

MISSOULA COUNTY OPEN LANDS CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

May 14, 2026
6:00 p.m.

Approved Minutes
*Meeting recordings available upon
request.*



Present		Absent	Staff	Others
Sharon Sweeney Sarah Holden Brad Hall	Caroline Byrd Tim Hall Ginny Sullivan	Helene Michael Bonnie Buckingham Noel Treat	Jenny Zaso	Kit Fischer, FVLT

A. Call to Order and Roll Call

Sarah facilitated and called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

B. Land Acknowledgement

Missoula County acknowledges that this event takes place in the aboriginal territories of the Salish and Kalispel people.

C. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved with an amendment to move the “Staff Communications” section to earlier on the agenda, just before the FVLT Level II Lovell-Bonner OSB project presentation.

D. Approval of OLC Meeting Minutes –April 9, 2026

Minutes from the April meeting were moved and seconded. All members voted in favor and the motion passed.

E. Public Comment and Announcements on items not on the agenda

There were no public comments or announcements.

F. Staff Communications

- Notification of Locke-Ninemile Level I Application & Approval for Level II Submission
 - Jenny announced that a new Locke-Ninemile Level II application presentation from FVLT will be given at the June 11th OLC meeting, and that the vote for BCC recommendation of the project heard at today’s meeting “Lovell-Bonner” will take place at the June meeting as well.
- Training & Next Steps: OLC Role in Open Space Bond Application process
 - Jenny did a quick overview of the full Open Space Bond project OLC recommendation process to prepare OLC for the two projects making their way through the full process this and next month.

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G. New Business

• Lovell-Bonner OSB Level II Application Presentation - Kit Fischer, FVLT

- Kit Fischer presented the Lovell-Bonner conservation land acquisition project to OLC and covered the following project information:
- The property is approximately 241 acres. The entirety of this property would be conserved through Five Valleys Land Trust ownership. Public access would be managed by Five Valleys and in the case of future disposition by Five Valleys, a conservation easement would prohibit any future building development.
- The Property is primarily comprised of steep conifer forestlands. Previous landowners have completed thinning projects on much of the property and the current owner has marketed the property for subdivision potential with percolation tests completed and multiple build sites identified. The current owner has been granted a utility easement through Bonner Development Corporation lands with the intent to pull power to the building sites. There is an existing well at the top of the property.
- There are currently no homes on the property. Five Valleys Land Trust would ensure no future building development occurs on the property.
- Conservation values on the property include critical wildlife habitat and connectivity corridor, public access for hunting and recreation and scenic views.
- Five Valleys Land Trust is committed to long-term ownership and stewardship of the property, as well as managing the property for public access.
- The Property is situated adjacent to an existing Five Valleys' Conservation Easement known as the "B Hill" property owned by Bonner Development Corporation. We currently manage for public access on this property and it would be complemented by the Lovell property if acquired. Additional adjacent lands include a small piece of Milltown State Park to the north and to the east Checkerboard LLC. Lands owned by The Nature Conservancy.
- Five Valleys is applying for \$250,000 of Open Space Bond funds from Missoula County which equates to \$1,033 per acre and 16% of the project budget. The requested funds would solely be used to acquire the property. Five Valleys Land Trust is currently under contract on the Lovell-Bonner property for \$1,040,000 with a contingency that we will not pay above appraised value.
- The total cost for the project is estimated to be \$1,576,000. The value of the property is estimated at \$1,040,000 or \$4,297/acre. The project budget includes \$36,000 in transaction and project facilitation costs, including: \$11,000 for legal fees, closing costs and title insurance, \$5,000 in appraisal fees and a goal of nearly a \$500,000 maintenance and management fund. This fund amount represents steady-state and perpetual costs for land, forest, and public access management, acknowledging the potential for long-term ownership by Five Valleys.
- Five Valleys has reached an agreement with partner organization, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative to fund a significant portion of this acquisition, contributing a total of \$1 Million to acquisition and Five Valleys' long-term maintenance and management of the property.

H. Subcommittee Reports/Communications/Questions

1. Subcommittee Communications

i. Communications

- **Good Neighbor Handbook Updates**
Jenny covered this update in the Joint OLC/OSAC meeting.
- **Land Stewardship Award**
Jenny covered this update in the Joint OLC/OSAC meeting.

ii. Board Chair/Vice-Chair Communications **None**

2. General Communications and Questions

i. Round Robin Updates:

- OLC members shared happenings in their respective communities including upcoming events at the Ninemile Community Center, ghost hunting at the Ninemile schoolhouse, master gardener tabling and more.

H. Future Agenda Items

Open Space Bond project process will take some significant spots on the next two months of OLC agendas.

I. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 pm.