



Conservation District Administrative Grant Guidelines

The Montana Legislature provides Montana conservation districts with coal severance tax monies for any purpose that they are authorized to perform pursuant to [MCA, Title 76, Chapter 15, Part.](#)

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Conservation Resource Development Division (CARDD) offers this funding through CD Administrative Grants to conservation districts that do not have adequate funds to cover basic operation costs, such as administrative salaries, office supplies, communications, and insurance.

Eligibility

All conservation districts in Montana are eligible to apply for CD Administrative grant funding. The following criteria will be applied in evaluating CDA funding requests.

1. CD has a need for funds beyond mill for general operations. [76-15-530, MCA](#)
2. CD has levied the maximum county mills allowed for the current fiscal year. [76-15-530, MCA](#)
3. CD has exhausted its authorized mill levies. [76-15-530 MCA](#)
4. CD has submitted its Annual Financial Report to the Department of Administration- Local Government Services. [2-7-503, MCA](#)
5. CD has prepared and submitted a preliminary budget to the county clerk and recorder. [7-6-40, MCA.](#)
6. A statement of assets including account balances and the district's plans and timeline for expending.

All sources of revenue will be considered to assess need, as well as the districts assets, expenses, and level of conservation activities. Preferential consideration will be given to districts with the most limited resources and who are implementing priority projects as identified by its constituents and included in a district planning document. Receipt of funds is not guaranteed and based on CD administrative criteria and available funding.

Additional Funding through the CD Administrative Grants

CDs are also able to apply for 310 application reimbursements through the CD administrative grant application. DNRC reimburses districts for each 310 application processed. Rates per application are subject to the total number of 310 reimbursement requests and available budget.

Through the CD administrative grant application, districts will be able to opt-in for \$3,500 in funding for Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) annual dues. By opting in, the district agrees to supplement these funds with \$500 in non-CDA funding. Through association dues, MACD provides statewide programming and services to all districts in Montana.



Application and Submittal Process

The CD Bureau will announce open grant cycles on the [CDB grants website](#) and through the *Conservation Matters* newsletter. CDS must apply for Conservation District Administrative grant funding through the [Submittable online grant system](#). The CD Administrative grant cycles opens on March 1 and closes on May 31.

Application review and contracting occurs in June through August. Funding awards are issued beginning in September. Additional grant cycles are announced if funding becomes available.

Required deliverables for CDA Grant Awards:

- Completed Accountability Assessment with corrective action plan, if applicable.
- District budget provided as a Profit and Loss, Balance Sheet, or applicable format for the most recent fiscal year of the grant cycle.



CDA Review Criteria and Checklist

All conservation districts in Montana are eligible to apply for CD Administrative grant funding. The following criteria will be applied in evaluating CDA funding requests.

- CD has a need for funds beyond mill for general operations. 76-15-530, MCA
- CD has levied the maximum county mills allowed for the current fiscal year. 76-15-530, MCA
- CD has exhausted its authorized mill levies. 76-15-530 MCA
- CD has submitted its Annual Financial Report to the Department of Administration- Local Government Services. 2-7-503, MCA
- CD has prepared and submitted a preliminary budget to the county clerk and recorder. 7-6-40, MCA.

A statement of assets including account balances and the district's plans

Is the application complete and does it include all the required components and documentation?

- CDA application submitted and received via Submittable
- CD has a demonstrated need for CDA funding
- CD has exhausted its authorized mill levy
- CD levied maximum mill including permissive, if applicable
- CD has a strategic plan, workplan, or other planning document to guide conservation priorities
- CD has provided a statement of assets including account balances and the district's plans and timeline for expending if applicable
- CD has submitted annual reporting to Local Government Services (LGS)
- CD has submitted annual reporting to county, if applicable
- CDs projected annual operating budget is less than the DNRC established base budget for that funding cycle (\$60,000 in FY26)

Comments: