

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

**Virtual Meeting (Zoom)  
December 11, 2023, 1:00pm-5:00pm**

### **In Attendance** (Quorum Established)

Daniel Lozar, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)  
Eric Bruguier, Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP)  
David Lake, Irrigator Representative  
Casey Ryan, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)  
Maya Rao, MT Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)

### **Call to Order**

Chair Casey Ryan called the meeting to order at 1:09pm.

### **Approve Agenda**

CITT members were given an opportunity to review the agenda. No amendments to the agenda were proposed. Motion by Dave to approve the draft agenda. Second by Maya. Motion approved by 5 of 5 members.

### **Informational Updates**

Dan Lozar provided updates from the BIA. Dan introduced Eric Bruguier, the new FIIP Project Manager, who started at FIIP in November, 2023. Dan gave an update on the finalization of the 2023 budget of the WIIN Act. Funding from the Act will go towards Rehabilitation and Betterment for items of significance as identified by FIIP. Dan highlighted some examples of projects that will receive funding which included rehabilitation of the Camas "C" Canal as well as ongoing design work for South Crow Headworks. There may also be additional FIIP measurement sites to supplement the current water measurement sites managed by CSKT. Dan mentioned that a CITT engineer will be hired soon. That individual will be housed under the BIA Division of Water and Power Chief.

Eric Bruguier provided updates on behalf of FIIP. FIIP is in furlough season. All FIIP equipment will be brought in for maintenance and upgraded for spring 2024. Eric mentioned minor FIIP vehicle policy changes. FIIP will be meeting this week with district irrigators to review budget expenses.

David Lake provided an update for the irrigators. The Flathead Irrigation District recently held a meeting which included agency updates from the DNRC and CSKT. Irrigators have concerns about the FIIP budget and look forward to learning more about that in a future meeting.

Casey Ryan provided an update for CSKT. CSKT focus has been on Operational Improvements, specifically to those identified in Appendix 3.4 to the Compact. Casey gave brief summaries of a few projects that will be covered in greater depth in later as meeting agenda items. Casey provided an update on the Charlo irrigation planning area and noted that CSKT's consultants have completed development of an integrated water management plan. CSKT reviewed the report and asked the contractors to develop additional alternatives for the plan that control project costs while still meeting

water management objectives. Casey also mentioned that CSKT is in the planning phase for rehabilitation of several canal headworks in the Charlo area, as well as master planning efforts in the Mission Valley South and Mission Valley North irrigation service areas.

Dave asked if CSKT could present to the irrigators in January to provide updates on the Charlo master planning efforts. Dave agreed to email Casey potential dates in January for CSKT to come provide updates.

Maya Rao provided updates for DNRC. DNRC has hired Heather McAdams as a hydrologist with the Compact Implementation Program. Heather will be based in the Missoula DNRC offices. Heather will be working on Operational Improvements including stock water mitigation. DNRC has also continued work on database enhancements so that the Office of the Engineer can have a system to track water rights. Maya mentioned that DNRC reviewed CITT funding to date, and that it is an agenda item she will present on today.

### **Settlement Funding Update**

Maya reported on the state's contribution to the settlement and gave an update on funding efforts to date. Maya shared a DNRC document detailing these expenses. That document will be posted on the CITT website. 11 Task Orders have been executed to date, primarily focused on water measurement and on-farm efficiency improvements. Maya briefly summarized several of these CITT activities. More information on the executed task orders can be found in the document described above. Maya mentioned DNRC's plans to develop on-farm efficiency and stock water mitigation projects over the winter.

### **CSKT Irrigation Infrastructure Program Updates**

Mark Simpson (CSKT) reported on three projects his program is working on. The Jocko K Canal Headworks is in the final stages of project delivery. Final construction work should be done by the end of the year. There will be some touch up work done in April-March 2024, which includes seeding. Following the seeding, CSKT Forestry Department will be doing reclamation and restoration as needed to the area. The second project is the Jocko K Canal Pipeline Project. CSKT is working on right of way and easements for the project and hopes to finalize those soon. Mark stated that the program is on still on track to start with Phases I and II in the fall of 2024, though it is still dependent on continued progress on the right of way process. The third project is the Placid Diversion – that project is in the initial stages. Information on CSKT Irrigation Infrastructure Projects and other Compact projects can be found at [www.csktwatercompact.com](http://www.csktwatercompact.com).

### **Water Supply Forecasting Update**

Brian Hogenson (CSKT) reported on water supply forecasting. Brian has continued work with the NRCS on water supply forecasting efforts. Brian mentioned that NRCS will be adopting a new technique in their forecasting model that will be used for the water year 2024. Brian is working to partner with the NRCS in an effort to include all natural flow gages identified in Appendix 3.7 as part of the Montana NRCS water supply forecasts. Brian also noted that the Post Creek above McDonald Reservoir water measurement station is back online and will provide important data on water supply through the winter and spring of water year 2024. Brian also reported that next year the CSKT Water Measurement Program plans to move the station to a new location next year due to the recent activation of a high-flow channel that makes gaging at the current gaging location challenging during the spring runoff period. Brian thanked the DNRC for their water supply outlook reports for the Post Creek drainage

### **Water Management Coordination**

Cody Goklish (CSKT) gave an update on the annual water measurement report for water year 2023. Cody shared a portion of a draft document that includes monthly and annual water volumes for CSKT's 94 active gaging stations. The report is currently in internal draft status and will be shared with the CITT when it is finalized. The CITT thanked Cody and provided some input and suggestions on the report.

Brian Hogenson provided an update on long-range forecasting based on climatic indicators. Brian noted that it is still early in the season with respect to SNOTEL data, but so far snowpack is below average for this time of year. Brian provided a summary of the National Weather Service Climate Prediction Center report. This report states that El Nino conditions are forecast to persist into December-January-February 2023-2024. Here in northwest Montana, including those watersheds on the reservation, it is likely that we will experience below average precipitation and above average temperatures. The NWS report notes that El Nino conditions potentially could transition into ENSO-neutral conditions during April-June 2024.

### **Review of Appendix 3.4 of Implementation Schedule**

Casey provided an overview of the implementation schedule within Compact Appendix 3.4. Casey noted that the Compact Minimum Enforceable Flows and River Diversion Allowance allocations were based on Operational Improvements models that did not include Rehabilitation and Betterment activities, hence the strong focus on Operational Improvements. Casey provided an update on selected Operational Improvement projects that have been completed to date.

### **Stock Water Mitigation**

Heather McAdams (DNRC) presented on potential partnerships and next steps. Heather suggested a working group with local stakeholders and noted that input from them is important to develop a process. Heather also suggested the NRCS EQIP model as one to explore and possibly learn from. Lastly, Heather stated her focus this winter will be in developing a process for stock water mitigation.

The CITT held discussion to identify initial steps in stock water mitigation projects. Casey will share some draft CITT material with the team that was developed in 2017. Casey asked Eric and his staff to review those draft stockwater maps for accuracy. The CITT agreed to follow-up on the topic in January, with FIIP providing the CITT with feedback including any necessary revisions.

### **Operational Model: Discussion of Potential Options**

Brian Hogenson presented on potential operational models for FIIP water management. Brian noted that the development of an operational model, or tools for water management, is identified as an Operational Improvement in Appendix 3.4. Brian noted that operational models can be developed to the basin-scale, or can also be developed as local decision support tools.

Casey commented that modeling is a unique professional service and that CITT may choose to seek an outside contractor to assist in the development of an operations model. The CITT has previously contracted for engineering projects, such as the flumes project and the reservoir bathymetry project, with the CITT collectively selecting qualified contractors. Casey suggested that CSKT create a draft version of an RFQ for professional services and advance to the CITT for edits and feedback. The group expressed consent and agreed to revisit this topic during a future meeting.

### **On Farm Efficiency**

Casey provided an update for on farm efficiency improvements. Casey and Brian have made exploratory phone calls to a couple of potential partners who have expertise in on farm efficiency improvements. Contacts included Montana State University, Ronan Natural Resources and Conservation Services office and Dr. Charles Burt with Cal Poly Irrigation Training and Research Center. The Ronan NRCS is unsure if they have capacity at present to assist CITT with this particular project, but are open to discussions. Dr. Burt offered a couple of ideas, noting that administration and cost were both challenges to consider. The Water Center at Montana State University has experience and expertise in this area, and are interested in CITT's efforts. MSU also had several project ideas for on-farm efficiency improvements. MSU offered to engage the MSU Extension Office and meet with CITT to discuss further. Casey offered to set up a meeting between MSU, MSU Extension, and the CITT.

**Next Steps and Follow-up**

Next steps and follow-up items discussed during the meeting were reviewed by the team.

**Public Comment**

No attendees provided public comment.

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 pm.

**Next Meeting**

The next CITT meeting is planned for January 2024.