

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

September 5, 2024

1:00pm-3:00pm

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

In Attendance (Quorum Established)

David Lake, Irrigator Representative

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

Daniel Lozar, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

Nick Belcourt, FIIP Operator Representative

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

Absent

Casey Ryan, Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)

Call to Order [00:00:00]

Chair Maya Rao called the meeting to order at 1:04 PM. A quorum was established.

Approve Agenda [00:02:20]

CITT members were given an opportunity to review the draft agenda for the meeting. Since Brian Hogenson was active CSKT representative in Casey Ryan's absence, Maya suggested amending the agenda to replace Casey's name to Brian's. A move was made by David Lake to approve the agenda with modifications. Second by Nick Belcourt. Approved by 5 of 5 members present.

Informational Updates [00:03:15]

Irrigator Updates

David Lake provided irrigator updates and discussed how FIIP delivery is being shut off in the Flathead Irrigation District Area. There is concern about hot weather that lies ahead while crop production ends however he feels that overall, the season has been okay.

CSKT Updates

Brian provided updates from CSKT regarding infrastructure improvement projects. Falls Creek diversion structure is under construction with main structure being completed in mid-October. Mobilization for the 31A Canal project will begin in the next few weeks. Easements are being secured for the Jocko K Canal project. Pump #2 at the Flathead Pumping Plant is the final stage of being rebuilt and should be reinstalled this fall. The Bureau of Reclamation will be doing a pen stock inspection at the Pumping Plant in October. The North Fork Jocko is at 90% design and is under review, while the Jocko Crow Pump plant is at 60% design.

DNRC Updates

Maya discussed how DNRC continues to work on stock water mitigation grant program working internally with financial folks on process related to fund distribution to grantees in the grant process.

DNRC's new Compact Coordinator Blair Libby starts Monday. Database enhancements continue with the hopes of getting FRWMB access to the database soon.

BIA Updates

Dan has been assisting FIIP with review of on-going design projects from CSKT such as Crow Pump, North Fork Jocko, and meat packing plant as well as visiting projects that are under construction. He is also planning for fall trainings across the region while participating in stock water mitigation grant work.

FIIP Updates

Nick redirected to Skye Cooley, FIIP hydrologist for reservoir levels updates. He mentioned that the irrigation season will end a few days before September 15. Stock water will continue through freeze up this year, as available. Skye highlighted management goals that lead to a successful season by FIIP which included a numbers-based approach to water management, better office management achieved through frequent communication, and holding off the lowest reservoir drawdown until the first week of September.

Pablo will continue delivery of stock water until water supply ceases. Lower Crow will also continue stock water delivery for the next month or two. The sensor in Lower Crow Reservoir is not currently working so it was not displayed in Skye's reservoir levels graph.

David Lake asked if there will be more available irrigation water in the Moise area if RDA's have not been met. Skye discussed that Lower Crow does operate with more water than other areas in the project area so water is available to deliver past the September 15 date, however, current policy does not allow for later delivery. Currently, there is no decision from FIIP or Tribes regarding this policy issue therefore September 15 will be the end of the season this year.

Skye mentioned that he has not calculated Moise's final RDA, however his approximations show that water would be available to deliver past September 15.

Nick Belcourt reiterated that September 15 is what the water right says so shutdown will occur on September 15 on all administrative diversions. An agreement with the tribes will provide stock water after September 15.

As irrigation season ends, FIIP is prioritizing infrastructure maintenance that will occur this fall. FIIP will also begin some compact work involving the installation of long crested weirs and work on the E canal. FIIP is finalizing 2026 budget and cross-training irrigation system operators to perform maintenance using heavy equipment during the off-season.

At the Flathead Pumping Plant, Pump #3 is running, Pump #2 is shut down for repairs, and Pump #1 is shut down due to cracks in the pen stock. Repair is anticipated by mid-September so Pump #1 can be started. The Flathead River Pumping Plant will be shut down for approximately two weeks this fall for pen stock inspections and cleaning.

FIIP is in the process of creating two new positions, a pump plant utility position and water dispatch position. There will also be four open positions in the North Division, one in the South Division, and one maintenance position.

2024 Water Supply Review [00:19:15]

Brian Hogenson provided a water year in review by comparing CITT's determinations based on climatic data and forecasts used over the water year to observed flows. Four of the forecasted models (South Fork Jocko, Mission Creek, South Crow Creek, and Hellroaring) performed well in predicting stream flow volumes for Wet/Normal/Dry determinations. The exception, Mill Creek, did not produce a "normal year" volume as modeled. However, CITT discretion established a "dry year" determination for that geographical area. This adaptive management approach was beneficial in adjusting the determination to local conditions. Ongoing conversations with NRCS will refine and improve future forecasts including Mill Creek and add forecasts for North Crow and Agency Creek.

CITT discussed how to improve on decision making in the future for technical purposes and how this relates to management within the project.

Stock Water Mitigation [00:52:20]

Maya provided update on stock water mitigation. The CITT has been engaging in technical working sessions along with Brian Hogenson (CSKT), Heather McAdams (DNRC), and Samatha Kemp (DNRC), to develop the application and guidelines. CITT has also begun public outreach regarding the stock water mitigation grant process with recent presentations at FRWMB and FID meeting. At the FRWMB meeting, Maya mentioned that some grantees may be interested in adding stock water to an existing development, but there is no water rights form to do that. The FRWMB Chairman asked Maya to put comments in writing. CITT discussed Maya's drafted comments and agreed on edits.

On-Farm Efficiency [01:08:45]

Brian provided update on on-farm efficiency. Casey Ryan and Patrick Mangan have been working on the position description for the on-farm efficiency position and next steps so that CITT can work on task order related to that position.

Discuss Next Steps and Schedule [01:11:55]

The CITT discussed next steps. The CITT discussed the date of the next CITT meeting October 2 at 2pm.

Public comment [01:12:30]

The CITT received public comment. No CITT public communication requests have been made.

End Meeting [01:12:50]

Motion to end the meeting by David, second by Dan. Motion carries unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:17 pm.

Next Meeting

The next CITT meeting is scheduled for October 2, 2024.