



Water Policy Interim Committee

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64th Montana Legislature

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April 18, 2016

To: Water Policy Interim Committee
From: Jason Mohr, committee staff
Re: May 2-3 meeting

Committee members,

The May 2-3 meeting begins at 9 a.m. at Bozeman City Hall, 121 N. Rouse Ave. Enclosed are meeting materials, which are also posted at www.leg.mt.gov/water. This meeting is nearly exclusively focused on your three studies. A few notes about the meeting and your packet materials:

- The meeting will not be streamed live, but an **audio recording** will be made available on leg.mt.gov shortly after the meeting.
- I will be driving an 8-passenger van for the **field trip** on May 2. This van will not accommodate all committee members, so some may have to drive their own vehicle. (If the state motor pool has a cancellation on a 12-passenger van, I will get that.) We do have a few confirmed guests for the field trip.
- Because this meeting must occur on shortened timeframes (we must be out of Bozeman City Hall by 2 p.m. Monday and 3 p.m. Tuesday to accommodate city functions), the committee will have a **working lunch** both days. I will email you menu options next week.
- I will also contact you via email to gauge your interest regarding **dinner at Rep. Williams' house** on May 2 and a tour of the **Yellowstone Club effluent spill** on May 3. Committee members will need to provide their own transportation to these two events, if interested.
- **Tab 1** includes draft findings and background for the Senate Joint Resolution No. 2 study of 404 permitting. These findings, which are conclusions based on the background gathered during our previous meetings, should provide the basis for committee recommendations, if any.
- **Tab 2** relates to the Future of the Water Court study. Again, you'll find draft findings and conclusions in this packet, from which to build recommendations. (the findings memo includes some of the suggested recommendations offered during this interim.) Also included is the "water distribution issues" identified by the Adjudication Advisory Committee, which the WPIC first discussed at the March meeting. At the meeting, District Court Judge Holly Brown and George Alberda, a local water commissioner, should be available beginning at 1 p.m. for additional committee questions, before both accompany you on the field trip.
- **Tab 3** relates to **Montana State University research** by Ellen Lauchnor, assistant professor of Civil Engineering. Dr. Lauchnor will present research related

to the presence of chemicals from industries and household products (like pharmaceuticals) might affect the process in wastewater treatment facilities.

- **Tab 4** includes the quarterly report of **adjudication** progress at the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and the Water Court.
- **Tab 5** contains a memo related to the DNRC's change of water right – and how a 2010 Montana Supreme Court decision affects this process. This topic was discussed at the March meeting.
- **Tab 6** includes information related to a U.S. Forest Service review of **vegetation management and water yield**. The committee requested information regarding timber projects around Hyalite Reservoir near Bozeman. (A proposed field trip to the reservoir could not be scheduled, as the road is closed until mid-May.)
- Enclosed is a **report on water use in closed basins**, which was commissioned by the Montana Association of Realtors. The report concludes that exempt wells cause no discernable impact on streamflows or water rights from streams.

Please let me know if you have any questions, comments, or concerns.

Sincerely,



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