

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

August 14, 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)

David Lake, Irrigator Representative

Absent

Nick Belcourt, Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP)

Call to Order [00:00:00]

Chair Maya Rao called the meeting to order at 1:05 PM. A quorum was established.

Approve Agenda [00:02:30]

CITT members were given an opportunity to review the draft agenda for the meeting. Since Nick Belcourt was absent, Casey suggested amending the agenda to replace FIIP updates by Nick Belcourt with FIIP reservoir updates provided by Skye Cooley, FIIP hydrologist. There was general agreement of the amendment among CITT members. Casey made a motion to approve the amended agenda. Dave seconded the motion. Approved by 4 of 4 members present.

Informational Updates [00:03:50]

FIIP Updates

Skye Cooley provided updates about FIIP reservoir levels, water management, and changes to FIIP during the 2024 irrigation season. Skye stated that he has noticed an improvement in FIIP's operations this irrigation season. He attributed the improvements to Eric Bruguier's leadership, the introduction of three times weekly operator coordination meetings, and using a numbers-based approach to water management. Skye mentioned that although snowpack was low, a wet and cool May and June provided favorable runoff conditions.

Regarding FIIP reservoir levels, Tabor Reservoir still has a large volume of water remaining, so water will be diverted from Tabor to Ninepipe and Kickinghorse Reservoirs. Mission and McDonald Reservoirs are close to minimum levels. Lower Crow Reservoir still has enough water to continue deliveries until the end of irrigation season. Water delivery has been challenging to manage in the Little Bitterroot and the Jocko Areas this season due to below average snowpack and water availability. In terms of reservoir volumes, FIIP is at about the same level as they were at the end of last year's irrigation season.

Irrigator Updates

David Lake provided irrigator updates regarding how FIIP delivery has improved this year and that stock growers are concerned about the stock water shutoff date.

CSKT Updates

Casey provided updates from CSKT regarding infrastructure improvement projects. The old Falls Creek Diversion structure has been demolished. Once the water management plan for that structure has been implemented, new box culverts will be installed. The replacement bridge, which is a 10' x 7' box culvert with wing walls, has been installed. The Falls Creek Project is expected to be completed in November. The 31A Canal project in Valley View will begin as soon as FIIP delivery is completed for the season. The project is projected to be completed in spring 2025. At the Flathead Pumping Plant, contractors are doing fittings on a thrust runner for the pumping shaft. If the thrust runner fits, then the goal is to get Pump #2 reassembled and running again in the fall.

The Jocko pipelines project open house will be August 19 & 21 at the Arlee Community Center where project staff will discuss the project and easements with the public.

Casey proposed that he and Maya present on behalf of CITT at the Montana Chapter of the American Water Resources Association Conference in October. The focus of the presentation would be CITT and its role in adaptive water management now and in the future.

DNRC Updates

Maya discussed how presenting the Adaptive Water Management Plan would provide the water resource community awareness on how hydrology and water rights interact within the Compact.

DNRC is collaborating with the FRWMB on permissions and updates for the water rights database. DNRC has recently hired a new CSKT Compact Coordinator who will begin on September 9. DNRC continues to work on stock water grant administration.

BIA Updates

Dan has been assisting FIIP on water management and the 2026 proposed budget while assisting CITT with stock water grant administration and on-farm efficiency.

2023 Draft Water Measurement Report [00:23:25]

Cody Goklish shared the 2023 Draft Water Measurement Report which summarized the hydrologic data from the network of CSKT water measurement equipment throughout FIIP. The framework for the report is outlined in Appendix 3.5 in the Compact and serves as an adaptive management tool to inform operational compliance reporting and irrigation water management. The document outlines the history of water resources on the Flathead Reservation and provides details on the water year, hydrologic conditions, snowpack, precipitation, and temperature data and how it correlates to water management and hydrologic conditions in Appendix 3.7.

The hydrologic condition for the Jocko, Mission, and Little Bitterroot service areas were categorized as a normal water year. The Jocko and Mission service area was on the wetter end of normal while the Little Bitterroot was on the drier end of normal.

The report also summarized irrigation flow volumes for April 15-Sept 15 for canals and streams, total annual volume for each gaging station and reservoir volumes for the water year. Supplement C outlines

the River Diversion Allowances for 2023 using provisional data. Cody highlighted different ways the report can be used to inform water management on the reservation in the future.

Maya suggested that in the future, the CITT water year categorizations be compared to the summarized hydrologic data for the water year.

Stock Water Mitigation [00:35:45]

Maya provided update on stock water mitigation. The CITT has been meeting twice a month developing the stock water grant program. The application and guidelines for the grant program is still under development however, a lot of progress has been made.

On-Farm Efficiency [00:37:22]

Casey provided an update on on-farm efficiency regarding partnering with MSU Extension. The irrigation efficiency specialist position will be jointly funded by CITT and MSU Extension Office and will be based in Polson. The goal is for the position is to provide on-the-ground support for local irrigators. The salary for the position would be approximately \$60,00 per year and could be a master's level or possibly a bachelor's level degree. MSU will be contributing \$12,000 per year to the position. Next steps will be to work with MSU to create a job posting for the position that captures tasks and duties required for the position and write a task order to utilize settlement funding.

Discuss Next Steps and Schedule [00:42:43]

The CITT discussed next steps. The CITT discussed the date of the next CITT meeting September 5 at 1pm. The October meeting will occur October 2 at 2pm.

Public comment [00:45:20]

The CITT received no public comment.

Casey asked if the CITT needs to discuss any public communication over the next month. No CITT public communication requests have been made.

End Meeting [00:47:49]

Motion to end the meeting by Dave, second by Casey. Motion carries unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:53 pm.

Next Meeting

The next CITT meeting is scheduled for September 5, 2024.