

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

**UPDATE:** July 15, 2000

The last negotiating session was held on May 16, 2000 at the Fort Belknap Agency. Negotiating parties are continuing to work to arrive at specific practical approaches to achieving a water rights settlement by the 2001 legislative session. The joint Legal Working Group is working to produce a second draft of the proposed compact. The Milk River International Alliance sponsored public meetings at Chinook, Glasgow, Malta and Havre in May, and will sponsor a second round of informational meetings in September, in conjunction with the next negotiating session, tentatively scheduled for September 19, 2000 at the Fort Belknap Agency on the Reservation.

#### TECHNICAL WORK IN PROGRESS

The joint Technical Working Group continues to review the list of possible alternatives to mitigate the impact of the proposed Tribal water right on the Milk River Project and other Milk River water users. The Technical Working Group released a draft report on estimating the natural flow of the Milk River and continues to work to further develop the procedure so they can estimate a daily flow rate. The Tribes and Federal technical staff are working on identifying irrigated acreage on upper Peoples Creek. Negotiators have agreed to work with water users in upper Peoples Creek on stipulations settling their water rights, and Commission staff is meeting with irrigators in upper Peoples Creek in August. The Technical Group is also reviewing other off and on-Reservation claims on lands in basin 40EJ.

**TRIBE:** Blackfeet Tribe of the Blackfeet Reservation

**UPDATE:** July 15, 2000

No formal negotiating sessions have been held since the last Water Court Report in January. 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.

**TRIBE:** Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation

**UPDATE:** July 15, 2000

A formal negotiating session took place in May on the Flathead Reservation. The parties discussed their goals for negotiations. A second negotiating session is tentatively scheduled for September 13, 2000 in Helena.

#### TECHNICAL WORK IN PROGRESS

The Commission and Tribes hope to start coordinating some exchange of technical information. A tentative technical meeting date has been set for August 23<sup>rd</sup> on the Flathead Reservation.