

**W<sub>2</sub>ASACT Meeting Minutes**  
**February 10, 2009**  
**10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**  
**Department of Environmental Quality**  
**1520 E. 6<sup>th</sup> Ave., Room 111**  
**Hosted by – Department of Environmental Quality**

**MEMBERS PRESENT INCLUDED**

Mark Smith	DEQ/SRF	Clay Landry	USDA/RD
Paul LaVigne	DEQ/SRF	Pam Higgins	MAP
Nancy Geary	DEQ/SRF	Debra Demarais	MDOC/TSEP
Bob Fischer	DNRC	Richard Knatterud	MDOC/TSEP
Rick Duncan	DNRC	Kate Miller	MDOC/TSEP
Jenny Chambers	DEQ	Jim Edgcomb	MDOC/TSEP
Dennis Horn	MTBOI	Barb Coffman	METC/MSU-Northern
Nick Clos	MRWS	Becky Beard	BETA
Jay Sinnott	EPA	Carolyn Jones	DOC/CDBG-ED
Lesa Evers	GOED	Kathy Brenden	DOC/CDBG
Heather Sobrepeña-George	MDOC/ICED	Steve Troendle	USDA/RD (by phone)
		Kara Stermitz	Confluence

**CALL TO ORDER, SIGN-IN SHEET, AGENDA CHANGES**

The scheduled meeting of the Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team (W<sub>2</sub>ASACT) was called to order at 10:00 a.m. on February 10, 2009, by Mark Smith. Steve Troendle (RD) was connected by conference phone to the meeting. A sign-in sheet, agendas and minutes of the last meeting were made available to those in attendance. Bob Fischer moved to approve the minutes; Paul LaVigne seconded the motion; the minutes were approved and adopted. There were no changes made to the agenda. All those in attendance introduced themselves.

- **Guest Speaker #1** (10:05 – 10:35)

1. **Barb Coffman, METC** – Barb discussed the efforts being made to resurrect the operator training program at MSU-Northern. There has been a moratorium on both the A.S. and B.S. degrees for the last couple of years and Northern is considering their re-establishment. It was generally agreed the program was very valuable and should be continued, with additional promotion throughout the surrounding states, as well as in Montana. The resulting jobs could be described as ‘Green’ and would provide valuable benefits to those with the education to fill them. Barb felt it would be very helpful for letters of support to be written to the Provost Office at Northern: **Dr. Joe Callahan, MSU Northern, PO Box 7751, Havre, MT 59520**. Coordination with all the colleges throughout the state to provide satellite learning would be very beneficial. This would make the courses more accessible to everyone who might be interested. The program can also use the support of people attending the Board of Regents meeting in July. Information on this will be sent at a later time.

## **ITEMS FOR REVIEW AND DISCUSSION**

### **1. Updates (if needed) from subcommittees**

Workshops – Bob Fischer reminded the group of the upcoming workshops: Great Falls at the Heritage Inn on February 18th, in conjunction with Rural Water, then at the Billings Crowne Plaza on March 4th, and Missoula at the Holiday Inn Downtown on March 11<sup>th</sup>. CDBG will be hosting a workshop the day before in each location, as well as one in Glendive on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Rooms should be reserved as soon as possible to assure availability and state rate. Please make sure to get any PowerPoint presentations you will be using at these workshops to Jim Edgcomb so he can have them loaded on a laptop. Email is a good way to do this. Let Bob know if you want to have another committee meeting. If he does not hear from anyone, there won't be any more meetings.

Uniform Application – Jim Edgcomb had no update. Paul LaVigne mentioned the re-writing of DEQ2 might create some changes in the future.

Standard Documents – Bob Fischer asked that any changes being made because of the revision of DEQ2 be given to him by this fall, so they may be incorporated in updates to the Standard Documents. As soon as RD accepts the new EJCDC Standards and Table Conditions, the consultants will be encouraged to use these instead of funding agency standard table conditions. Steve Troendle said the timing for this will likely be delayed, due to the extra workload related to the Stimulus Package.

Internet Website – Bob Fischer reported some broken links have been fixed and the site has been updated. There was discussion about ways to make the site easier to find. It was noted you could search for 'W2ASACT' on the Montana State web page and directly find the site.

### **2. Updates on Ongoing Topics**

Emergency Projects – Bob Fischer / Richard Knatterud – TSEP had nothing to report. Bob said a \$15,000 emergency grant was made to the Centerville School for a chlorination project for their well. This was done by DNRC, as the TSEP program cannot do business with school districts. The Town of Superior, while working on their water project, discovered material in their right of way and construction area that had been imported years ago from a State Super Fund site which was contaminated with arsenic and lead. They have been awarded a grant in the amount of approximately \$63,000 through a DNRC environmental contingency plan to remove this material, do some sampling, and do a follow up report for DEQ. Jim Melstad is the engineer.

Tribal Issues – Richard Knatterud reported the Crow Tribe is moving forward ; the interceptor line is about done and there should be plans soon on the lagoon project.. They think they have their funding in place. The Blackfeet project has been stopped for lack of funds. Steve Troendle will have Bob Parsley send a group email with agendas for the Tribal Workshop to be held in Billings in March.

**Rocky Boy's - North Central** - The Chippewa-Cree Tribe plans for bringing reverse osmosis (RO) plant water to existing water storage reservoirs in the Box Elder vicinity are currently under revision. The pipeline project is estimated at ~\$6 million, and will be re-advertised for bids when the new route has been set. One million dollars in TSEP regional water funds are to be provided for the project.

The Authority's plans and specifications to bring City of Havre water to North Havre County Water District on an interim basis are under review by DEQ. The grant agreement for use of \$1 million of TSEP Regional Water Fund monies is in the final drafting stages, and the Authority hopes to be able to advertise for bids this spring. Estimated cost of the project is \$2.3 million. The Authority is developing plans and specs for supplying Riverview Colony with water from Tiber County Water District. Other interim plans which are in exploratory phases are: Big Sandy, with water from the Reservation; Dutton, with water from Conrad or Tiber County; and several member entities in the Shelby area with interim supply using Shelby's excess capacity.

### **The Musselshell-Judith Rural Water Supply**

The monthly authority board meeting is scheduled to take place tomorrow evening (02/11) in Roundup. An update was given by hydrogeologist Mark Cunane at the December meeting in Broadview on feasibility of drilling test/production wells in the Buffalo/Garneill/Judith Gap area. Estimated cost of drilling into the Madison Formation is about \$750,000 per well.

### **Dry-Redwater**

The Authority's bill for Federal authorization of a regional water system is to be reintroduced in the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress some time this month, according to aides to the Senator Baucus. He will be carrying the bill in the Senate; members of the Authority board have also heard Rep. Rehberg that the Senator's support will carry it forward in the House, as well.

The preliminary environmental work is complete, for now. The Board has indicated to the environmental consultant that there is to be no new work on this aspect of the project until the Board has notified the firm in writing. Part of this is due to statements from Reclamation which reflected a view on the agency's part that some of the work being done was "piecemeal," and would be a wasted effort if it continued. A full environmental review (EA, etc.) will be prepared if/when the project is authorized.

### **Fort Peck - Dry Prairie**

The Fort Peck Tribes' work on the clear wells and washwater recovery basin for the Regional water treatment plant (WTP) is due to be completed by the end of March. The Tribes have prepared the next Phase of the WTP project for advertisement for bids; estimated to cost at \$27 million.

Dry Prairie's southern Valley County plans and specifications are under review by Montana DEQ. In January, Dry Prairie and Boeing/Marco formalized an agreement in which Dry Prairie will receive an average of 200,000 gpd, with provisions for higher flows during periods of peak demand. The project will provide water to the Town of Nashua, as well as to rural users in Valley County between Nashua and Glasgow.

Upgrade of the Culbertson WTP by means of installation of a 3<sup>rd</sup> filter bay is moving forward. DEQ has approved the plans and specifications. The filter installation work, and new raw water pump supply and installation were advertised for bids, with bid opening in late January. The filter bay components are due to arrive in March, and installation is expected to be complete some time in the spring.

Dry Prairie's other current projects include:

- Completion of service to Basin Electric electrical generating plant NE of Culbertson, via a project segment now referred to as the McCabe loop, which is 85% complete.
- Installation of a main from Culbertson west to Big Muddy Creek (Reservation boundary), from which point the Fort Peck Tribes will provide water to the community of Fort Kipp.

WASACT Project Tracking Sheet – Jim Edgcomb – The tracking sheet is updated every 6 months, and is also available on the W2ASACT website.

Army Corps of Engineers – Sect. 595 Program & Projects – No updates.

STAG projects – Jay Sinnott – The Crow Agency grant is final; the Conrad grant should be any day, and Helena should just be an amendment. Jay talked with Evergreen and reminded them of the grant they had received. They said the project was officially dead.

### **PROGRAM / PROJECT UPDATES**

**Paul LaVigne (CWSRF)** – The staff is finishing a rewrite of Circular DEQ2. It will then have to be reviewed and approved as a new Rule. A Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) training was held this month, with good attendance and presentation. DEQ hopes to continue the presentation of this workshop.

**Mark Smith (DWSRF)** – The Stimulus Package is still being constructed. The DWSRF, as well as the CWSRF programs are waiting for explicit dollar amounts, guidelines, and timeframe to make any final implementation plans. Then, a separate Intended Use Plan (IUP) will be prepared to explain the new regulations. A priority list of Stimulus eligible projects will be included. The Drinking Water program would like to change the rules so they would have the authority to issue Categorical Exclusions. A Public Hearing will take place on February 24th to address this issue.

**Kathy Brenden (CDBG)** – Kathy handed out a list of projects that have been reviewed, with funding contingent on the Budget. She said they could get through number 8 without using Stimulus money. She also passed around copies of summaries of the projects. Funding has not been finalized for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP). A copy of the program's brochure was handed out.

**Nick Clos (MRWA)** – Rural Water will be hosting a conference in Great Falls, with the pre-conference taking place on Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup> at the Heritage Inn using a new format. There will be 5 classes offered, with smaller class size, and the times will be adjusted to expedite student movement between classes. The number of CEC credits will be reduced accordingly.

**Barb Coffman – (METC/Northern)** – Barb started back with METC in August, and has 25 workshops or classes on the calendar. Spring School - Kalispell in March and Billings in April; Summer School – Helena in May; and Fall Water School - Bozeman, in September. If you are not able to reach her by her work phone, feel free to call on her cell phone. She will return calls as soon as she is able.

**Pam Higgins (MAP)** – The new SOURCE magazine is out. Pam has been participating in a National Indian Health Services Workgroup, addressing coordination of technical assistance. If anyone wants to see the Draft Recommendations, let her know. New staffing is as follows: Leo Kapp, Northwest Montana, Callie Ronning in Bozeman, Sandy Kust of Ballantine, and Dustin White is out of the Laurel office. He is working with the Manager Mentor Program that works with Tribal entities. If you have any training questions, please call Dustin.

**Bob Fischer (DNRC)** – HB6 and HB11 are expected to fund 52 projects in the next year. More planning grant money has been requested, and the use of these funds has been expanded. More definite

information will hopefully be available next month. Anna has proposed adding \$3 million to HB8 (Renewable Resource Loans) for water and wastewater loans to cover public entity funding of projects that don't qualify for SRF.

**Jim Edgcomb (TSEP)** – HB 11, as it stands, will fund 33 projects. An increase has also been requested for planning funds. Information has been sent to everyone regarding the Workshop to be held in Great Falls. Personal letters went to the Tribal Chairmen, with a copy to the planning office, and the brochure is on the W2ASACT website. Jim would like presentations sent to him as soon as possible so he can have them on the computer.

**Dennis Horn – (INTERCAP)** – The website has been updated.

**Steve Troendle (RD)** – The Tribal Agenda has been forwarded to the W<sub>2</sub>ASACT list. There have been some changes in staffing. Shad Weber has taken a different position with USDA, and Traci McDonald (406-657-6297 x4) is filling in temporarily in the Billings office. Please have MAP call Traci at some point regarding the North Baker project. Instructions will be forthcoming on how to do the new planning grant, called a Search Grant. Dollar amounts depend on the allocation letter, which will be received from the National office. Steve should know more about stimulus money by the end of the week.

**Legislative update/ Bills of interest to the group** – SB95, which allows for variances from water quality standards, is presently being worked on. Each program is trying to be as prepared as possible for immediate action when this has actually happened. Bob Fischer commented that HB6 and HB11 were set up with the intent that a funding bill would be before the President for signature. DNRC and Commerce have been instructed to start drafting amendments to HB6 and HB11 to try and be ready when the bill is passed, making it possible to use money from the stimulus bill to fund projects normally funded by General Funds, thus freeing the use of these funds for such things as TSEP and RRGL. Executive action on these bills is expected on the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup>. All agreed that nothing could be finalized on actions to be taken until the Stimulus Bill has been finalized and passed. Mark Smith reported that LC 2131 (Regional Water asking for separate Rules) is still in Committee.

**Rick Duncan (DNRC)** – Dry Redwater is advertising for a regional project manager. The location is not certain. Applications are being accepted through Glendive Job Service, with the job open until February 27<sup>th</sup>.

#### **OTHER ISSUES AND LOGISTICS OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting was scheduled for April 14, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. hosted by DNRC.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:00 p.m.