

Evaluation of the State Water Planning Process and Implementation

- 1) Why was the evaluation of the State Water Planning process initiated?
It was initiated to see if it accurately represented the interests of Montanans, defined reasonable and viable solutions to problems, and was the best approach for building a state water plan.
- 2) When did the evaluation occur?
The evaluation began in May, 1993 and was completed in November, 1994.
- 3) Who conducted the evaluation of the State Water Planning Process?
DNRC and EQC selected participants that were intimately involved with the process. The Evaluation Committee included:
 - a. Jo Brunner, Executive Director of the MT Water Resources Ass.
 - b. Stan Bradshaw, Attorney, Trout Unlimited
 - c. Hal Harper, Democratic legislature
 - d. Mike Zimmerman, Vice President of MPC
 - e. Lorents Grosfield, Republican Legislature
 - f. Jerry Sorensen, EQC member and Plum Creek employee
 - g. John Wordell, State Director, EPA
 - h. Debbie Schmidt, Director, Staff of EQC
 - i. Mark Simonich, Director, DNRC
- 4) What were the objectives of the evaluation?
There were five objectives.
 - a. Determine whether there are water resource problems or opportunities that "should" be addressed by government.
 - b. Evaluate the success of the state water planning process in addressing water resource problems and opportunities.
 - c. Examine alternative forums or mechanism for addressing water resource problems and opportunities.
 - d. Assess Whether the State Water Planning Process should continue and, if so, show could it be improved.
 - e. What should be the relationship with other governmental and on governmental planning and policy development process ongoing in Montana (e.g. Water Policy Committee).
- 5) What procedure did the committee use to evaluate the process? The process consisted on a number of steps.
 - a. A survey was sent out to 75 steering committee members that participated in developing the state water plan sections. A total of 38 responses were received. These responses were analyzed and summarized and the findings presented to the Evaluation Committee.

- b. Direct one-on-one dialogues were held with prominent constituency groups, including: MT Water Resources Ass, Stock Growers, MT Wildlife Federation, Trout Unlimited, hydropower produces (MPC), Water Policy Committee, Clark Fork Coalition, Western Environmental Trade Ass, MT Ass. of Counties, MT EIC, MT Rural water Systems, MT Ass. of Conservation Districts, Northern Plains Resource Council, etc. These groups were asked the same set of questions regarding the planning process.
- c. Reviewed the following reports: a Report prepared by staff on water planning processes in Western States; the Park City Principles established by the Western States Water Council and Western Governor's Association and Who Does What in Water Planning in Montana.
- d. Conducted a facilitated forum where a number of questions were asked to participants regarding the planning process. Questions dealt with the deficiencies and strengths of the process.
- e. Based on the above results, the November 19th, 1994 State Water Plan Evaluation Decision Summary was drafted; debated among the Evaluation Committee members, modified and final approved by the Committee.