

**SUMMARY OF
COMPACT IMPLEMENTATION TECHNICAL TEAM (CITT) MEETING**

July 10, 2024

1:00pm-3:00pm

Mission Valley Power Conference Room
Flathead Indian Reservation-Pablo, MT

In Attendance (Quorum Established)

Casey Ryan, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

Maya Rao, MT Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)

Daniel Lozar, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

Nick Belcourt, Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP)

David Lake, Irrigator Representative

Call to Order [00:00:00]

Chair Maya Rao called the meeting to order at 1:11 PM. A quorum was established.

Approve Agenda [00:03:19]

CITT members were given an opportunity to review the draft agenda for the meeting. There were no additions or modifications to the agenda. Motion to approve agenda by Dave. Second by Casey. Approved by 5 of 5 members.

Informational Updates [00:03:50]

BIA Updates

Dan provided updates from the BIA. The CITT Federal Implementation Engineer position is progressing through BIA's human resources process. Dan will share the USAJobs position when advertised. 2024 WIIN Act money will fund the construction of five long-crested weirs on 31A Canal, the Jocko Siphon safety project, a front-end loader, an excavator, and water measurement equipment for FIIP. CSKT will handle design and construction for the long-crested weirs. The Jocko R siphon safety project which will be completed internally by the BIA/FIIP. Dan continues to provide technical support to FIIP for ongoing design projects and development of the 2026 proposed budget.

FIIP Updates

Nick provided updates from FIIP. Water is no longer being diverted from North Fork of the Jocko as Tabor Reservoir is full. The South, Middle, and North Fork Jocko flows have decreased, therefore Jocko Lake Dam has been opened to meet irrigation demand and instream flow at K Canal headworks.

On the Dixon Bench, flows in Revais Creek have decreased so the Revais Pump has been started up to subsidize the Dixon Bench with water from the Lower J Canal. In the Mission District, demand for water is high so additional water is being discharged from Mission Reservoir to meet demand on A, B, C, and 6C Canals. Tabor headworks is still closed and is operating from leakage at the gates to run the Pablo Feeder and F Canals.

Ninepipes Reservoir discharge has increased as a result of high water demand in the Charlo and Ninepipes areas. Discharge from Kicking Horse Reservoir has decreased so the reservoir can fill. The only

water currently being discharged from Kicking Horse Reservoir is to supply water for A and G Canals. Flows into McDonald Reservoir have decreased so FIIP has reduced discharge so it can fill the reservoir. Camas Division is out of water, and FIIP is currently closing the diversion season in the Camas Division. Pablo Reservoir is starting to recede as outflows are greater than inflows to the reservoir. Both Flathead pumps are running. FIIP has started holding internal coordination meetings which occur three times a week to train new leadership and support decisions regarding water delivery throughout the valley.

Irrigator Updates

David Lake provided irrigator updates. Crops are using a lot of water currently and water delivery is meeting the demand.

CSKT Updates

Casey provided updates from CSKT. Crow Pumping Plant is at 30% design. Falls Creek Diversion will be completed this year and construction is starting next week. Construction on the 31A Canal will begin after irrigation season and is anticipated to be completed this year.

The Water Measurement Program provides updates to the CSKT Water Data website which helps FIIP meet compact requirements and irrigation water deliveries.

The USGS Mission Creek above Reservoir gage had a sensor malfunction in June, so some data in June is estimated. The CSKT Post Creek above McDonald Reservoir gage is being relocated and may need a new relay tower; the evaluation and permitting process for the new tower is underway.

DNRC Updates

Maya provided DNRC updates. DNRC has recently hired Morgan Case as the compact coordinator for compacts east of the divide. DNRC is currently in the process of hiring a new CSKT compact coordinator. DNRC is still collaborating with the FRWMB on permissions and updates for the water rights database. DNRC also continues to work with Samatha Kemp on the development of the stock water mitigation grant program.

Water Management Coordination [00:18:30]

Water Supply Update

Casey Ryan presented a Water Supply update on behalf of Brian Hogenson. NOAA's 6-10 day outlook indicated that we are under a heat advisory. Models also favor below average precipitation. The monthly July forecast favors above average temperatures and below average precipitation.

Casey Ryan presented a review of the water supply forecasting that has occurred for the year by showing a graph that compares average daily temperatures and precipitation at St. Ignace Agrimet station. The temperature graph shows that May and June 2024 were cooler than May and June 2023, which was favorable for snowpack and late season flows. Less precipitation was recorded in May 2024 compared to May 2023, but most of the precipitation in May 2023 came from one large event and compared to several smaller events in 2024. Daily precipitation in June was close to average for both 2023 and 2024.

Snow water Equivalent (SWE) was historically low in January 2024, however a wet and cool May and June sustained below average snowpack which is favorable for late season flows. Peak SWE was still below normal in some areas, therefore volumetric runoff was below average.

The Moss Peak SNOTEL site had SWE in the 30th percentile throughout most of the year with an average melt out date. North Fork of the Jocko SNOTEL set a new historic low for the period of record.

Total observed flow at each indicator gage location from April through June shows:

South Crow – April average, May 16% below average, June 34% below average

Mission Creek – April 44% above average (indicates early runoff), May 14% less than average, June less than average (sensor issues so June data includes estimates)

Percent of the normal year threshold:

(percentage of flow achieved from dry year to normal year by July 1):

South Crow 90%

Hellroaring 87%

Jocko River– 98%

Mill Creek 82%

Mission Creek 61% (includes 36 days of estimated data)

It was clarified that ‘% Median’ statistic in the forecast table does not refer to the year but is for the remaining forecasted period.

There was additional discussion on how streamflow forecast, water year categorization, and other technical information can be conveyed to the Project Operator in the future to improve water management.

The next CITT meeting will include a review of the April-July forecast compared to observed values.

River Diversion Allowances (RDAs) are not enforceable at this time. FIIP is not currently managing diversions to meet RDAs. RDAs become effective following Appendix 3.4 of the Compact. The CITT reviewed the current water year’s total diversions for each RDA Administrative Area for informational and planning purposes. Overall, if RDAs were enforceable today, FIIP would be in compliance with all RDAs except for the Upper Crow Creek RDA. The Upper Crow Creek RDA area includes the South Crow Feeder Canal which is used to fill Kicking Horse and Ninepipes Reservoirs. Because the Kicking Horse Feeder Canal headworks on Post Creek is not reliably operational, FIIP currently moves water up Pablo Feeder Canal to South Crow Creek to the South Crow Feeder, which is then reported in the Upper Crow Creek RDA Administrative Area. If FIIP were to repair the Kicking Horse Feeder Canal headworks, the water used to fill Kicking Horse Reservoir would be accounted for in the Upper Mission RDA, and the Upper Crow Creek RDA would likely no longer be exceeded.

FIIP was largely compliant with incremental MEFs this year. Nick mentioned that operators are still learning how to adapt water management to additional instream flow requirements.

Stock Water Mitigation [01:14:40]

Maya provided update on stockwater mitigation. The CITT had a working session with DNRC’s Grant Administrator, Samatha Kemp on 7/10 regarding the grant administration program that is under development.

CITT received a letter on June 18, 2024 (also addressed to BIA and FIIP) from the Mission and Jocko Irrigation Districts. The letter requests the continued delivery of stockwater after September 15. The districts state that in Spring 2024 they were made aware of the possibility that stock water could be shut off on September 15. CITT members reviewed the letter and agreed to a response explaining that that the request is outside the purview of CITT, as the CITT has no role in the administration of the Tribal Water Right. Nick stated that BIA is planning to respond to the letter.

On-Farm Efficiency [1:21:50]

Casey discussed CITT’s ongoing communication with Patrick Mangan at the MSU Extension Office on the creation of an on-farm efficiency position. After receiving input from CITT and MSU administration, the position focus would be on education and outreach to producers, irrigators, and agency/organizational partners who serve local irrigators. Duties would include one-on-one education and interaction with

producers, integrating new technologies and education to improve water use efficiency on individual properties. Other duties would include educational workshops, development of a weekly irrigation guide, and guest lectures to stakeholder groups. Costs associated with the position would range from \$46,000-\$85,000 depending on education and experience level. MSU Extension did propose to contribute 20% of the total cost of the position and suggest an annual operating budget of \$10,000 for equipment, travel, supplies, etc. The position may be housed in the MSU Extension office in Polson. Next steps for CITT would be decide if this captures the objectives for the position. After this is done, CITT would develop a position description followed by a job advertisement and a multi-year funding agreement. Casey will setup another meeting with Patrick to move forward with the process.

Discuss Next Steps and Schedule [1:38:40]

The CITT discussed moving the dates of the September and October CITT meetings, due to scheduling conflicts. CITT members agreed to hold the September CITT meeting on September 5th at 1 pm, the October CITT meeting on October 2nd at 2pm.

Public Comment [1:49:00]

The CITT opened the floor for public comment, but no comments were presented.

End Meeting [1:49:10]

Motion to end the meeting by Dave, second by Casey. Motion carries unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 3:01 pm.

Next Meeting

The next CITT meeting is scheduled for August 14, 2024 at 1pm.

Key: Underline = Action item

Normal Font = Discussion, comment, and/or update