

TRIBE: Gros Ventre and Assiniboine Tribes of the Fort Belknap Reservation

UPDATE: July 15, 2001

The Fort Belknap Community Council preliminarily approved the Fort Belknap compact which was then passed by the Montana legislature and signed by the governor in April 2001. The final compact allocates 645 cfs from the Milk River to the Tribes, limited by the United States share of the natural flow of the Milk River and the Tribal capacity to develop water. It also quantifies the Tribal water rights in Peoples Creek, Beaver Creek, and Missouri River basin 40EJ. When uses upstream of the Reservation interfere with the Tribal water right the Tribes will obtain water from the federal Milk River Irrigation Project. Funding and authorization of specific mitigation measures and Tribal projects must occur in federal legislation, which the parties will continue to negotiate.

TRIBE: Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Reservation

UPDATE: July 15, 2001

No formal negotiating sessions have been held since the last Water Court Report. The Tribe, State and United States representatives have continued to focus on exchanging information to allow the parties to examine the impacts of the Tribe's proposed settlement. The Blackfeet have met with the Fort Belknap Tribes to discuss the impact of their claims on each other. The Blackfeet did not support the Fort Belknap compact in the 2001 legislature. The parties are looking into scheduling a meeting this fall.

TRIBE: Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation

UPDATE: July 15, 2001

A negotiating session took place in May 2000 in Polson, and a second session was held in September 2000 in Helena. The Tribes presented a verbal proposal to the Commission at the Helena meeting. In June, 2001, they presented the proposal in written format. The Commission and staff will be reviewing the proposal and meeting with interested members of the public prior to scheduling another negotiating session.

TECHNICAL WORK IN PROGRESS

The Commission staff has continued to do some preliminary technical work to review soils and irrigation on the Reservation, however, no agreement has been made between the two parties to exchange technical information at this time.

TRIBE: Crow Tribe

UPDATE: July 15, 2001

The Stream Flow and Lake Level Management Plan for operation and management of Bighorn Lake, Yellowtail Dam, and the blue-ribbon stretch of the Bighorn River plan was completed by June 17, 2000 as called for in the Crow compact. The Tribe and the United States worked successfully to prepare a report listing the current uses of the Tribal Water Right and the State was given six months to approve or disapprove the report. Following tribal elections in May 2000 the new Tribal government is reviewing some portions of the Compact and may request renewed negotiations. The Commission and