
Montana Stream Permitting

A Guide for Conservation District
Supervisors and Others



Conservation Districts Bureau
Montana Department of
Natural Resources and Conservation

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Lane Diagram—Rosgen (1966); Lane (1955).

Classification of Alluvial Channels—Schumm (1977).

Channel Evolution Model—Simon (1989).

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INTRODUCTION

This manual is designed to provide guidance to Montana Conservation District Supervisors in making decisions on 310 Permits. The purpose of the 310 Law is to ensure that projects will be carried out in ways that minimize impacts to the stream or river, or to adjoining landowners' property.

The guiding principle behind wise stream management is to select tools and methods that are compatible with a stream's natural tendencies, and to minimize undesirable side effects. Often, this means letting a stream set its own course, forming and re-forming natural meanders, or abiding by historical flood patterns. When more hands-on management is necessary, the best tools and methods are those that support natural stream form and function.

To that end, this manual includes chapters on stream form and function, stream management, irrigation structures, soft and hard engineering methods, and the permitting process. Examples of stream projects are provided, along with design criteria for different types of projects.

This document is a guide only and should not be construed as a rule for projects. Some conservation districts have adopted construction standards for certain projects and others may or may not allow all of the projects listed in this guide, depending on the local circumstances.

For more information, contact the Conservation Districts Bureau, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, 1625 Eleventh Avenue, Helena, MT 59620, (406) 444-6667.

