

**DRAFT W2ASACT MEETING NOTES**

Meeting on August 11, 2020, 10 am to 12 pm

Dept. of Natural Resources & Conservation – Montana Conference Room & Conference Call

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**Members and participants present via Conference Phone and in person:**

Amy Steinmetz	DEQ	Mark Smith	DEQ
Anna Miller	DNRC - CARDD	Michelle Pond	MAP
Denise Cook	DNRC - CARDD	Rick Duncan	DNRC - CARDD
Erinn Zindt	MAP	Rika Lashley	Morrison Maierle
Karen Bucklin Sanchez	USDA - RD	Roger Skogen	MRWS
Laura Dunlap	Morrison Maierle	Steven Troendle	USDA - RD
Lynette Jones	GWE	Tanya Shadrick	MRWS
Maria Jackson	GWE		

APE – Advanced Pump & Equipment  
DEQ - DRF – Drinking Water State Revolving Loan program  
DEQ – Montana Department of Environmental Quality  
DEQ - WRF – Drinking Water State Revolving Loan program  
DNRC - SRF - Wastewater State Revolving Loan program  
DNRC – WRF - Drinking Water State Revolving Loan program  
FDB – Financial Development Bureau  
KLJ – Kadrmas Lee & Jackson Engineering  
MAP – Midwest Assistance Program  
MBOI – Montana Board of Investments  
MRWS – Montana Rural Water Systems  
RATES – Rural and Tribal Environmental Solutions  
RDB – Resource Development Bureau  
TSEP – Treasure State Endowment Program

**At DNRC:**

Anna Miller and Denise Cook, DNRC – CARDD. Roger Skogen, MRWS

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Call to Order, Sign-in Sheet, Agenda Changes

Anna Miller, Chair, called the scheduled meeting of the Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team (W2ASACT) to order at 10:00 am, on Tuesday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The draft minutes from the May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, which were previously distributed to members. The May 5<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes were approved and adopted by those present. Anna conducted a “roll call” of those connected by phone. We had 12 members present via phone and 3 on site.

**No guest speaker. Discussion began on grant cycles, rural water, funding, and concerns relating to the COVID 19 Pandemic.**

## **Program Updates**

### Anna Miller DNRC Financial Advisor

Anna said DNRC received 76 Renewable Resource grant applications. 19 for drinking water, 15 for wastewater and 1 for storm sewer. We also received 20 Resource Development grant applications. These include well, mining and railroad station cleanup projects. One project in particular is a toxicity issue with lagoon sludge in Phillipsburg. Anna asked Denise to send the group a link to the RRGL application list. On the WASACT website, there is a link to the DNRC 2019 Rate Study.

AWWA training for small communities was mentioned as being available.

RRGL applications are being assigned to engineers for review. Today there is a ranking meeting, which is a consolidated meeting. A proposal was brought up: to ask for alternate solutions. Applications are scored on what is submitted. In another week, we will look at projects' resource benefit. Then they will be presented to the division administrator and then the agency director. In September, we will have the final recommendations. TSEP has a similar process.

### Roger Skogen with Montana Rural Water

Roger reminded all that the Montana Rural Water conference is planned for March 24, 25 & 26, 2021. DEQ is working with operators to get CEC (Continuing Education Credit) needs met. They are seeing systems with compliance issues, lack of operators, inexperienced operators, sampling processes, water storage issues and emergency response questions and capabilities.

At MRW in March, a funding workshop will be conducted on Tuesday March 23<sup>rd</sup>, before the MRW conference.

Roger noted a new staff member, Robin Francin, who is a wastewater technician and is from Belt.

### Tanya Shadrack with Montana Rural Water

Tanya mentioned there is still room at the training next Thursday, August 20 at MRW, 525 Central Ave in Great Falls. The training on wastewater treatment is at the Heritage in the ABC rooms. It is helpful for those needing CEC's. Masks are required. See MRW website for info. Tanya will get the class info to Denise to send out to the group.

Tanya said there is new EPA contract in August. Julie Allen, who is our contact on the wastewater training, will have more on-site hours at MRW. We will be able to do GoTo webinars more often. Tanya noted the "Lead in Schools" program is back.

### Michelle Pond & Erinn Zindt with Midwest Assistance Program (MAP)

MAP will have some training before March. They are doing some extra GO-To trainings and some smaller trainings. The training info in on MAP's website [www.map-](http://www.map-)

[inc.org/montana-training.html](http://inc.org/montana-training.html). No major updates from MAP. October 1st is MAP's fiscal year end.

#### Karen Bucklin Sanchez with USDA Rural Development

Karen reached out to Steve Troendle as he was not expected to make the meeting. This is a pooling week. Funds are being allocated. Justin Dailey is coordinator and environmental reviewer. And there is a new loan specialist, Jennifer Baldassin, who is out of Missoula. Karen mentioned two webinars. 1) August 26<sup>th</sup>: 15-minute presentation with EPA on Co-funding with US Dept of Ag. 2) August 25 & Sept 2: webinar for RUS Bulletin 1780-26 Updates. Karen will get this info to Denise, who will send to group.

Anna Miller said that DNRC has been working on interim financing. RD has come up with some funding. They have been great. She expressed her thanks to Steve Troendle and the staff at Rural Development.

#### Mark Smith, Engineering Manager with DEQ Water Quality

Mark said the SRF IUP for drinking water should be on the DEQ website. We have wastewater public comment for another week. Jackie Kuhl is now on board with the wastewater program.

#### Amy Steinmetz with DEQ

Amy, who is in John Dillard's former position, had nothing new to report. Rika Lashley asked about locating and adopting a lagoon operator test or very small wastewater system. Amy said she will get back to Rika. Roger added that MRW starting using a new test and he will follow up with more info.

As far as stimulus plan Anna said it is an election year, so we'll see what happens.

#### Rick Duncan DNRC Regional Water System Program Manager –

**Fort Peck Dry Prairie** – Work continues on branch lines in the NE corner of the Reservation, with about 30 miles left to go. Of 130 home hook-ups in the area, only 50 remain to be done. The Tribal Authority is waiting for InControl to set up telemetry for SCADA. There are 2 projects under construction in the western half of the Reservation, including a 10-inch diameter mainline which the contractor for that segment hopes to be able to plow in, for the Fort Peck West mainline branches. Two project segments had bid openings on Tuesday Aug. 5<sup>th</sup> including 4 booster pump stations and 2 ground storage reservoirs. There will be a new 400K gallon tank constructed near the community of Lustre. Recent video inspection of the raw water lines from the intake side indicate siltation is at acceptable levels, and the new structures put in almost 2 years ago at the WTP continue to significantly reduce the turbidity levels in raw water entering the WTP.

For Dry Prairie, the Flaxville-Scobey mainline construction continues, with 87% of work complete and 77% of the contract time elapsed, amounting to 56 miles of pipe. Work is proceeding on meter pit and individual service connection installation. Dry Prairie has notified the communities of Flaxville and Scobey to be prepared to receive regional water in 90 days. Construction is also proceeding on the Westby segment, but progress has been slow due to high stone content in the soils. Cultural and wetlands studies are in process for Phases I & II of the Scobey-Flaxville branch lines segment, with an anticipated bid advertisement for those coming up in September. Work has also begun on the Authority's Glasgow area shop and office building.

**Rocky Boys. North Central** – Work is progressing on the sub-surface portions of Phase 1 of the regional WTP, with that 11 mgd phase scheduled to be completed by mid-2022. Underdrain piping, and over 120 drilled piers with caps have been installed thus far. Concrete work will follow soon. Reports on the work are available upon request.

For the North Central Authority, work on the Shelby North pipeline segment is nearly complete, with pigging and pressure and leakage testing of the line nearing completion, and punch list items remaining on the structures. Upgrades to the City of Shelby's wellfield are proceeding, including the 3 existing wells which were renovated in late fall of 2019, and plans for installation of 2 new ultraviolet light disinfection reactors. Next regional construction phases under planning are pipelines to Loma, Big Sandy and Havre.

**Central Montana** (Musselshell-Judith Regional System) – The Authority is at work on a plan for funding construction of the first phase of the system, water main from the wellfield NW of Judith Gap to the Town of Harlowton. An application to the US Economic Development Administration (EDA) for assistance with construction of Phase 1 did not pan out. There will be a \$2.8 million DNRC regional water systems grant to assist, and they are looking to other funding agencies for possible assistance. They are still waiting on passage of Federal authorizing legislation.

**Dry Redwater** – No water main construction projects are taking place at present. Mains for wastewater service for the Sidney Circle subdivision area are currently being installed; that sewage will go to City of Sidney's WW treatment plant for disposal. The Authority is also awaiting Federal authorization for regional water.

## **Committee Updates**

### Workshop

Erinn Zindt said she will look at getting something scheduled, but they don't always do something in the fall of the year. She will check with workshop committee.

## Uniform Application and Standard Documents

David Larson is attending the RRGL ranking meeting today.

Karen mentioned a webinar on Standard Documents. There may be changes made to help consulting engineers.

## WASACT Website

Lindsay Volpe is attending the RRGL ranking meeting.

## **Congressional Update –**

- 1) Anna said CARES act funding 1 and 2 funds the Business Adaptability Grants and \$1.2 billion was awarded to Montana. There is money to install plexiglass for clerks, etc. and for cleaning and sanitizing businesses. The funds can also be used for not-for-profits, churches, credit unions, banks, and local governments.
- 2) Legislative body meets in January 2021. We will have a new governor, possibly a new congressman and senator. The legislative system will be different. It will be important to have a good computer, camera and Zoom version. Long-Range planning will be remote so we will need more planning. We will need to speak slowly and clearly.

Laura Dunlap with Morrison Maierle asked when the RRGL funding will be awarded. Anna replied that we will need to see where we are at with funding. The state is doing well financially, whereas many states are relying on sales tax money. Helena has limited shopping options, especially since stores like Macy's, JC Penny's and Shoko have closed.

As far as Planning Grants, Anna said we will have to wait and see.

Tanya added they the new hotel across from the Heritage in Great Falls is open and she will block out some rooms for the conference in March.

## Steve Troendle with USDA Rural Development

Steven said that March 19<sup>th</sup> RD got their funding. Obligations are at \$18,569,000, 143% on loan allocation; \$11,766,150, 320% of grant allocation. He said it's easier to allocate funds for the first half of the fiscal year. Interest rates are 1.8750% market rate; 1.500% intermediate rate and 1.125% poverty rate. These are adjusted at the end of each quarter.

End of Updates

Next WASACT meeting will be tentatively November 10, 2020. Details will be sent out later.

Meeting adjourned at 11:10. Minutes taken by Denise Cook

11 Aug 2020

W2ASACT Meeting Notes