



**NATURAL RESOURCES AND TRANSPORTATION
APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE
SECTION C**

**2025 BIENNIUM BUDGET
MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION**

**HOUSE BILL 2
AGENCY-WIDE
AMANDA KASTER, DIRECTOR**

Mission Statement:

Serving Montanans first through natural resource management.

Statutory Authority:

2-15-104 and Title 2, chapter 15, part 33, MCA.

Agency Description:

The Department serves Montanans through a diverse set of programs to help ensure the State's land and water resources provide benefits for present and future generations. Through pursuit of the mission and satisfying statutory responsibilities the Department sustainably manages 5.2 million acres of State Trust Land to generate revenue for trust beneficiaries; provides coordination and promotes sustainable use and development of the State's water resources; leads efforts for responsible and proactive stewardship and management of forest resources and wildfire risk; administers oil and gas conservation laws while encouraging conservation and reducing waste in resource recovery through regulation, remediation, and permitting; and connects communities and Conservation Districts with financial, informational, and personnel support resources to improve and manage natural resources.

AGENCY PROPOSED BUDGET

Budget Item	Starting Point Fiscal 2023	2024 Adjustments	2024 Total	2025 Adjustments	2025 Total	2025 Biennium
FTE	539.61	1.00	540.61	1.00	540.61	
Personal Services	\$45,080,397	\$1,536,959	\$46,617,356	\$1,797,183	\$46,877,580	\$93,494,936
Operating Expenses	21,396,489	6,341,427	27,737,916	6,680,272	28,076,761	55,814,677
Equip & Intangible Assets	1,353,066	83,450	1,436,516	33,450	1,386,516	2,823,032
Local Assistance	2,058,090	1,000,000	3,058,090	1,000,000	3,058,090	6,116,180
Grants	2,487,714	0	2,487,714	0	2,487,714	4,975,428
Benefits & Claims	400,000	0	400,000	0	400,000	800,000
Transfers	1,724,243	0	1,724,243	0	1,724,243	3,448,486
Debt Service	2,263,766	0	2,263,766	0	2,263,766	4,527,532
TOTAL COSTS	\$76,763,765	\$8,961,836	\$85,725,601	\$9,510,905	\$86,274,670	\$172,000,271
General Fund	\$32,573,854	\$4,896,627	\$37,470,481	\$4,785,615	\$37,359,469	\$74,829,950
State/Other Special	42,119,288	4,017,353	46,136,641	4,672,443	46,791,731	92,928,372
Federal Spec. Rev. Funds	2,070,623	47,856	2,118,479	52,847	2,123,470	4,241,949
TOTAL FUNDS	\$76,763,765	\$8,961,836	\$85,725,601	\$9,510,905	\$86,274,670	\$172,000,271

CHANGE PACKAGES

Present Law Adjustments

	-----FISCAL 2024-----					-----FISCAL 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
SWPL 1		\$609,158	\$786,492	\$3,341	\$1,398,991		\$735,993	\$917,930	\$5,292	\$1,659,215
SWPL 2		101,845	253,068		354,913		5,701	178,278		183,979
SWPL 3		549,369	724,338	44,515	1,318,222		652,790	896,052	47,555	1,596,397
Present Law Adj*		1,178,689	1,729,500		2,908,189		1,157,314	1,754,525		2,911,839
TOTAL		\$2,439,061	\$3,493,398	\$47,856	\$5,980,315		\$2,551,798	\$3,746,785	\$52,847	\$6,351,430

* See Individual Divisions' Change Package Handouts for Details

SWPL 1 – Personal Services

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$609,158	\$1,398,991
FY 2025	<u>\$735,993</u>	<u>\$1,659,215</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$1,345,151	\$3,058,206

The budget includes \$1,398,991 in FY 2024 and \$1,659,215 in FY 2025 to annualize various personal services costs including FY 2023 statewide pay plan, benefit rate adjustments, longevity adjustments related to incumbents in each position at the time of the snapshot, and vacancy savings.

SWPL 2 – Fixed Costs

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$101,845	\$354,913
FY 2025	<u>\$ 5,701</u>	<u>\$183,979</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$107,546	\$538,892

The request includes \$354,913 in FY 2024 and \$183,979 in FY 2025 to provide the funding required in the budget to pay fixed costs assessed by other agencies within state government for the services they provide. Examples of fixed costs include liability and property insurance, legislative audit, warrant writer, payroll processing, and others. The rates charged for these services are approved in a separate portion of the budget.

SWPL 3 – Inflation Deflation

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$549,369	\$1,318,222
FY 2025	<u>\$652,790</u>	<u>\$1,596,397</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$1,202,159	\$2,914,619

This change package includes \$1,318,222 in FY 2024 and \$1,596,397 in FY 2025 to reflect budgetary changes generated from the application of inflation to specific expenditure accounts. Affected accounts include those associated with supplies and materials, communications, repair and maintenance, state motor pool, and other services.

New Proposals

	-----FISCAL 2024-----					-----FISCAL 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
New Proposals*	1.00	\$2,457,566	\$523,955		\$2,981,521	1.00	\$2,233,817	\$925,658		\$3,159,475
TOTAL	1.00	\$2,457,566	\$523,955	\$0	\$2,981,521	1.00	\$2,233,817	\$925,658	\$0	\$3,159,475

*See Individual Divisions' Change Package Handouts for Details.



2025 BIENNIUM BUDGET MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION

DIRECTOR'S OFFICE PROGRAM 21 REX RENK, CHIEF OF STAFF

Division Overview:

The Director's Office provides central services and leadership to ensure the Department's essential and constitutionally mandated functions are optimally delivered to all Montanans. The division is comprised of 60.75 FTE providing services for the Department's personnel.

Division Programs:

The office is led by the Director, Deputy Director, and the Chief of Staff and includes a Communications Director, Safety Officer, and Records Manager, as Director's Office staff. The Division is further organized into five work units which are the Legal Services Unit, Financial Services Office, Office of Information Technology, Human Resources Office, and the Office of Administrative Hearings.

- **Executive Leadership (Amanda Kaster, Director; Kerry Davant, Deputy Director; Rex Renk, Chief of Staff)**
Provides leadership to the Divisions, implements the Executive vision, and supervises Division Administrators and Director's Office staff.
- **Communications (Cassie Wandersee, Communications Director)**
Communicates program and Department updates to the public through a variety of mediums.
- **Safety (Matt Chambers, Safety Officer)**
Manages safety programs, safety training, and oversees claims to ensure risk is managed to reduce costs to the Department and promote employee and property wellbeing.
- **Records Management (KarenDe Herman, Records Manager)**
Manages Department records, policies, and information requests to meet the statutory requirements.
- **Legal Services (Brian Bramblett, Chief Legal)**
Provide legal services and support to the Divisions and represent the Department in legal matters.
- **Financial Services Office (Tricia Greiberis, Chief Financial Officer)**
Provides financial management for the Department and assists other users of financial data both within and outside state government.
- **Office of Information Technology (Acting Tyler Redden, Chief Information Officer)**
Provides quality, cost-effective information technology for the Department to fulfill its mission.
- **Human Resources Office (Christy Stapley, Human Resources Manager)**
Oversees a variety of human resource functions in support of the Department's mission.
- **Office of Administrative Hearings (Rex Renk, Chief of Staff)**
Hears administrative law proceedings for the Department as required in rule and statute arising from program decisions.

Budget Discussion:

In addition to the agency-wide change packages, the Director's Office is requesting six change packages, comprised of three present law adjustments and three new proposals, one of which is a branch-wide fixed cost allocation. We are also requesting one language appropriation.

PROGRAM PROPOSED BUDGET

Budget Item	Starting Point Fiscal 2023	2024 Adjustments	2024 Total	2025 Adjustments	2025 Total	Biennium Total
FTE	60.75	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	
Personal Services	\$5,741,102	\$337,315	\$6,078,417	\$370,085	\$6,111,187	\$12,189,604
Operating Expenses	1,893,911	414,280	2,308,191	619,959	2,513,870	4,822,061
Equip & Intangible Assets	62,554	0	62,554	0	62,554	125,108
Transfers	500	0	500	0	500	1,000
Debt Service	484,129	0	484,129	0	484,129	968,258
TOTAL COSTS	\$8,182,196	\$751,595	\$8,933,791	\$990,044	\$9,172,240	\$18,106,031
General Fund	\$4,645,118	\$421,314	\$5,066,432	\$555,604	\$5,200,722	\$10,267,154
State/Other Special	3,537,078	330,281	3,867,359	434,440	3,971,518	7,838,877
TOTAL FUNDS	\$8,182,196	\$751,595	\$8,933,791	\$990,044	\$9,172,240	\$18,106,031

CHANGE PACKAGES

Present Law Adjustments

	-----FISCAL 2024-----					-----FISCAL 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
SWPL 1*		\$123,433	\$95,836		\$219,269		\$141,887	\$110,152		\$252,039
SWPL 2*		129,223	107,778		237,001		35,500	34,949		70,449
SWPL 3*		78,215	60,724		138,939		89,497	69,473		158,970
TOTAL		\$330,871	\$264,338	\$0	\$595,209		\$266,884	\$214,574	\$0	\$481,458

* See Agency-Wide Change Packages Handout for details.

New Proposals

	-----FISCAL 2024-----					-----FISCAL 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
CP #99		\$21,567	\$12,473		\$34,040		\$21,567	\$12,473		\$34,040
CP #2101	1.00	68,876	53,470		122,346	1.00	67,300	52,246		119,546
CP #2104							199,853	155,147		355,000
TOTAL	1.00	\$90,443	\$65,943	\$0	\$156,386	1.00	\$288,720	\$216,866	\$0	\$508,586

CP #99 – New Fixed Costs

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$21,567	\$34,040
FY 2025	<u>\$21,567</u>	<u>\$34,040</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$43,134	\$68,080

The budget includes \$34,040 in FY 2024 and \$34,040 in FY 2025 to provide funding for the agency to pay for new fixed cost allocation related to the Chief Data Office and the State Management Training Center. Rates for the fix costs are reviewed by the Section A Subcommittee.

CP #2101 - DO Project Manager/Business Analyst Position

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$68,876	\$122,346
FY 2025	<u>\$67,300</u>	<u>\$119,546</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$136,176	\$241,892

DNRC requests 1.0 FTE Project Management/Business Analyst position. The agency is committed to align with the Governor’s 100% digital challenge, but remains tied to significantly outdated, siloed, technology and/or paper-based processes. As a first step toward modernizing and efficiency, the Department undertook two large HB 10 database projects authorized by the 2019 Legislature — upgrades to the water rights database system and trust land management system. Through that experience, the Department identified a critical need for dedicated FTE to manage, coordinate, and oversee large technical projects within and across divisions and with third party vendors. The need will become more crucial as the Department works to comply with the Governor’s mandate, including a third HB 10 request for an agency-wide modernized, efficient, digital financial system to replace antiquated paper-based, manual workflows that currently exist. Additionally, the Department’s fire finance system needs to be overhauled; customer service portals with online payment capabilities need to be created for each division; and the Department’s website and online forms overhaul needs to continue.

CP #2104 – DO Financial Management System O & M

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$0	\$0
FY 2025	<u>\$199,853</u>	<u>\$355,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$199,853	\$355,000

DNRC requests an increase in general fund and state special revenue funds for the annual ongoing maintenance costs for the DNRC Financial Management System. This request is contingent on the passage of the DNRC's HB 10 request.

Language Appropriations

During the 2025 biennium, up to \$1,500,000 of funds currently in or to be deposited in the DNRC Indirects state special revenue account is appropriated to the department for indirect pool expenditures.



2025 BIENNIUM BUDGET MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION

OIL AND GAS CONSERVATION DIVISION PROGRAM 22 BEN JONES, DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR

Division Overview:

The Oil and Gas Conservation Division is responsible for the regulation of oil and gas exploration and production in Montana. The Division's authority includes protecting correlative rights of the owners of the mineral estate, requiring that measures be taken to prevent waste of oil and natural gas, preventing contamination of or damage to land or underground strata caused by drilling operations and production, regulating underground injection used for disposal of oil and gas wastes and for injection of fluids for enhanced recovery, and utilizing the damage mitigation account to plug and reclaim orphaned and pre-regulatory wells.

Division Programs:

The Division is comprised of 19.5 FTE that are located across the state: at the headquarters in Billings; a field office in Shelby; and inspectors located in Roundup, Bainville, Sidney, and Plevna.

PROGRAM PROPOSED BUDGET

Budget Item	Starting Point Fiscal 2023	2024 Adjustments	2024 Total	2025 Adjustments	2025 Total	Biennium Total
FTE	19.50	0.00	19.50	0.00	19.50	
Personal Services	\$1,615,004	\$47,220	\$1,662,224	\$55,286	\$1,670,290	\$3,332,514
Operating Expenses	492,374	38,916	531,290	44,209	536,583	1,067,873
Equip & Intangible Assets	56,550	33,450	90,000	33,450	90,000	180,000
Debt Service	18,491		18,491		18,491	36,982
TOTAL COSTS	\$2,182,419	\$119,586	\$2,302,005	\$132,945	\$2,315,364	\$4,617,369
General Fund	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
State/Other Special	2,074,540	119,586	2,194,126	132,945	2,207,485	4,401,611
Federal Spec. Rev. Funds	107,879		107,879		107,879	215,758
TOTAL FUNDS	\$2,182,419	\$119,586	\$2,302,005	\$132,945	\$2,315,364	\$4,617,369

CHANGE PACKAGES

Present Law Adjustments

	-----FISCAL 2024-----					-----FISCAL 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
SWPL 1*			\$34,448		\$34,448			\$42,514		\$42,514
SWPL 2*			9,374		9,374			9,190		9,190
SWPL 3*			29,542		29,542			35,019		35,019
CP #2201			46,222		46,222			46,222		46,222
TOTAL		\$0	\$119,586	\$0	\$119,586		\$0	\$132,945	\$0	\$132,945

* See Agency-Wide Change Packages Handout for details.

CP #2201 - BOGC Per Diem, Overtime, & Equipment Adjustment

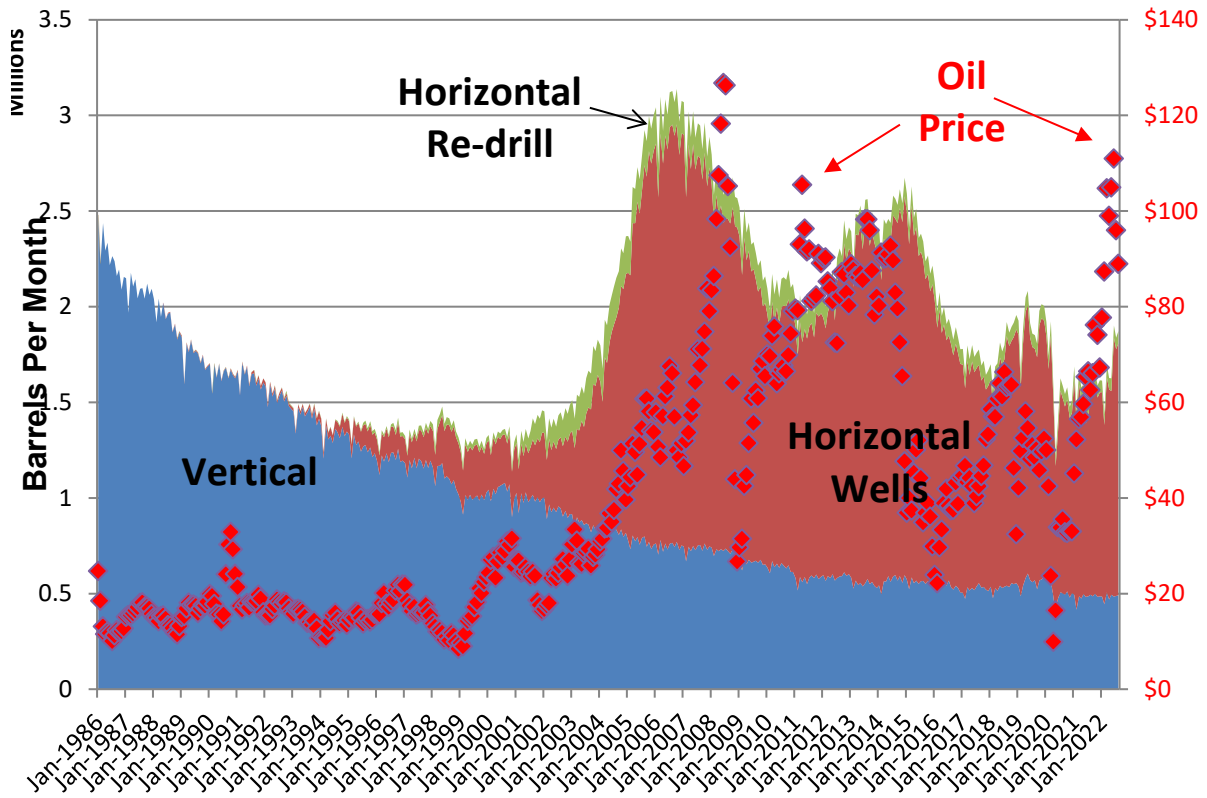
	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$0	\$46,222
FY 2025	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$46,222</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$0	\$92,444

The DNRC Board of Oil and Gas Conservation Division requests appropriations in each year for overtime in the amount of \$8,122 for field inspectors, per diem in the amount of \$4,650 for the board members who serve on the Board of Oil and Gas Conservation, and an equipment cost adjustment of \$33,450 to fund the cost increase of vehicles. The Division was awarded a \$25 million grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior through funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, [Public Law 117-85 \(2021\)](#), to cap the 237 identified orphaned oil and gas wells. This request is to ensure the Division is properly equipped for the oversight and administration of the grant funds. The requests are funded with state special revenue.

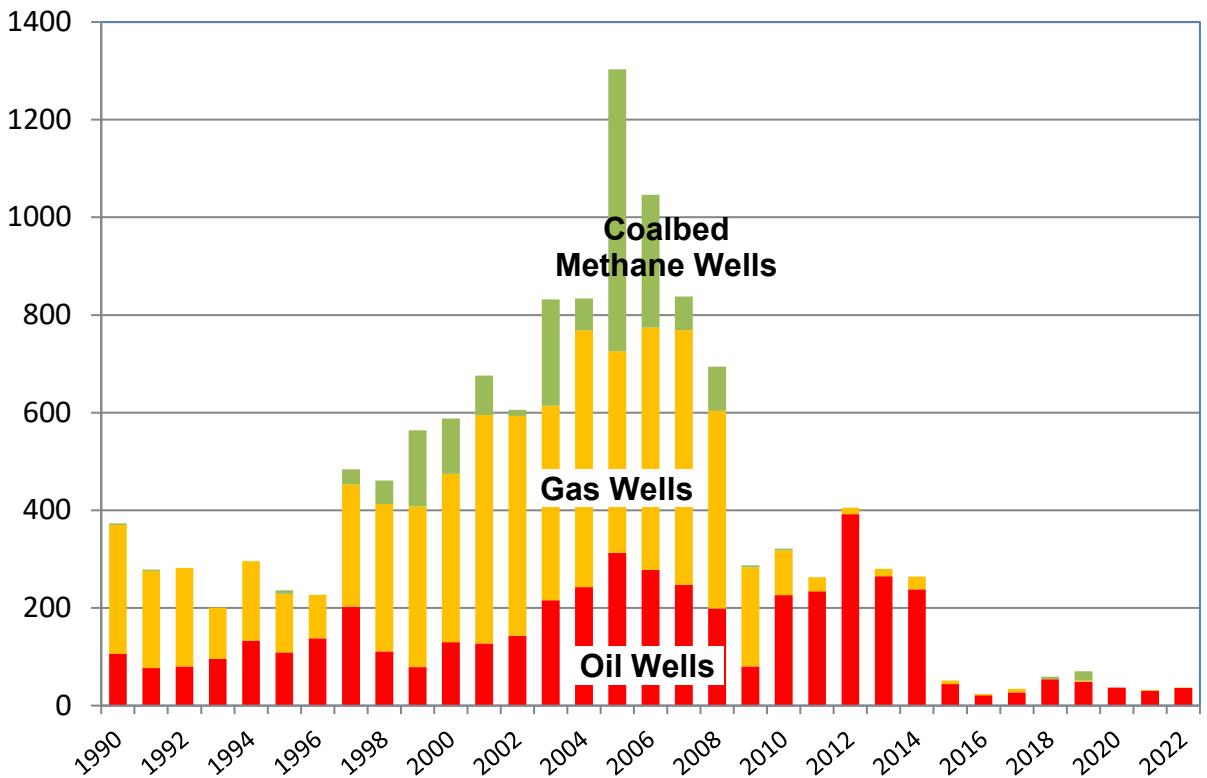
Program 22 Funding Overview:

- Funding for the Board of Oil and Gas Conservation and Oil and Gas Division is through a state special revenue account established under § 82-11-131 MCA. The maximum tax rate of 0.3% of the value of oil and gas sold is established in § 15-36-304, MCA, and the current rate set by the board is 0.25%. The remaining 0.05% directed to the natural resource distribution account for distribution to incorporated cities and towns in oil and gas producing counties. Income to the earmarked revenue account is primarily dependent upon the price and sold volume of oil.
- An annual grant from the Environmental Protection Agency supports the administration of the Underground Injection Control Program. Injection well operators also pay an annual fee of \$200 for each permitted injection well.
- Funding for the Oil and Gas Damage Mitigation Account (02010) is from plugging and reclamation bond forfeitures and Resource Indemnity Trust (RIT) earnings via a statutory appropriation from Resource Indemnity Trust interest under § 82-11-161, MCA. These funds are used for the direct costs associated with the abandonment and reclamation of orphaned or pre-regulatory wells. These funds would also be used in the event change orders are needed when plugging wells with BIL federal grant funds.

Oil Production by Well Type



Drilling Permits, 1990 through 2022





2025 BIENNIUM BUDGET MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION

CONSERVATION & RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT DIVISION PROGRAM 23

MARK BOSTROM, DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR

Division Overview:

The Conservation Resource Development Division provides financial and technical assistance to local governments, state agencies and private citizens for conservation, development, protection, and management of the state's natural resources.

Division Programs:

The division's 30.17 FTE are arranged into four bureaus and has five administratively attached councils and commissions.

- **Office of Administration & Finance (Anna Miller, Deputy Administrator)**

The Office of Conservation Finance protects Montana's resources by issuing loans to local government borrowers for infrastructure improvement projects, Co-manages the SRF programs with Department of Environmental Quality by providing financial administration of Montana's Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund loan programs and oversees the Treasure State Endowment Program - Regional Water Systems. The 2023 projects for these loan programs are being heard in the Long-Range Planning Committee in the form of House Bill 8.

- **Resource Development Bureau (Autumn Coleman, Bureau Chief)**

The Resource Development Bureau administers two major grant programs, Renewable Resource Grants and Reclamation Development Grants. The bureau also administers \$429 million of grants from the ARPA water, wastewater section. The 2023 projects for the RRG and RDG grant programs are being heard in the Long-Range Planning Committee in the forms of House Bill 6, 7, and 11.

- **Conservation Districts Bureau (Stephanie Criswell, Bureau Chief)**

The Conservation Districts Bureau provides financial, legal/technical assistance, and training to Montana's 58 conservation districts.

- **Montana Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program (Therese Hartman, Program Manager)**

The Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Program implements the stakeholder developed Executive Order 12-2015 and the Montana Greater Sage-Grouse Stewardship Act, collectively referred to as Montana's Sage Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy.

- **Administrative Attachments**

- Rangeland Resource Committee (Stacey Barta, Rangeland Resource Coordinator)
- Montana Invasive Species Council (Liz Lodman, Invasive Species Program Manager)
- Flathead Basin Commission (Cassidy Bender, Acting Executive Director)
- Upper Columbia Conservation Commission (Cassidy Bender, Acting Executive Director)
- Grass Conservation Commission (Contracted to Montana Association of Grazing Districts)

PROGRAM PROPOSED BUDGET

Budget Item	Starting Point Fiscal 2023	2024 Adjustments	2024 Total	2025 Adjustments	2025 Total	Biennium Total
FTE	30.17	0.00	30.17	0.00	30.17	30.17
Personal Services	\$2,753,411	\$55,413	\$2,808,824	\$73,224	\$2,826,635	\$5,635,459
Operating Expenses	2,899,808	414,290	3,314,098	454,270	3,354,078	6,668,176
Equip & Intangible Assets	43,743		43,743		43,743	87,486
Grants	2,140,249		2,140,249		2,140,249	4,280,498
Local Assistance	2,058,090	1,000,000	3,058,090	1,000,000	3,058,090	6,116,180
Benefits & Claims	400,000		400,000		400,000	800,000
Debt Service	238,781		238,781		238,781	477,562
TOTAL COSTS	\$10,534,082	\$1,469,703	\$12,003,785	\$1,527,494	\$12,061,576	\$24,065,361
General Fund	\$1,826,376	\$101,035	\$1,927,411	\$129,307	\$1,955,683	\$3,883,094
State/Other Special	8,399,420	1,368,668	9,768,088	1,398,187	9,797,607	19,565,695
Federal Spec. Rev. Funds	308,286		308,286		308,286	616,572
TOTAL FUNDS	\$10,534,082	\$1,469,703	\$12,003,785	\$1,527,494	\$12,061,576	\$24,065,361

CHANGE PACKAGES

Present Law Adjustments

	-----FISCAL 2024-----					-----FISCAL 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
SWPL 1*		(\$80,850)	\$136,263		\$55,413		(\$74,734)	\$147,958		\$73,224
SWPL 2*		15,459	24,622		40,081		15,126	24,464		39,590
SWPL 3*		78,926	70,283		149,209		101,415	88,265		189,680
CP #2305			1,000,000		1,000,000			1,000,000		1,000,000
TOTAL		\$13,535	\$1,231,168	\$0	\$1,244,703		\$41,807	\$1,260,687	\$0	\$1,302,494

* See Agency-Wide Change Packages Handout for details.

CP #2305 - CARDD Reinstate SSR Base Loan Approp & Fed Fund Re-Align

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$0	\$1,000,000
FY 2025	\$0	<u>\$1,000,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$0	\$2,000,000

The DNRC is requesting to reinstate state special revenue base loan appropriation to the original level that was authorized in previous sessions. This funding is used for low-interest loans to public entities to assist in the completion of their water and wastewater projects to accommodate the growing demand for housing and businesses in Montana. The loans in any given fiscal year vary.

New Proposals

	-----FISCAL 2024-----					-----FISCAL 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
CP #2301		\$12,500	\$12,500		\$25,000		\$12,500	\$12,500		\$25,000
CP #2302			50,000		50,000			50,000		50,000
CP #2303		75,000	75,000		150,000		75,000	75,000		150,000
TOTAL		\$87,500	\$137,500	\$0	\$225,000		\$87,500	\$137,500	\$0	\$225,000

CP #2301 -CARDD Rangeland Resource Internship Program

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$12,500	\$25,000
FY 2025	<u>\$12,500</u>	<u>\$25,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$25,000	\$50,000

The DNRC is requesting funding for the Rangeland Resource Internship Program. This request allows the program to meet the current demand for the popular program, which funnels students with natural resource majors into range-focused positions in the state. It is funded by general fund and state special revenue.

CP #2302 - CARDD Montana Invasive Species Support

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$0	\$50,000
FY 2025	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$50,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$0	\$100,000

The DNRC is requesting funding for the Montana Invasive Species Council and support positions to assist the program with increasing demand as non-aquatic species threaten the state’s natural resources. DNRC will establish modified FTE to support this work.

CP #2303 - CARDD Infrastructure OTO

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$75,000	\$150,000
FY 2025	<u>\$75,000</u>	<u>\$150,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$150,000	\$300,000

The DNRC is requesting funding for the increased workload that will occur due to the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) replacing state grant funds in the current biennium. This replacement has resulted in \$5.4 million of additional funds to flow into the 2025 biennium in the Renewable Resource Grant and Reclamation Development Grant programs. This will be funded with general fund and state special revenue. DNRC will establish modified FTE to support this work.

Language Appropriations

During the 2025 biennium, the Department is authorized to decrease federal special revenue in the water pollution control and/or drinking water revolving fund loan programs and increase state special revenue by a like amount within administration accounts when the amount of federal EPA CAP grant funds allocated for administration of the grant have been expended or federal funds and bond proceeds will be used for other program purposes as authorized in law providing for the distribution of funds.

During the 2025 biennium, up to \$600,000 from the loan loss reserve account of the private loan program established in 85-1-603 is appropriated to the department for the purchase of prior liens on property held as loan security as provided in 85-1-615.

NOTE: Conservation District funding bills currently being debated will appropriation to allow CARDD to grant funds to Conservation Districts.



2025 BIENNIUM BUDGET MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION

WATER RESOURCES DIVISION PROGRAM 24

ANNA PAKENHAM STEVENSON, DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR

Division Overview:

The Water Resources Division is responsible for management and allocation of Montana's waters. Sound coordination of the development and utilization of the state's waters allows the Division to protect existing uses and to promote adequate future supplies for domestic, industrial, municipal, agricultural, recreational, and other beneficial uses, as well as the conservation of water for wildlife and aquatic life.

Division Programs:

The Division is organized into five bureaus and eight regional offices:

- **Water Sciences Bureau (Paul Azevedo, Bureau Chief)**
Supports local and state-wide water resource management decisions by providing high quality and accurate real-time surface, groundwater, and reservoir monitoring data, conducting surface and groundwater hydrologic assessments, conducting water availability studies, and training court-appointed water commissioners in water measurement.
- **Water Rights Bureau (Nate Ward, Bureau Chief)**
Processes new appropriations for post-June 30, 1973, water rights (i.e., permits and groundwater developments exempt from permitting), changes for all water rights, petitions for controlled groundwater areas, and petitions for stream depletion zones. This bureau assists the Montana Water Court in the adjudication of all claims to pre-July 1, 1973, water rights. The bureau also manages the centralized records of water rights for the State of Montana.
- **Water Operations Bureau (Steve Story, Bureau Chief)**
The Dam Safety Program regulates the construction, operation, and maintenance of Montana's public and private dams to protect life and property from damages due to failure. The Floodplain Management Program promotes common sense planning through education for development in flood prone areas for the benefit of public health, safety, and welfare.
- **State Water Projects Bureau (Brian Holling, Bureau Chief)**
Administers the operation, maintenance, management, and rehabilitation of state-owned water projects, including 22 dams, approximately 250 miles of irrigation canals, and one hydroelectric power facility.
- **Planning, Implementation, and Communication Bureau (Bureau Chief In-recruitment)**
Updates and supports implementation of the State Water Plan and State Drought Management Plan. This bureau is responsible for the implementation of the state's 18 legislatively ratified Reserved Water Right Compacts through a wide range of technical, administrative, and legal implementation duties. The bureau coordinates and develops the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and assists with standardized Division communications.

- **Regional Offices (Kathy Olsen, Regional Operations Manager)**

The Division includes eight regional offices, located in Kalispell, Missoula, Helena, Bozeman, Glasgow, Havre, Billings, and Lewistown. These offices serve as satellite offices for the work of the entire Water Resources Division and are the most direct link to our stakeholders and the public.

PROGRAM PROPOSED BUDGET

Budget Item	Starting Point Fiscal 2023	2024 Adjustments	2024 Total	2025 Adjustments	2025 Total	Biennium Total
FTE	136.26	0.00	136.26	0.00	136.26	
Personal Services	\$11,768,751	\$244,946	\$12,013,697	\$315,157	\$12,083,908	\$24,097,605
Operating Expenses	7,564,628	3,597,274	11,161,902	3,342,099	10,906,727	22,068,629
Equip & Intangible Assets	133,499	50,000	183,499		133,499	316,998
Transfers	41,591		41,591		41,591	83,182
Debt Service	889,113		889,113		889,113	1,778,226
TOTAL COSTS	\$20,397,582	\$3,892,220	\$24,289,802	\$3,657,256	\$24,054,838	\$48,344,640
General Fund	\$11,698,297	\$3,127,405	\$14,825,702	\$2,775,086	\$14,473,383	\$29,299,085
State/Other Special	8,420,739	754,199	9,174,938	868,413	9,289,152	18,464,090
Federal Spec. Rev. Funds	278,546	10,616	289,162	13,757	292,303	581,465
TOTAL FUNDS	\$20,397,582	\$3,892,220	\$24,289,802	\$3,657,256	\$24,054,838	\$48,344,640

CHANGE PACKAGES

Present Law Adjustments										
	-----FISCAL 2024-----					-----FISCAL 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
SWPL 1*		\$78,688	\$157,175	\$1,933	\$237,796		\$131,049	\$174,713	\$2,245	\$308,007
SWPL 2*		44,826	21,596		66,422		43,964	21,182		65,146
SWPL 3*		149,765	242,472	8,683	400,920		189,373	315,382	11,512	516,267
CP #2402		388,800	43,200		432,000		388,800	43,200		432,000
CP #2404			200,000		200,000			230,000		230,000
CP #2405		68,000	68,000		136,000		63,000	63,000		126,000
CP #2406		20,000			20,000		20,000			20,000
CP #2408		205,275			205,275		188,875			188,875
CP #2410			7,150		7,150			7,150		7,150
TOTAL		\$955,354	\$739,593	\$10,616	\$1,705,563		\$1,025,061	\$854,627	\$13,757	\$1,893,445

* See Agency-Wide Change Packages Handout for details.

CP #2402 – WRD Reduce Backlog Process and Meet New Needs OTO

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$388,800	\$432,000
FY 2025	\$388,800	\$432,000
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$777,600	\$864,000

As a growing state, water right ownership update requests have increased immensely. The ownership update process changed on July 1, 2008. DNRC ownership update records show that in 2009 (first full year of records under current process), DNRC received a total of 2,284 ownership updates. In 2021, DNRC received a total of 16,338 ownership updates. Final decrees mean permits and changes will need to be verified in a timely manner. There is currently a backlog of approximately 10,000 permits and changes that need to be verified. There is no set timeline from receipt of a project completion notice to verification of a water right permit or change. DNRC's goal moving forward is to verify project completion notices on permits/changes within six months of receipt. Not only

is the volume of applications increasing, but the complexity of these applications has also increased. This request, \$432,000 in FY2024 and \$432,000 in FY 2025, is for reducing the backlog with 6.0 modified FTE. If HB 114 passes, then this decision package is void.

CP #2404 – WRD Broadwater Dam Essential Operating

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$0	\$200,000
FY 2025	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$230,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$0	\$430,000

This request, \$200,000 in FY 2024 and \$230,000 in FY 2025, is for additional state special appropriation from the Broadwater Operations and Maintenance (O&M) fund, for the operation and maintenance of the Broadwater/Toston Dam. The revenue for the fund is collected from the hydro-electric revenue received from the dam and is sufficient to cover the cost of O&M, however, the Department does not have enough authority to spend those funds, so for the last few biennia, the Department has requested a budget rearrange, which takes appropriation out of the debt service account level.

CP #2405 – WRD Safety and Reliability of State Projects OTO

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$68,000	\$136,000
FY 2025	<u>\$63,000</u>	<u>\$126,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$131,000	\$262,000

This request, \$136,000 in FY 2024 and \$126,000 in FY 2025, is for a modified FTE to assist in the increased workload to maintain safe and reliable operations due to aging infrastructure. The State Water Projects Bureau has identified over 50 projects that are in backlog of work that needs to be accomplished. In addition, the Toston hydropower facility has many mechanical systems and components that need replacement, either due to nearing failure or functional obsolescence. The FTE would provide a competent and qualified engineer to help deliver these projects and keep these dams in safe and reliable condition.

CP #2406 – WRD Crucial Dam Safety Technical Support Services

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$20,000	\$20,000
FY 2025	<u>\$20,000</u>	<u>\$20,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$40,000	\$40,000

This request, \$20,000 in FY 2024 and \$20,000 in FY 2025, is for the Water Operations Bureau’s Dam Safety Program to hire expert external engineering assistance to provide technical guidance to the Dam Safety Program. The Dam Safety Program frequently encounters complex dam engineering problems that require expert council to ensure that the program makes fair and sound regulatory decisions that adequately protect the downstream public.

CP #2408 – WRD Flood Risk Credibility and Safety of High Hazard Dams

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$205,275	\$205,275
FY 2025	<u>\$188,875</u>	<u>\$188,875</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$394,150	\$394,150

This request, \$205,275 in FY 2024 and \$188,875 in FY 2025, is for 2.00 modified FTE Professional Engineers to support the Dam Safety and Floodplain Mapping Programs. These programs have staff that are funded from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), and the state is required to match 50% of the grant amount. Currently, we are restricted for additional funding due to the match component. The Dam Safety program regulates over 100 High-Hazard Dams that are aging and experiencing an increased frequency of potentially

serious problems. The state Floodplain Management Program provides technical assistance to 136 communities to review floodplain permit applications.

CP #2410 – WRD Overtime and Per Diem

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$0	\$7,150
FY 2025	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$7,150</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$0	\$14,300

This request, \$7,150 in FY 2024 and \$7,150 in FY 2025, is for appropriation for overtime for the Broadwater/Toston Dam staff in the amount of \$6,500 per year. In addition, WRD requests appropriation of \$650 for the Board of Water Well Contractors, for board members per diem for attending board meetings.

New Proposals

-----FISCAL 2024-----						-----FISCAL 2025-----				
	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	FTE	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
CP #2401		\$131,453	\$14,606		\$146,059		\$124,072	\$13,786		\$137,858
CP #2403		831,598			831,598		629,453			629,453
CP #2407		413,000			413,000		320,500			320,500
CP #2409		500,000			500,000		500,000			500,000
CP #2411		296,000			269,000		176,000			176,000
TOTAL		\$2,172,051	\$14,606	\$0	\$2,186,657		\$1,750,025	\$13,786	\$0	\$1,763,811

* See Agency-Wide Change Packages Handout for details.

CP #2401 – WRD Water Rights Database & Query System O&M

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$131,453	\$146,059
FY 2025	<u>\$124,072</u>	<u>\$137,858</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$255,525	\$283,917

This request, \$146,059 in FY 2024 and \$137,858 in FY 2025 is for the operations and maintenance of the state’s newly redesigned Water Rights Information System (WRIS). The next phase of the WRIS project is to overhaul the interface that customers use to engage in Montana’s water rights information, known as the Water Rights Query system. Customers will benefit from an improved Water Rights Query System where they can get to the information they want in the easiest way possible. The new system will be more intuitive to use, presents more refined/detailed information, and features a new map-based interface. This will allow the public to more easily find and act upon the water rights information they are looking for. This request will support 1.0 modified FTE and \$75,000 per fiscal year for contracted services.

CP #2403 – WRD Montana Stream Gage Network Support OTO

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$831,598	\$831,598
FY 2025	<u>\$629,453</u>	<u>\$629,453</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$1,461,051	\$1,461,051

This request, \$831,598 in FY 2024 and \$629,453 in FY 2025, is for developing a network of 100 state-operated, year-round stream gages to gather and distribute real-time streamflow information on smaller streams and tributaries not monitored through the United States Geological Survey (USGS) program, where most of the water use in Montana occurs. DNRC will establish modified FTE to support this work.

CP #2407 – WRD Flathead Reserved Water Rights Administration

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$413,000	\$413,000
FY 2025	<u>\$320,500</u>	<u>\$320,500</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$733,500	\$733,500

This request, \$413,000 in FY 2024 and \$320,500 in FY 2025, is for the Flathead Reservation Water Management Board’s anticipated needs of the board and the Office of the Engineer’s workload associated with the water rights administration as described in the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) Compact and the Unitary Administration and Management Ordinance. The request is for operating, equipment, and personnel costs in the Office of the Engineer.

CP #2409 – Willow Creek Rehab OTO

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$500,000	\$500,000
FY 2025	<u>\$500,000</u>	<u>\$500,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000

This request, \$500,000 in FY 2024 and \$500,000 in FY 2025, is for the WRD’s State Water Projects Bureau for the planning and design of the Willow Creek Dam rehabilitation. Scope of this work will include final design, cost estimating, preparing final construction documents, final permitting, and advertising for bids.

CP #2411 – Open ET OTO

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$296,000	\$296,000
FY 2025	<u>\$176,000</u>	<u>\$176,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$472,000	\$472,000

This request, \$296,000 in FY 2024 and \$176,000 in FY 2025, is for using modern technologies to meet new water demands. In the water rights change process, water rights are limited to the amount of water historically put to beneficial use. DNRC’s current historic consumptive use analysis is ineffective for an efficient change process, relies on an inaccurate county management factor, penalizes efficient water users, and is restrictive to the flexible change and use of water. The Comprehensive Water Review Working Group, by consensus, recommended that the department evaluate a modern meteorological and field-scale crop analysis approach to estimating historic consumptive use to improve the accuracy and timeliness of completing a historical use analysis. The outcome of this work would lead to more accurate water right changes, thus aiding in the state’s ability to meet new demands.

Language Appropriations

During the 2025 biennium, up to \$1 million of funds currently in or to be deposited in the Broadwater replacement and renewal account is appropriated to the department for repairing or replacing equipment at the Broadwater hydropower facility.

During the 2025 biennium, up to \$1,500,000 of funds currently in or to be deposited in the state project hydropower earnings account is appropriated for the purpose of repairing, improving, or rehabilitating department state water projects.

During the 2025 biennium, up to \$100,000 of interest earned on the Broadwater water users account is appropriated to the department for the purpose of repair, improvement, or rehabilitation of the Broadwater-Missouri diversion project.



2025 BIENNIUM BUDGET MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION

FORESTRY & TRUST LANDS DIVISION PROGRAM 35 SHAWN THOMAS, DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR

Division Overview:

The Forestry & Trust Lands Division is responsible for the program administration and management of trust lands along with planning and implementing forestry and fire management programs throughout the State of Montana. These programs are implemented through an extensive network of 292.93 FTE located in bureau and field offices throughout Montana that work together to promote the sustainability of Montana's trust lands, forests, rural lands, and communities. An additional 25 FTE support the Aviation and Nursery proprietary programs, and 7 FTE are housed in the Good Neighbor program statutory appropriation.

Division Programs:

Forestry & Trust Lands Division consists of seven bureaus: Fire Protection, Good Neighbor, Forestry Assistance, Forest Management, Real Estate, Agriculture & Grazing, and Minerals Management and the Recreation Use & Public Access program. Division and bureau staff coordinate with field offices across the state to deliver a variety of programs and services for the benefit of Montana citizens and natural resources:

- **Fire Protection Bureau (Matt Hall, Bureau Chief)**
Protects lives, property, and natural resources from wildfire by providing leadership and coordination to Montana's wildland fire protection services and landowners.
- **Good Neighbor Authority Bureau (Greg Archie, Bureau Chief)**
Accelerates Forest restoration and management activities on federal lands, using state timber sale and procurement contracts, to address shared state and federal priorities.
- **Forestry Assistance Bureau (Matt Arno, Bureau Chief)**
Provides programs, resources, and forestry expertise to promote resilient forests, vibrant communities, and sustainable economies.
- **Forest Management Bureau (Dan Rogers, Bureau Chief)**
Manages Montana's forested trust lands to maximize long-term revenue while promoting healthy and diverse forests.
- **Real Estate Management Bureau (Ryan Weiss, Bureau Chief)**
Administers programs involving land acquisitions and dispositions, land exchanges to improve the trust land base, rights-of-way and access transactions, as well as commercial and residential ground leases.
- **Agriculture & Grazing Management Bureau (Kelly Motichka, Bureau Chief)**
Responsible for leasing and managing agreements for crop and rangeland uses of school trust lands throughout the state.
- **Minerals Management Bureau (Trevor Taylor, Bureau Chief)**
Oversees mineral related leases, permits, and manages oil & gas, metalliferous and nonmetalliferous, coal, sand, and gravel agreements.
- **Recreational Use & Public Access Program (Jess Hoag, Program Coordinator)**
Manages commercial recreation and public use of state trust lands.

PROGRAM PROPOSED BUDGET

Budget Item	Starting Point Fiscal 2023	2024 Adjustments	2024 Total	2025 Adjustments	2025 Total	Biennium Total
FTE	292.93	0.00	292.93	0.00	292.93	
Personal Services	\$23,202,129	\$852,065	\$24,054,194	\$983,431	\$24,185,560	\$48,239,754
Operating Expenses	8,545,768	1,876,667	10,422,435	2,219,735	10,765,503	21,187,938
Equip & Intangible Assets	1,056,720		1,056,720		1,056,720	2,113,440
Grants	347,465		347,465		347,465	694,930
Transfers	1,682,152		1,682,152		1,682,152	3,364,304
Debt Service	633,252		633,252		633,252	1,266,504
TOTAL COSTS	\$35,467,486	\$2,728,732	\$38,196,218	\$3,203,166	\$38,670,652	\$76,866,870
General Fund	\$14,404,063	\$1,246,873	\$15,650,936	\$1,325,618	\$15,729,681	\$31,380,617
State/Other Special	19,687,511	1,444,619	21,132,130	1,838,458	21,525,969	42,658,099
Federal Spec. Rev. Funds	1,375,912	37,240	1,413,152	39,090	1,415,002	2,828,154
TOTAL FUNDS	\$35,467,486	\$2,728,732	\$38,196,218	\$3,203,166	\$38,670,652	\$76,866,870

CHANGE PACKAGES

Present Law Adjustments

	-----FISCAL 2024-----				-----FISCAL 2025-----			
	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
SWPL 1*	\$487,887	\$362,770	\$1,408	\$852,065	\$537,791	\$442,593	\$3,047	\$983,431
SWPL 2*	(87,663)	89,698		2,035	(88,889)	88,493		(396)
SWPL 3*	242,463	321,317	35,832	599,612	272,505	387,913	36,043	696,461
CP #350102	453,250	194,250		647,500	453,250	194,250		647,500
CP #350201	43,364	170,678		214,042	43,389	170,703		214,092
TOTAL	\$1,139,301	\$1,138,713	\$37,240	\$2,315,254	\$1,218,046	\$1,283,952	\$39,090	\$2,541,088

* See Agency-Wide Change Packages Handout for details.

CP # 350102 – Forestry Fire Protection Program Operations

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$453,250	\$647,500
FY 2025	<u>\$453,250</u>	<u>\$647,500</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$906,500	\$1,295,000

This request, \$647,500 in FY 2024 and \$647,500 in FY 2025, is for an increase in operating budget to continue to provide effective fire protection, preparedness, and pre-suppression services as required across the state. As the wildfire season grows in length and intensity, an operational budget increase is needed to support County Co-op capacity, dispatch center operations, contracted fire protection services, aviation crew facilities, and other fire program operating needs to continue to collectively facilitate approximately 55 million acres of fire protection in Montana.

CP # 350201 – Forestry & Trust Lands Operating Increase

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$43,364	\$214,042
FY 2025	<u>\$43,389</u>	<u>\$214,092</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$86,753	\$428,134

This request, \$214,042 in FY 2024 and \$214,092 in FY 2025, is for an increase in operating budget for lease, janitorial, maintenance, and equipment cost increases at Forestry & Trust Lands state offices.

New Proposals

	-----FISCAL 2024-----				-----FISCAL 2025-----			
	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds	General Fund	State Special	Federal Special	Total Funds
CP # 350101	\$98,629			\$98,629	\$98,629			\$98,629
CP # 350107	8,943			8,943	8,943			8,943
CP # 350202		\$230,906		230,906		\$229,506		229,506
CP # 350203		75,000		75,000		75,000		75,000
CP # 350204						250,000		250,000
TOTAL	\$107,572	\$305,906	\$0	\$413,478	\$107,572	\$554,506	\$0	\$662,078

CP # NP 350101 – Forestry Communications Coordinator

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$98,629	\$98,629
FY 2025	<u>\$98,629</u>	<u>\$98,629</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$197,258	\$197,258

This request, \$98,629 in FY 2024 and \$98,629 in FY 2025, is for 1.0 Modified FTE for the Forestry Communications Coordinator, to facilitate and coordinate a range of communication efforts directed to a variety of audiences regarding Forestry programs, priorities, activities, and accomplishments. Given the changing landscape of the media and access to information on the internet, a dedicated Communications Coordinator is necessary to meet the demand for information-sharing and outreach occurs across multiple platforms including traditional mass media, social media, digital media, direct public outreach, and collaboration with partners. This position will communicate timely and accurate wildfire information to the public, develop public awareness around forestry and wildfire issues, and communicate programmatic success stories that demonstrate the value of public investment for programs like Good Neighbor and Montana’s Forest Action Plan.

CP # NP 350107 – O&M – Miles City Facility

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$8,943	\$8,943
FY 2025	<u>\$8,943</u>	<u>\$8,943</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$17,886	\$17,886

This request, \$8,943 in FY 2024 and \$8,943 in FY 2025, is for an operating and maintenance (O&M) increase for the new Miles City facility, based on a Long-Range Building Program (LRBP) supplemental project request.

CP # NP 350202 – Trust Lands Informatics Section Modified FTE

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$0	\$230,906
FY 2025	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$229,506</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$0	\$460,412

This request, \$230,906 in FY 2024 and \$229,506 in FY 2025, is for 2.0 Modified FTE in the Informatics Section, to provide support for all Trust Lands field programs for data related analytics and e-government opportunities to serve Agricultural and Mineral lessees, timber sale purchasers, and the recreating public. E-government for Trust Lands is a key component of the Red Tape Initiative to improve interactions with customers. The increase in FTE is needed to help manage and maintain the new land inventory and trust lands accounting system and move toward allowing direct customer interaction through a web-based customer portal. The funding for the positions is state special revenue, the Trust Administration Account, derived from revenues generated by land management activities on behalf of the trust beneficiaries.

CP # NP 350203 – Trust Lands TLMS Application O&M

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$0	\$75,000
FY 2025	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$75,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$0	\$150,000

The Trust Lands Management System (TLMS) provides critical functionality to enable the DNRC to administer and manage state lands under title 77, MCA. This request, \$75,000 in FY 2024 and \$75,000 in FY 2025, is for ongoing operations and maintenance for the TLMS portal so the Department can manage account information and automate many standard work tasks, such as developing online payment capabilities. The TLMS is a major component of the Trust Lands plan to become 100% digital.

CP # NP 350204 – Trust Lands TLMS Customer Portal O&M

	General Fund Total	Total Funds
FY 2024	\$0	\$0
FY 2025	<u>\$0</u>	<u>\$250,000</u>
BIENNIUM TOTAL	\$0	\$250,000

This request, \$0 in FY 2024 and \$250,000 in FY 2025, provides for ongoing maintenance for the TLMS customer portal, where citizens can manage their own account information, and automate many standard work tasks, such as developing online payment capabilities. The TLMS is a major component of the Trust Lands plan to become 100% digital.

Language Appropriations

During the 2025 biennium, up to \$1 million of funds currently in or to be deposited in the contract timber harvest account is appropriated to the department for contract harvesting, a tool to improve forest health and generate revenue for trust beneficiaries.

During the 2025 biennium, up to \$150,000 of funds in the Trust Administration and Forest Improvement accounts are appropriated to the department for road maintenance on state trust lands due to damage from erosion, public use, flooding and/or post fire or other natural disaster restoration.

During the 2025 biennium, up to \$100,000 of funds currently in or to be deposited in the Trust Administration account are appropriated to the department for agriculture and grazing management infrastructure on state trust lands unexpected or emergency repair or replacement due to damage from public use, flooding, fire or other natural disasters.

Proprietary Rates

Forestry requests a flight time rate increase for Department aircraft used in wildland firefighting. Proposed increases are based on the cost of aircraft parts and fuel prices. Bell helicopter and Cessna parts have experienced an approximate 20% increase in cost since 2015, when a rate increase last occurred. Fuel prices have also increased considerably in recent years and continue to experience volatility.

TYPE	FY 2023 Current	FY 2024 Request	FY 2025 Request
Bell UH-1H Helicopter	\$1,650	\$1,860	\$1,860
Bell Jet Ranger	\$515	\$525	\$525
Cessna 180 Series	\$175	\$210	\$210