once they are have adopted their new codes.

8:17
This left the county with with a need to figure out whether we wanted to have a county planning board and continue to have a county board of adjustment and create a county zoning Commission or if we want to pursue this consolidated board concept.

8:35
We consulted the planning board, we consulted the board of adjustment and talked with you about their feedback.

8:41
The planning board was generally supportive.

8:43
The board of adjustment was more mixed and had more concerns about a consolidated land use board.

8:48
We also sent this out to our broad ranging e-mail list which includes developers, representatives and agencies and members of the community and community councils.

9:03
We presented it to the all community council meeting and generally heard support for this concept.

9:08
So we're bringing to you today a resolution that would create a new 7 member board.

9:14
We would transition the the consolidated Planning Board and the Board of adjustment, which are currently in place.

9:20
We'd transition them out after the new year and transition this board in and they would hear all of the items that would typically have been heard by those boards, both advisory as an Advisory Board and as a governing body.

9:36
And the case of the Board of adjustment, we're proposing A7 member board with two alternates.

9:42
All must be residents of Missoula County.

9:45
The and we've provided you know a selection of the types of background and experience We'd recommend.

9:55
Folks represent various areas of the geography of Missoula County, as well as have expertise in the area of natural, historical, cultural, resources, agriculture, housing, economic development, architecture and design, land use planning, real estate, land use law, as examples.

10:14
The We've also suggested that, as has historically been the case, that we continue to have a member of the Conservation District be recommended to the commissioners to serve on that board as a voting member.

10:27
And another idea that had come up in our annual meeting with the tribes was to have a tribal Council appointment.

10:36
We have proposed to the tribal Council appointment either be as a voting member or as an ex officio member depending on whether or not they meet the residency requirements and the preference of the tribes.

10:50
The that is an amendment that I have suggested and handed to you today as a small revision would be to make that change.

11:02
Ultimately, this board would again serve as the board of adjustment, the zoning Commission, the planning board and potentially should the county follow the Montana Land Use Plaque Planning Act, the Planning Commission.

11:19
So what what we'd recommend today is that you adopt the resolution to create this board with the amendment that would clarify that the Conservation District would be recommending an appointment and the Confederate Salvation Kootenai Tribal Council would recommend an appointment and that the tribal council appointment could either serve as a voting member or ex officio member.

11:49
So that would be the amendment to the resolution.

11:52
And if you following public comment, if you have questions for me, I'm happy to answer them.

11:58
Thank you.

11:58
Is there any public comment?

12:05
OK, Yes, Karen.

12:10
So in the event that the tribes appoint someone who would not be a resident of Missoula County and would serve in an ex officio role, does that mean that we would then appoint an additional person to be a a voting member or how would that work?

12:26
You would always have seven members, so 7 voting members plus the two alternates.

12:31
So if they appoint an ex someone who would serve as an ex officio, then the Commission would appoint the the voting member that might have been appointed by tribal council.

12:41
OK, thank you.

12:43
Yeah.

12:47
Any other questions or public comment?

12:51
Not seeing any in the room or online, I would move that we adopt the resolution as amended.

12:57
Second, again, any further discussion and public comment?

13:02
OK, All in favor, aye, thank you, Karen.

13:04
Thanks, Karen.

13:08
Kevin Dantic with a I'm sorry, Stephenson family transfer.

13:37
Good afternoon, commissioners.

13:38
For the record, my name is Kevin Dantic, planner with the Missoula County Department of Planning, Development and Sustainability.

13:45
Today I will be presenting the Stevenson family transfer request.

13:49
I'm sorry I mangled that.

13:51
OK.

13:55
This request has been brought forward by Jeffrey E Stevenson.

13:59
Stephen Co from Water and Environmental Technologies is the technical representative.

14:06
The property's address is 3233 S 7th St.

14:10
W lies approximately .95 miles West of Reserve St.

14:15
and approximately .1, excuse me, one mile east of Clemens Rd.

14:21
It is included within the Orchard Homes Community area.

14:28
Here we see a close up view of the property.

14:31
Parcel is zoned under Citizen Initiated Zoning district #9 which was created on December 27th, 1958.

14:39
Zoning District allows for up to two homes per acre.

14:43
The parcels also included in the 2019 Missoula Land Use Element, an amendment of the 2016 Growth Policy that has a recommended residential density of three to 11 units per acre.

14:54

However, that aforementioned density is only applicable if the property has connections to public sewer and water.

15:02
Staff has identified the property is currently served by a City of Missoula water, but the nearest public sewer connection is approximately .2 miles to the northeast.

15:13
Hence, the proposed division will meet the criterion set forth by zoning regulations and growth policy.

15:20
The parcels accessed by S 7th St.

15:23
West which is a Missoula County maintained roadway.

15:30
Before you, we have the existing conditions on the parcel.

15:33
The parent tract was created by the filing of Dinsmore's Orchard homes #5 on September 5th, 1901.

15:41
Book 1 Micro page 10 contains 4.555 acres.

15:46
It's currently developed with one single family residence that was constructed in 1959 and an accessory garage per CAMA data.

15:58
The claimant's proposal is to utilize the family transfer exemption to divide the subject property.

16:05
The family transfer will result in the excuse me, will result in the division of the parcel into two tracks.

16:13
The gifted parcel to the claimant's wife, Wendy T Grace, will contain 3.85 acres and the parent parcel to be retained by the claimant will contain .87 acres.

16:27
The proposed family transfer tract is intended to be developed by the recipient in the future with a single family residence.

16:36
The remaining .87 acre tract will be retained by the claimant until which time that new home is built on the newly created parcel.

16:45
At that time, aging parents will be moved into the existing residence that you see before you on the parent parcel.

16:55
Again, here are the proposed conditions.

16:58
A gifted track of 3.85 acres will encompass most of the southern and eastern portions of the tract, and the existing home is depicted in the top left.

17:11
As part of the review process, this proposal was sent out for agency comment.

17:17
Three agency comments were received on the proposal.

17:20
Karen Baldridge from the Missoula County Clerk and Recorder's Office commented that it's never been divided since its creation, so no comment on that one.

17:28
Kevin Heisler from Missoula County Public Works Building Division commented that all future development on the parcels will require all appropriate permits and consultation with all applicable county departments.

17:40
The Missoula County Floodplain Administrator, Matt Heimel, commented that if the parcel went through full subdivision review, an engineered crossing for the irrigation ditch that fronts the property and pre approval by the irrigation district district would likely become conditions of approval.

18:02
In reviewing the request, staff considers Chapter 8.4, the Missoula County Subdivision, Missoula County Zoning Regulations, which lists general evasion criteria when evaluating claimed exemptions to determine if the request could be considered evasion to subdivision review.

18:19
There were three criterion identified that possibly indicated evasion.

18:24
The claimant did receive the property via quitclaim deed.

18:28
On September 24th, 2024, there was a Development Review Team meeting for a proposed 5 lot minor subdivision in the Lazy Grace subdivision that came through on January 2nd, 2024.

18:45
Nothing was identifiable as staff after that point and the irrigation ditch that was mentioned would likely be considered during subdivision review such as the engineer crossing and possible pre approval by the irrigation district.

19:03
However, staff has identified this is the most appropriate exemption to utilize for what the claimant proposes aims to accomplish based on the information submitted in the application and affidavit.

19:18
Jeffrey Stevenson, are you in the room or online?

19:22
I am.

19:23
Perfect.

19:24
I'll have you come up to the mic here.

19:26
And please make sure that the green light is on.

19:28
Green lights.

19:30
Push the little button.

19:33
There we are.

19:35
My great.

19:37
Fantastic.

19:38
Hi, Jeffrey.

19:38
I'll just be asking you a few questions.

19:40
OK.

19:41
Thanks, Joe.

19:41
Shall we proceed?

19:42
We shall.

19:43
Perfect.

19:44
Did you buy the property with the intent of dividing it?

19:49
We purchased the property when we realized we were coming to Missoula for purposes of making sure we had space for our rescue animals.

19:58
Building a home was later.

20:00
We came to that notion later on.

20:04
Perfect, thank you.

20:06
Do you or your transferee intend to transfer the property within the next year?

20:11
Nope.

20:13
And have you talked with anyone at Missoula County about going through subdivision review?

20:17
Yes.

20:19
And commissioners, that was mentioned previously, will the property be developed and will the recipient of the property be residing on the property perfect.

20:34
Commissioners, any questions?

20:37
Thank you, Jeffrey.

20:38
So a couple questions for you.

20:39
First, since it sounds like a a parent, parents will be living in the existing residents after you build a new home, is there any reason why you simply don't build the new home without dividing the property?

20:57
Because my understanding is that the zoning would allow that it's there's financing issues that are impossible to overcome and there's also a weird kind of thing that has to do with the medical some sort of health insurance thing.

21:15
I don't know what it is, but there's specifically, it's just that specific.

21:19
It's the the impossibility of financing.

21:22
It's just too, too, too hard.

21:25
OK.

21:26

And could you talk to us just a little bit about the the prior subdivision that you explored doing there?

21:35
Yeah.

21:35
So after we had been situated for a while and we knew that we're going to be Missoula, is it?

21:40
I'm never leaving Missoula.

21:43
We sort of thought, OK, this will be this will be a good opportunity.

21:47
When we realized my in laws were getting older and we started listening to the stories of our friends, we're like, oh, we had a an immediate need to deal with moving parents.

22:01
We're like, OK, I don't want to deal with that.

22:03
We can do something where we not only build our own space, but we can if we're going to go through this whole process anyhow, let's just subdivide, right?

22:11
Subdivide.

22:11
We could have our friends come in, purchase.

22:13
Everybody loves Missoula.

22:14
It'd be great.

22:17
And then as we went on along, we, we had our meeting with the reps as we went along, it became clear that it's not financially feasible.

22:29
It is not something that we could afford to do to manage the subdivision costs.

22:35
It's very expensive.

22:37
So we we gave up on it.

22:41
OK.

22:42
Thank you.

22:43
Yeah.

22:45
Is there anyone from water environmental Technologies to add to this?

22:53
I see.

22:53
I'm assuming you're Wendy.

22:55
Russell Park should be on.

22:57
OK.

22:58
Wendy was nodding.

22:59
Russell, Yeah, I'm located online.

23:03
Can you guys hear me?

23:05
Yes.

23:08
Great.

23:09
Yeah.

23:09
Do you guys have any more questions about anything going on or anything that I should speak to directly?

23:18
I don't.

23:19
I just wanted you to have an opportunity to to add anything, if you had anything to add.

23:25
Sure.

23:26
Yeah, we've, we've been with these guys for a little while and we've been helping them out through this process.

23:32
I think everything that we've covered so far covers everything that is that is needed.

23:38
If we have any more questions, I'd I would be happy to answer them.

23:42
But yes, I am here if needed.

23:44
OK, thank you.

23:46
And Jeffrey, anything to add or Wendy?

23:51
No Oh, here, come on up.

23:55
You can share the mic with them.

23:56
Thank you.

23:57
Commissioners, there is one correction to the record that we went through a quick claim deed and that was in September of 2025 S just recently just to amend the record.

24:05
And that was at your recommendation because of the the fact that there could not be both of us on the on the original house deed into the quick claim deed.

24:15
So that why that's why we did that.

24:17
Is it misdated?

24:19
He just said 2024.

24:20
It's OK.

24:21
So the other thing I'll just mention is that we, we Jeff alluded to this, but we continue to have a farm.

24:26
We have many farm animals.

24:27
And so we have no intention of, of otherwise subdividing or getting rid of the land.

24:33
We still need that land for all of our animals.

24:35
Subdivision was just something we initially entertained and then as Jeff said, became very clear that was way too expensive for us to go through.

24:42
It costs hundreds of thousands of dollars and we weren't we weren't anticipating that.

24:46
So once we got deeper into the process, we realized that we weren't going to be able to do that.

24:49
So this is the only way that we can understand to bring my parents here.

24:53
They live out of state, but need to be closer to us and have them have them close to us so that we can continue to care for them.

25:02
Thank you.

25:03
Thank you.

25:03
Appreciate that opportunity.

25:06
I don't have any questions.

25:07
No, thank you.

25:08
All right.

25:09
Thank you so much.

25:09
Did you have anything to add?

25:15
OK.

25:18
In conclusion, staff recommends approval with the motion presented on the screen before you.

25:24
Commissioners, here is your language.

25:27
Thank you.

25:28
Kevin, I don't have anything to add.

25:32
Do you have a motion?

25:34
Thank you.

25:36
Is there any further public comment on this?

25:41
OK, thanks.

25:43
I would move to approve the request by Jeffrey and Jeffrey Stevenson to utilize the family transfer exemption as presented in the exemption application and affidavit.

25:53
Second, any further discussion or public comment?

25:57
All in favor, aye, thank you.

25:59
Good luck with your project.

26:02
Thank you.

26:06
OK.

26:06
Our third hearing is with Tim Worley, the Big Bear addition subdivision amendments.

26:28
Good afternoon, commissioners.

26:30
I'm Tim Worley, Senior Planner with PDS, and I'm here to present Big Bear Addition Condition and Covenant amendments, which is a request from Phyllis and Dennis Sotter, represented by WGM Group for a condition and covenant amendment.

26:53
Big Bear Addition is a minor subdivision between Pulp Mill Road and Loiselle Lane South of the Interstate and northwest of the Y, and this is a view of the plat with N to the left of the slide.

27:10
There were three conditions of approval for this filed subdivision that dates back to 2003.

27:16
Condition 3C was regarding Fire Protection, offering the options of either residential fire sprinklers or a 350 gallon per minute well.

27:27
The condition applies to new structures or expansion of existing structures.

27:35
There was a new manufactured home placed on the property in July of this year.

27:40
The preference of the landowner is for a cistern rather than what's prescribed in Condition 3C, and this requires a condition and covenant amendments.

27:55
So what's required is to amend condition language to include cisterns and similarly to amend covenant language to include installation and maintenance of those cistern cistern or cisterns, I should say.

28:09
So amending conditions and covenants is authorized in subdivision regulations section 6.7.

28:17
Certain criteria must be met.

28:19
Essentially this.

28:20
It can only be a minor change that's fundamentally in keeping with the original subdivision approval, complying with the essence of the subdivision regulations as applies to the project, and it can't be based on factors such as cost.

28:40
The bottom line is that these sorts of changes are minor changes that can't allow for the elimination of the basic requirement, which in this case is Fire Protection and the new mitigation must be roughly equivalent to the original.

28:57
So this is the manufactured home in question that was placed on the property in July of 2005 and is required to have Fire Protection.

29:07
So WGM in making this request had alternate language for Condition 3C, which you can see on the slide here.

29:16
And just to illustrate, this will result also in covenant language that will be amended and I'm not going to go over the fine points, but it gets into maintenance of the cistern.

29:29
In addition to the changes that I've discussed, this went through agency review or the County Fire inspector and Frenchtown Rural Fire both reviewed the project and support the change.

29:43
So staff is in support of the the condition and covenant amendment.

29:48
Commissioners, there's your main motion.

29:53
Thank you.

29:54
Is there anyone from WJMGM who'd like to speak to this?

30:04
Hello, I'm Caitlin Frisby from WGM Group, and I just will offer my time for any questions or anything you guys need.

30:17
Tim covered it and yeah, Tim covered it.

30:21
Actually fire, all the fire folks just walked out.

30:28
So is there a reason why we're dealing with this now after the home has already been put in place?

30:34
Yes, I will make a correction and I don't know if I just misheard, but this, it was placed in July of 2025, not 2005.

30:42
But basically it was an oversight and the client, once it was caught, then I think she spoke to Tim and then came to WGM with her options.

30:58
And she has she is under contract with a concrete casting company for cistern tank to be installed in the spring.

31:09
And can you explain what a dry hydrant is?

31:12
Yeah.

31:12
So that is just a gosh, it's just a stand alone kind of pump out of the ground that then connects to the cistern or the cistern tank.

31:24
It is what's called a static system.

31:28
So no electricity or anything.

31:29
But that's why the maintenance is included in that covenant language as well for how full it needs to be and how to protect it from getting clogged.

31:40
Thankfully, it will not be dry if there's a fire.

31:43
So thank you.

31:46
Thanks.

31:47
Thank you.

31:50
Is there any public comment?

31:52
Finally remembered not seeing any in the room online.

32:01
OK, OK.

32:02
In the spirit of better late than never, I move to approve the Big Bear addition condition amendment slash covenant amendment request as detailed in the staff analysis and subject to the amended condition of approval.

32:13

Second, any further discussion or public comment all in favor, aye, I was thinking we were almost done, but I see Matt Heimel's here, other business.

32:28
We got a floodplain map update.

32:30
We're just going to get situated here.

32:48
OK, you can anywhere.

33:02
Where?

33:03
Wherever you can find a seat in a Yeah.

33:52
Well, good afternoon.

33:53
I am Matt Heimel, a planner and the floodplain Administrator with Missoula County Planning, Development and Sustainability.

34:00
This item on our agenda under other business is the floodplain map update consultation coordination officers meeting.

34:08
So we are in the process of a major floodplain mapping update with FEMA also being assisted with the DNRC for the Clark Fork River, Bitterroot River, and Rock Creek.

34:21
The Federal Emergency Management Agency published preliminary maps and a preliminary study on August 28th.

34:28

And this meeting, Consultation Coordination Officer, CCO for short, is one of the major milestones in the process where the community is presented with this information.

34:38
We have a discussion and we can have some some questions answered.

34:43
Usually this is like a workshop meeting.

34:46
We have it on our public meeting agenda today because as a regularly scheduled meeting, it's the most accessible and transparent format that that we could have.

34:53
It's a little unusual today also because the federal government being the what what it is, we don't have FEMA staff here today with us, but we do have some amazing staff from the DNRC to help us with with information.

35:08
So I'll be accompanied by Nadine Wadsworth, flood Hazard outreach planner, Douglas Bruger, Flood Plain Dam Safety Bureau chief, Tracy Sears, the Montana National Flood Insurance Program Coordinator, Maura Davin, Public Information Officer.

35:24
We have Sarah Smuggle, Joyce, flood Hazard GIS specialist, and we also have Larry Shock, civil engineering specialist, online.

35:33
So we have a presentation today.

35:36
Nadine Will take over much of the presentation, but I'm also on hand to answer specific questions and talk about some areas of concern for our community.

35:48
Thank you.

35:49
OK, Nadine, perfect.

35:52
If I could share my oh, thank you, Matt.

35:55
Could I be able to share my screen, even the the teams?

35:59
I am OK, so, so for the teams and then oh, I am able to share.

36:03
Perfect.

36:04
All right, let me get this up because technology.

36:23
All righty, do it.

36:32
There we go.

36:32
We got it.

36:34
Well, thank you, commissioners.

36:36
Thank you, Matt, for letting us come and talk to you today.

36:40
We're here to officially kick off your preliminary flood insurance rate map.

36:46

So Matt asked me to put together a neat little agenda, and I know it's an agenda within your agenda, but I thought it would be worth pointing out.

36:59
So really before we kind of dig into the preliminary flood insurance rate maps, I wanted to just kind of set the stage, talk about what brought us all together today, some of the history of the county's floodplain maps and the next steps in the project.

37:15
So what is the purpose of floodplain mapping?

37:20
Floodplain maps help identify flood risk, and by identifying that flood risk, we can help people stay out of harm's way.

37:30
Floodplain mapping projects are a coordinated effort with the city, county, state, and FEMA, and we really coordinate these efforts to help identify and eventually reduce those risks.

37:45
We don't map any old flood events.

37:47
What goes on these floodplain maps is what's called the 1% annual chance flood event, or you've probably heard it as the hundred year flood event.

37:58
Don't think of it in terms of years, think of it as a flood event that has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year.

38:08
Now, as much as I'd like to think that these maps are going to show every single flood event exactly this way, there could be some circumstances where maybe there's some debris in the channel or blocked culverts that could make the water behave a little bit differently.

38:25
But by and large, these maps should be able to show you what that 1% annual chance of flood risk is.

38:34
Floodplain maps today are called flood insurance rate maps or firms.

38:38
If I, if I say an acronym, absolutely stop me and say what is that?

38:42
But they're used for lots of different reasons.

38:44
So because the county regulates these map floodplains with their county floodplain regulations, federally backed flood insurance is available to all the residents countrywide.

38:59
They're also used by your planners to help guide growth and development.

39:03
Adrian uses these for Emergency Management to understand what roads could possibly be overtopped during that flood event.

39:11
The county Sanitarian uses them to ensure that septic systems are placed outside of those flood risk areas.

39:20
Mortgage companies use maps to determine if a home they're willing to finance could be at risk of being flooded.

39:27
And these maps are used to help set flood insurance premiums.

39:31
So recognizing that all these entities use these maps, these maps should be up to date, current and accurately reflect the flood risk.

39:42
So let's just go back in time a little.

39:44
We're going to talk about the history of the the floodplain maps in Missoula County.

39:48
The first actual floodplain map was issued in 1974 and it was just mostly to the city.

39:54
It wasn't issued with a study and they just used what best data they had available at that time to really show what the flood risk could potentially be.

40:06
The actual first flood study that.

40:10
Was for the areas that we studied, which is the Clark Fork, Bitterroot, and Rock Creek didn't actually happen until 1983, and that's what the status of your maps currently are.

40:28
So back in 2015, Missoula County was a part of what was called map modernization.

40:35
It was an effort to try to get the counties that were fast growing some more better up to So the county has been trying to regulate to maps that are almost as old as me, but that's really what prompted this new study.

41:09
So for many years before we started this project back in 2019, there had been requests to get some actual flood study work done on these systems, but we really didn't have the opportunity until we actually got this project started.

41:26
So in 2019, we coordinated with the county and the city.

41:33
We got some letters of support for the project and we, the state, applied for grants from FEMA to conduct the study.

41:43
One of the things in the letters of support was that the county was actually going to offer some in kind services similar to the Clearwater study that we did, where they were going to get some of the survey work.

41:57
We didn't actually need to use those services because the grant that we got was large enough to cover the whole flood study, which was really great.

42:06
This blood study actually updated 93 stream miles through the entire county.

42:11
And I want to point out it was a collaborative effort with also Granite County.

42:17
So we did.

42:19
Originally we had started with Mineral, then we moved down to Missoula and Granite.

42:23
Granite's quite a bit of ways ahead of Missoula.

42:26
Their maps actually went effective just this past year or so.

42:32
I don't know how familiar everybody is with flood zones, but I kind of want to set the stage before we start looking at some of the preliminary flood insurance rate maps.

42:42
So I just had, OK, what we're looking at is what is depicted on your flood insurance rate maps.

42:55
The special flood hazard area is that blue area where you see the flood fringe with that area in the middle with the red hatching.

43:06
Now that flood, special flood hazard area, 100 year floodplain, 1% annual chance floodplain.

43:12
However, you want to say it is the area that the county's regulations are subject to where there are permits required.

43:20
If somebody has a federally backed mortgage, their lender will require them to carry flood insurance.

43:27
Now that red hatching area in the middle, that's what we call the floodway that has different stricter regulations at the county and at the state levels for development in the state of Montana because that's typically where we see the deepest and fastest moving water during this high flood event.

43:51
There is no new development in a floodway.

43:54
Now that brown area on the outside, that would take a much larger flood event called a .2% or 500 year flood event.

44:05
And then anywhere outside of that, we just call it low risk area, but low risk doesn't mean no risk.

44:14
All right, so we're going to kind of keep going with setting the stage.

44:18
So we were here many years ago, I want to say 20/23/22, rolling out what we call draft data.

44:30
What is draft data?

44:31
Those were just the initial results from the flood study that we conducted.

44:36
It was really before the in depth review that was conducted by FEMA and their contractor.

44:42
But we like to share those results early, get that into the community's hands so that they can start looking at the results.

44:50
And that's what the public open house meetings that we held here in that October were based on.

44:57
FEMA actually issues the preliminary maps.

45:00
We don't issue the preliminary maps, the state level.

45:04
We just help coordinate the the roll out of the maps with our communities.

45:10
Now there have been changes from draft to prelim.

45:14
It happens often, especially for larger studies like this.

45:19
And it's because the study has to meet FEMA standards and guidance and that's when they really do their in depth review.

45:27
All those changes were captured in this technical memorandum and we did share that with the county for their review when the maps went preliminary.

45:41
So here's some of the components of your preliminary issuance for the county.

45:46
This is three of five index maps.

45:49
The other two index maps aren't on here because they're not affected by this new study.

45:55
What I want to point out is the index maps are really nice reference way to figure out what map panel number you need to look up in order to see what the flood risk for your areas.

46:08
And only those areas in red are affected by this preliminary study.

46:18
So that's why you see some of the panels are still in black, except for the there wasn't enough room for how many panels.

46:26
So that middle one shows all the numbers down below.

46:31
Those are also additional prelim panels.

46:36
Now these preliminary flood insurance rate maps and the flood insurance study, what do they represent?

46:42
They represent the 1% annual chance floodplain, the floodway, the .2% annual chance floodplain, all the flood elevations and only.

46:53
These preliminary flood insurance rate maps are the basis for an the upcoming 90 day appeal and comment period.

47:03
So someone living on the Blackfoot or up on the Clearwater would not be able to submit an appeal as part of the formal 90 day appeal.

47:16
Here's some of the other things that came with the prelim issuance.

47:20
So volume one of four for your flood insurance study, the flood insurance study really takes the study data and condenses it.

47:33
It outlines all the important components.

47:35
One of the things that's kind of unfortunate is in the new format, if we did lose the big section for the flood history.

47:45
So besides the fact that Tracy will tell you you have to, you should keep your old FISS, You should keep your old FISS just so you can keep that flood history.

47:56
The flood history section is really small and condensed, which is unfortunate because it they really did a good job for a while to capture all the flood, historic flood events in the jurisdictions.

48:09
But it also includes all your flood profiles.

48:12
So it it's a section view of the stream and it helps you determine the flood elevations for the area.

48:21
Makes Matt's life a lot easier.

48:24
And then the floodway data tables.

48:28
Along with this, FEMA also takes initial look at what are called letter of map amendments.

48:35
So what is a letter of map amendment?

48:37
Because I'm trying not to use acronyms.

48:39
They're also called Lomas.

48:41
So due to map scale, sometimes property owners are actually higher than what is shown on the floodplain map.

48:52
And instead of having Swiss cheese on a map, a property owner could determine if their home is actually higher through elevation and submit that to FEMA.

49:06
If FEMA agrees, then FEMA sends a determination back to the property owner saying yes or no.

49:16
Now a letter of map amendment is only for flood insurance purposes.

49:21
So if FEMA agrees, the property owner could then submit that to their lender and say, look, I'm higher and they may allow them not to have flood insurance.

49:34
But ALOMA does not exempt them from getting a floodplain permit for any work that they do on their home, home or property.

49:41
They still have to come talk with Matt about a permit.

49:44
But what FEMA does is they review all of the Lomas in the study area and they make a determination whether those Lomas will still be valid or no longer valid because of the study.

49:57
So this, it's a pretty decent sized document that was given to the county and the city is available.

50:05
Matt has it and if anybody wanted to see what their determination for their map amendment was, they could bug Matt and ask him.

50:16
So let's talk about some of the changes, Commissioners.

50:18
I know with the draft day that you remember this kind of broken up by the streams.

50:24
So we had the Clark Ford Bitterroot in Rock Creek because this is all combined now.

50:29
These are the changes from the last firm or flood insurance rate map.

50:33
So it compares that 1980s study data with the new study data and the colors correlate to the state flood hazard viewer, which we'll be looking at here in just a few minutes.

50:46
But what what this is showing is acres structures over 400 square feet and then structures under 400 square feet, it's broken up by flood way and floodplain.

51:01
And what is showing you as how many are being added because of the new study, How many are proposed to be removed with the new study and how many are unchanged?

51:14
So they are currently in and they're proposed to stay in the floodplain.

51:24
What's coming up next?

51:27
6 to 9 months now roughly.

51:30
FEMA will open a formal appeal.

51:34
FEMA does all the the most of the legwork for this.

51:37
To get it prepped, they have very strict guidance.

51:40
They must post it in the Federal Register.

51:43
It also has to correlate with press releases, which they'll run for you.

51:49
They generally run a press release 2 weeks before the appeal.

51:52
Start date and then the second press release must run on the appeal start date.

52:00
The only things that we need help with from Matt is he's kind of the pass through, so it has to follow whatever your public comment process is.

52:11
So, however the county accepts public comments, I do have tools to make it easier for Matt, tracking sheets, nice infographics to really help people understand what the difference between a comment and an appeal is and what's required for an appeal to be considered an appeal.

52:35
We do post all the information also on the project website that I maintain.

52:40
I know the county has one as well.

52:42
Some of the things to know about the formal appeal.

52:46
Matt does not review any submittals that come in.

52:50
I don't review any submittals come in.

52:52
The submittals are only reviewed and considered by FEMA.

52:55
So there are the ones that make the final determination for that.

53:00
And then for an appeal, in order for an appeal to be valid, it's not just that an area could be mapped differently.

53:13
It actually has to prove that there's a scientific or mathematical error in the study and they have to be able to provide the revised component of the study.

53:26
So by this point in the study, we started it in 2019, it has gone undergone rigorous quality assurance and quality checks not just during the study at our level, but also at the federal level by FEMA and their contractors.

53:43
So it's it's really more about catching errors as opposed to study or mapping something differently.

53:54
And so before we get into some of the other stuff, I'm going to hand it over to Tracy.

53:59
She's going to talk about the National Flood Insurance Program and really why this study in these maps are important.

54:07
Great.

54:07
Well, thank you, Nadine, and good afternoon, commissioners and county staff and participants.

54:12
As Nadine mentioned, my name is Tracy Sears and I'm out of the DNRC Helena office.

54:17
I'm the National Flood Insurance Program coordinator for the state of Montana.

54:21
And I'm just going to go over just a, just some general information of the National Flood Insurance Program, which is also referred to as the NFIP.

54:29
The NFIP is really a unified floodplain management program that is offered by the federal government.

54:35
It's made-up of four parts.

54:37
It's made-up of mapping, regulations, insurance and mitigation.

54:40
And I know today's really focusing on mapping, but all these parts kind of work together.

54:46

But the main premise of this program, the intention of this program from the from the start is actually to reduce flood losses and damages through by reducing flood risk and kind of knowing what that risk is and means on how to reduce it, whether it's through development or mitigation, is hopefully going to make the community safer kind of moving forward.

55:08
The National Flood Insurance Program, for a community to really want to join the program, they actually have to enter into an agreement with the federal government.

55:19
So it is a mutual agreement between the community and the federal government and participating communities there.

55:27
They have a few responsibilities when they join the program, and one of them is to adopt and enforce regulations that meet or exceed the state and federal standards.

55:38
They're also required to maintain these maps.

55:41
So that could be through processing some of these letter of map changes that Nadine mentioned.

55:46
It's also through some of these mapping updates that are occurring as well.

55:50
And these happen continuously throughout local communities.

55:56
In exchange, FEMA provides not only flood insurance throughout the entire community to be available, but also they provide disaster assistance if there were to be an event.

56:09
And so for flood insurance, I, I know Nadine mentioned this previously, but when you're looking at areas that have been designated in the community as high risk within that high risk area, flood insurance is mandatory for anybody who takes out a federally backed loan for their structures.

56:27
Now it's not mandatory in some of those lower risk zones.

56:31
We always recommend it because we see flooding events that do go outside some of those those high risk areas.

56:37
But lenders can always require flood insurance in any zone.

56:43
Flood insurance is a huge tool.

56:45
When we see disasters, it's the last thing we want to see in the community.

56:50
But we do work with property owners throughout the state.

56:54
They do fare better if they have flood insurance.

56:56
It's almost like a a way to kind of protect their structure as well to kind of help them.

57:00
It's not going to make them whole, but hopefully help them if they were to be faced with a disaster, especially for flooding.

57:09
Now, a few years ago, the flood insurance program changed to an actual rating.

57:14
And what that means is they, as Nadine mentioned, they use the maps to look at if a property is in or out of that high risk area, but they're also using those maps to as, as one of the factors they use for rating.

57:28
There's other things that kind of go into it.

57:32
They look at how far a structure is from stream, the history of flooding for that structure.

57:36
But I do know FEMA has a, has a great rate explanation guide that kind of goes over some of that.

57:42
But the, IT, it has changed on how floodplain management and flood insurance actually interacts with the, with this new rating system that they have.

57:52
One of the big things I wanted to highlight was that Missoula actually participates in what they call the community rating system, which is excellent because it shows that the community is going above and beyond the minimum federal standards.

58:06
And because of that, it's the the community rating system is the only break that property owners have when it comes to flood insurance.

58:14
So depending on how how the community's classified under the CRS program, it provides insurance discounts on premiums from property owners.

58:24
And right now you guys are at a class 7.

58:28
So that's providing over 15% of the discount on on a premium ratings for property owners.

58:34
And that's, that's great.

58:35
It's the only discount that's that's available.

58:37
Other things that that can lower flood insurance rates and lower flood insurance risk as if people are building higher, if they are are actually following the regulations, they get a lot of a break when it comes to flood insurance.

58:53
There's also private flood insurance that's also available.

58:57
I would direct anyone if you're if you're curious about insurance to go to the Montana Insurance Commissioner's website.

59:03
They have a lot of information about that.

59:06
Then we get into what if a community is decides not to administer the program or in in these situations where new maps are kind of going through.

59:17
If they decide not to adopt these new maps, what what happens if a community is no longer participating in the program or they decide not to adopt these maps?

59:26
They actually could be subject to being sanctioned and and the maps are the only ones that if they don't adopt the maps, they automatically, unfortunately the community, the entire community gets sanctioned.

59:36
When that happens.

59:37
Flood insurance is no longer available within the community.

59:40
Disaster assistance is extremely limited if if if available at all.

59:46
And then it becomes this process of the community.

59:51
What we see is a lot of communities try to get back into the program within the next couple years.

59:55
And so it's going to be, it's going to be a huge process, but there is limitations when the community unfortunately gets sanctioned if they're not from the NFIP program, if they decide not to adopt the maps before they're effective dates.

1:00:13
Thanks, Tracy.

1:00:14
So kind of looking ahead, here is an updated timeline.

1:00:20
We're at the preliminary maps issuance.

1:00:23
They were issued on August 28th.

1:00:28
Now kind of looking ahead and what we've seen historically is what this timeline is kind of based on.

1:00:36
Like I mentioned, 6 to 9 months from now, we should see the appeal.

1:00:41
Open up.

1:00:41
We'll work with Matt to get everything ready for that.

1:00:46

If a submittal comes in that changes the maps and it's a valid appeal, there will be revised preliminary that will be issued.

1:00:57
It could delay the project.

1:00:59
But barring any of that, if everything goes the way that it typically goes, these maps could be ready to go effective by mid to late 2027.

1:01:12
So 6 months before the maps go effective, FEMA issues what's called a letter of final determination saying, hey, we've reviewed everything, we've run our formal due process.

1:01:24
These are what the maps are.

1:01:26
You, the county, have six months to formally adopt the maps and update your regulations.

1:01:31
So it's not like all the sudden tomorrow the maps would go effective and the county wouldn't have time to get the regulations in order.

1:01:39
And we help Matt get all that squared away through the process.

1:01:45
So like I mentioned, we do have a project website at the state level that I maintain where we post all the outreach materials, meetings, background of the the project.

1:02:00
And then this is the way to access our state blood hazard viewer, which I'm really proud of, especially because our GIS is here.

1:02:10
She works really hard on this for us.

1:02:15
So I did want to kind of walk you through this.

1:02:17
And then that's really all I had other than some questions, but this is really neat.

1:02:25
So property owner can come up here.

1:02:28
They can either put in their address if they wanted to and that search bar, or they can just click the Missoula Granite button.

1:02:38
Like I said, Granite County was a part of this project, but they're a little bit further ahead, but it'll always open up on the preliminary mapping.

1:02:47
I know it says draft mapping on the tab, but this is for all the projects we have statewide.

1:02:54
So we've just kind of left it as draft, draft mapping.

1:02:57
But it does show the preliminary flood study results at these bottom tabs.

1:03:06
You can also toggle over to, well, I'm curious, I want to know what the effective maps look like.

1:03:12
So the effective mapping is also loaded on the viewer.

1:03:18
I'm a visual person.

1:03:19

And if you remember that table that I showed earlier with the floodplain changes, it correlates to the next two tabs.

1:03:27
So through the study kind of comparison, the comparison between the effective and the preliminary, anywhere you see that blue, like I mentioned, they are already mapped in and they're proposed to stay in.

1:03:47
Anywhere you see the red is going to be newly added.

1:03:50
And anywhere you see that green is proposed to be removed from the floodplain and it's broken down even further with the floodway.

1:04:01
So if you just wanted to see what the changes were, what the floodway from the effective maps to the the preliminary maps, it's broken down this way.

1:04:15
Matt really wanted me to kind of highlight this next tab a little bit.

1:04:20
So I'm going to go over here.

1:04:28
All right.

1:04:30
So when we collected LIDAR back in 2019, one of the things that they do is they also collect the ground elevation surrounding a home.

1:04:41
So if somebody was curious thinking that maybe they were higher, like we talked about for a map amendment, they could click on their their home and it'll tell you what that leg lowest adjacent grade or that ground elevation around their structure is.

1:05:07

And if they zoom in, which this might not have been the best 10, there's a flood elevation, they can compare it to the closest flood elevation, which in this case the one I picked was 3290, and it's significantly higher to the closest flood elevation.

1:05:30
It unfortunately can't be used to submit that map amendment, not yet.

1:05:35
But it does give somebody an idea if it's worth spending the money to hire a surveyor to come in and help them determine some elevation.

1:05:45
So it's a neat tab and then the next tab over is flood depth.

1:05:53
This will come in super handy for Emergency Management planning.

1:05:58
It really shows how deep the water is expected to get during that 1% annual chance or 100 year flood event.

1:06:06
And I know that there's a historic button tab and I apologize, we do not have historic flooding area for Missoula County yet.

1:06:16
This is for a different county.

1:06:17
We are working on it, but that's that's not for Missoula County yet.

1:06:23
But with that, that's all we really had today.

1:06:25
And so, yeah, thank you.

1:06:30
Thank you.

1:06:31
Are there any communities in Montana that have opted out, if you will, and not allowed their citizens at 15% discount?

1:06:41
We, we actually, Missoula is actually one of 11 communities that participate in community rating system.

1:06:48
All of our communities can qualify for it because we have higher state standards, but only 11 actually take that time to commit to it because it's a huge savings.

1:06:58
Yeah.

1:06:58
Thank you.

1:06:59
Absolutely.

1:07:02
OK.

1:07:02
When I have another question, Matt, I feel like a couple weeks ago we had some citizens come to us who and now I'm confused when we said that kind of all entities use these maps like the health department, OEM or Office of Emergency Management, planning department, they all use these draft maps now at the same time.

1:07:29
Or it seems like from that meeting there was like the health department, environmental seem to be setting as regulations of like into the OR the, the future maps are going to say X.

1:07:43
And so that's how the health department was determining it.

1:07:46
But then the planning department or the insurance companies are using the maps differently.

1:07:52
Can you, can you help me out in my word salad?

1:07:56
Right.

1:07:56
Yeah, it's, it's, it's a little confusing.

1:07:58
That's that's for sure.

1:07:59
So right at this time, environmental health, the health department are using these preliminary maps as available data for regulatory use.

1:08:10
County floodplain administration and using it for flood been reviewing for floodplain development permits is based on the effective older maps that we have now.

1:08:21
So for floodplain permitting in the planning department, we're not using the preliminary map data.

1:08:29
We look at it for every development that comes in and I will almost on a daily basis provide cautionary advice to people.

1:08:39
However, we're still using the effective flood insurance rate maps that were last published for the Clark Fork Bitter Rock Creek July of 2015.

1:08:51
Now, the county may adopt regulations that reference preliminary maps for regulatory use before they're effective at the federal level for insurance purposes.

1:09:01
However, that's not on the table at this time.

1:09:03
So that would take place in the future for for consideration at a public meeting with public notice beforehand.

1:09:13
OK.

1:09:13
So only the health department could is using it the latest greatest correct.

1:09:22
That's can be frustrating for folks to have two different timelines to work with if you're trying to develop a project now in 2025 and we're not going to know what's going on until 2027.

1:09:38
OK, thank you.

1:09:41
Yes.

1:09:43
So, Nadine, this might be a question for you or, or Tracy, have you ever seen an instance of a successful appeal?

1:09:53
Because clearly there's a differentiation between an appeal and someone commenting.

1:09:59
And I think this is an important distinction because we not infrequently get folks coming before us concerned that, hey, I've, I've never seen any water anywhere near my my home.

1:10:12
But clearly you need to do a little more work to, to make that case.

1:10:18
But have you ever seen an instance where someone actually was successful in in challenging the data?

1:10:25
Yes, it was in Gallatin County.

1:10:29
It was during the West Gallatin Bozeman Creek flood study update.

1:10:34
And the data that they had to submit was quite a lot.

1:10:41
It required a lot of coordination with FEMA and their contractors.

1:10:48
And it it, it did end up resulting in a change to some panels, but it was not an easy task.

1:10:56
And it was a business that was able to expend those funds.

1:11:02
So you're right, Commissioner, a comment is more I don't like these maps or it's never flooded here or this is the name of a road and you have the road incorrectly labeled.

1:11:16
The county actually provided comments similar to that when the preliminary maps were issued that will be addressed by FEMA.

1:11:26
But an appeal is, like I mentioned, not just that the mapping could have been done differently, but that the mapping that is shown and the study data is incorrect and you have to be able to prove why it's incorrect.

1:11:41
So would it be safe to say that if someone sees their property or a portion of their property within the floodplain in the preliminary maps and wants to challenge that, they should probably expect that unless they themselves are an engineer or a surveyor, that they're going to need to hire some expert outside assistance to help make that case to submit a formal appeal?

1:12:07
I would I would agree with that, yes.

1:12:09
OK.

1:12:10
Just want to temper folks expectations that simply disputing with a comment probably will not result in the desired outcome.

1:12:22
Another question, I guess, so you mentioned our good friends Granite County.

1:12:27
Holy smokes, Granite County got ahead of us, Juanita.

1:12:29
So, so is there a process going on with, with Ravalli and Mineral County simultaneously?

1:12:38
So Mineral County actually was ahead of you.

1:12:40
So we who counted what the heck we get, you get better results when you study the system as a whole.

1:12:46
So we, we did, we started with Mineral County.

1:12:49
Gosh, their maps went effective in 2020, 1/20/22.

1:12:58
So we had already started working on Missoula County and Granite County.

1:13:04
We actually have Powell County loaded up too.

1:13:07
So Powell County is actually going through a study, but Ravalli County is not on our study list right now and we are not currently re studying Ravalli County.

1:13:20
OK, thank you.

1:13:22
Thank you.

1:13:25
Douglas, do you have anything to add?

1:13:36
I did have a thought about your your question about appeals and the amount of data.

1:13:43
We're happy to be available for folks if they come to you with questions.

1:13:48
We've done several cases where we will give some feedback on what pass forward could look like because obviously like you mentioned, people need to be surveyors, engineers to really dive into the data and we are the ones who produce these maps with our contractors primarily.

1:14:08
So we have the data available.

1:14:13
We've been giving it to Matt and and are happy for Matt to provide the data too.

1:14:17
But we're a backup source for that information.

1:14:19
And yeah, we can give, you know, a 10,000 foot view of what sort of requirements there would be for an appeal and help people make an informed decision if they want to, if they want to pursue that, if they're willing to, to hear us out.

1:14:37
So don't be shy to send folks our way as well.

1:14:42
We're we're as busy as anybody else, but we can try to, yeah, give people at least a preliminary cut of what types of appeals maybe may end up being valid or not.

1:14:53
And all the other nuances Say they have an issue with the Blackfoot River that's coming in there.

1:14:58
That wasn't part of our study.

1:15:00
It's part of the new panel now.

1:15:02
And so we can help have those conversations as well and connect folks with FEMA contacts and otherwise be be there to assist as best we can.

1:15:14
Thank you.

1:15:15
Thank you.

1:15:19
Does anyone else have any questions or comments?

1:15:23
Oh my gosh, I'm forgetting about the folks online.

1:15:26
Maura, Sarah, Larry or anyone on the OK.

1:15:36
Hi, Bradley Watkins, Executive Director of the Missoula Conservation District, and we oversee the Montana Natural Stream Bed and Land Preservation Act for Missoula Conservation District, which is just about the boundaries of the county.

1:15:52
And I just really appreciate the partnership from Floodplain.

1:15:55
I work closely with Matt.

1:15:57
Probably Floodplain and Fish, Wildlife and Parks are our two closest partners.

1:16:02
I get to see Matt in action all the time and he's ultra professional and has a really hard job because he can't waiver in order to get these discounts for all the people in the county.

1:16:17
It doesn't always make him very popular and, and you know, I feel for him that way, but it's so important.

1:16:26
And I also want to thank the commissioners and, and DNRC for having the avenue and for the county participating in those extra steps like the the floodway riparian buffer.

1:16:43
I think it's so important.

1:16:44

You know, we have channel migration zone maps for the Bitterroot and the Clark Fork through Missoula County.

1:16:51
And I get the question sometimes after even even not a registered 100 year flood, but just a high water event and where someone loses some land and they say, well, where is it going to stop?

1:17:02
You know, and I always say, are you talking 500 years, you know, 5000 years, 5 million years.

1:17:08
Like look at that mountainside, look at that mountainside.

1:17:10
It's been back and forth and, and a lot of us in stream management are trying to teach people that we can't just look at the river or the stream.

1:17:21
We have to look at the stream corridor and remember that this is sort of a living entity that's going to be moving back and forth.

1:17:27
So as you guys go through this unpopular process of telling people that their house is now in the floodplain based on better data and climate models and things, I just want to tell you that it's really appreciated by your partners out there and it really helps serve the people of Missoula County.

1:17:45
So thanks.

1:17:47
Thanks so much for sharing that Rad.

1:17:55
OK, Griffin.

1:17:59
OK.

1:18:01
Well, I just want to say and thank you for DNRC sharing almost all of its staff apparently to join us today.

1:18:07
We appreciate that.

1:18:09
Yeah, thank you all.

1:18:10
It was our pleasure.

1:18:11
Thank you, commissioners, for having us come today.

1:18:15
OK, With that, we're adjourned.

1:18:17
Have a great afternoon everyone.