

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

**June 12, 2024**

1:00pm-5:00pm

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

**In Attendance** (Quorum Established)

Brian Hogenson, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT), Acting Representative  
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**

Chair Maya Rao called the meeting to order at 1:07 PM. A quorum was established.

**Approve Agenda**

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 Dan. Approved by 5 of 5 members.

**Informational Updates**

*DNRC Updates*

Maya provided DNRC updates regarding CSKT Coordinator position job posting. DNRC continues collaboration with the FRWMB on permissions for the water rights database. DNRC also continues to work with Samatha Kemp in CARRD on the development of the stock water mitigation grant program.

*BIA Updates*

Dan provided updates from the BIA. General allocations for the 2024 WIIN Act funds have been finalized for projects. Projects include installation of five long-crested weirs to manage water level on Lateral 31A, in Valley View. Funding will also be used to make the Jocko R siphon safer for FIIP to access. Other funding will be used to purchase equipment and flumes and other measuring devices for FIIP.

*FIIP Updates*

Skye Cooley provides update on reservoir levels. There was some early pumping on Pablo Reservoir to address to producers' concerns. Tabor is rapidly filling. Mission and McDonald are filling and FIIP is keeping some headroom as a safety buffer. Lower Crow has been 75% full water for 3 months. Ninepipes Reservoir is filling rapidly and a lot of water has been pushed through Kicking Horse in the past three weeks. Jocko and Camas areas had low snowpack and will have a shorter irrigation season due to drier conditions.

Nick provided additional updates from FIIP. FIIP is staging down flows at Tabor Feeder Canal because of the fill rate at St. Mary's Lake. The North and Middle Fork diversions will be staging down as well, and

fish rescue will occur. FIIP will continue catching water at Falls Creek until flows decrease. Once Falls Creek reaches minimum flows, then construction of the Falls Creek Diversion will begin.

FIIP is now being charged \$15,000 for the month for wheel charges at the Flathead Pumping Plant. North Crow Creek is still being diverted into Pablo Reservoir. Flows at North Crow will help determine when pumping plant is started back up.

At the request of the irrigation districts, FIIP is evaluating stopgap solutions to address electrical needs at the Flathead Pumping Plant. Maintenance of FIIP infrastructure is mostly complete and structures are ready to accept water. Arlee has started distributing water. Hot Springs is starting up and will have a short irrigation season. .20 quota in hot springs. All other districts have a .60 quota.

It was noted that Lower Bitterroot Lake and Hubbard Reservoir are low because there was no carryover water from last season. This was the result of late-season diversions at the request of irrigators in the Camas Division.

#### *Irrigator Updates*

David Lake provided irrigator updates. He mentioned that canals are running well. ET is high and crop use is high currently, therefore irrigation is high.

#### *CSKT Updates*

Brian provided updates from CSKT. Crow pumping plant is at 30% design. The construction phase of the Falls Creek Diversion project is scheduled to begin this fall. Position just closed in the water management program.

### **Water Management Coordination**

#### *Refine Projection of Water Supply*

Brian Hogenson presented an updated June water supply outlook to inform CITT's refinement of the 2024 water year projection per Appendix 3.5 Timeline.

NOAA's 6-10 day (valid June 15-19) outlook indicated that temperatures likely below normal and precipitation leaning above normal.

There was an overall trend of increased precipitation and decreased average in May 2024 precipitation in the Flathead Basin compared to May 2023. This trend was reflected in greater remaining SWE compared to this point that year.

May was wet and cool, which was favorable for snowpack, however volumetrically, the SWE totals are still below normal. There was almost twice as much precipitation recorded at the Jocko SNOTEL in May of this year compared to May 2023. However, the Jocko had significantly below average peak SWE (snow water equivalent) in 2024. The Jocko SNOTEL site showed complete melt out on June 10.

Precipitation in 2023 was slightly lower at the St. Ignatius Agrimet station in 2024 compared to 2023, but most of the 2023 precipitation came in one large precipitation event. Moss Peak SNOTEL site still had some snow remaining at the time of the meeting.

June through July stream flow forecasts, combined with observed April through May flows, indicate streamflow volumes that fit within the dry end of the normal-year category (50% exceedance

probability) for all forecast locations. Brian stated that at this point in the season there is a shift from focus on precipitation and snowmelt to further refining water year categorization based on temperature.

It was clarified that the ‘% Median’ column in the forecast tables refers only to the NRCS forecast period and does not include observed flows for the water year. CITT members requested that in future years the % of median statistic is updated to reflect observed and projected flows for the water year.

#### Update Water Year Categorization

Maya stated that in the earlier May meeting CITT categorized Jocko Area as ‘dry,’ the Mission Area as ‘normal,’ and the Little Bitterroot Area as ‘dry.’ After reviewing the data presented by Brian Hogenson, CITT members agreed that conditions impacting streamflow remained largely unchanged from May to June

Motion by Dan second by David to categorize Jocko as normal. Motion carries unanimously.

Motion by David and second Dan by to keep Mission as normal. Motion carries unanimously.

Little Bitterroot still is on lower end of normal and has been characterized as dry in May. Motion by Brian to categorize as dry. Second by Dan. Motion carries unanimously.

#### **Approval Transmittal Document to Amend 2021 CITT Elevation-Capacity Table and Curve for Lower Crow Reservoir to Revise Safety of Dams Restriction Level**

Crow filling restrictions were put into place in 2006. Due to completion of spillway upgrades, Safety of Dams (SOD) filling restrictions have been lifted. CSKT’s Safety of Dams Program requested that CITT update the Lower Crow Reservoir tables to reflect this change. CITT members had questions about the effect of changing the SOD restriction levels on FIIP’s ability to use the spillway. Dave made the motion to table the discussion until the next meeting as more clarification is needed. Second by Nick. Motion carries unanimously.

#### **Off-Season Stock Water Mitigation**

Heather McAdams provided examples of costs associated with developing wells, pipelines, and other stock water mitigation projects. CITT members agreed to meet with Samantha Kemp, a grant specialist at DNRC, on July 10<sup>th</sup> for a stock water mitigation grant program working session. There was discussion about stock producers’ concerns regarding a potential September 15 shutoff date this season. There was also discussion about how mitigation applications from applicants on land leased from CSKT would be handled.

#### **On-Farm Efficiency**

DNRC’s Gold Creek Project field trip announced for June 24.  
FIIP is now installing measurement devices in all new delivery points.

#### **Discuss Next Steps and Schedule**

The CITT discussed next steps. The CITT discussed the date of the next CITT meeting and the CITT meeting schedule.

#### **Public comment**

The CITT received public comment. There were no comments.

**End Meeting**

Motion to end the meeting by Dave, second by Brian. Motion carries unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:04 pm.

**Next Meeting**

The next CITT meeting is scheduled for July 10, 2024.