

SUMMARY OF COMPACT IMPLEMENTATION TECHNICAL TEAM (CITT) MEETING

November 12, 2025

1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Salish Kootenai College - D'Arcy McNickle Conference Room
Flathead Indian Reservation, Pablo, MT

In Attendance

Brian Hogenson, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT)
Maya Rao, MT Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC)
Nick Belcourt, Flathead Indian Irrigation Project (FIIP)
Daniel Lozar, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

Call to Order [00:00:00]

Chair Brian Hogenson called the meeting to order at 1:14 p.m. Four of the five CITT members were present, and a quorum was established.

Approve agenda [00:02:24]

Nick requested to modify item 4 to reflect that Amanda Courville (CSKT) will be presenting on reservoir carryover. Brian requested to modify item 3 to reflect that Patrick Mangan (MSU-Extension) is not present; in Patrick's presence Brian will provide update for on farm efficiency specialist. Motion by Maya to approve modifications, seconded by Dan, approved by all 4 members present.

Informational Updates [00:04:15]

DNRC updates

- The CSKT compact coordinator hiring process is moving forward and they are almost to in-person interview stage.
- DNRC has been working with FRWMB on updates to the database.
- DNRC had representation at the water law conference in Helena.

BIA updates

- Dan Lozar gave updates on the FIIP 22C Canal project, it consists of 2 new turnouts and is the first flap gate check structure for FIIP, it will be done in next few weeks.
- A new initiative is being developed to track laterals and sub laterals and tie them to parcels; this would help modernize irrigation and support water measurement/management by showing how areas are being served.
- They are also looking into rehab and maintenance projects on Camas A Canal, Camas C Canal, and the Mill Creek diversion. They are meeting in Polson Nov 19th and will be in the Camas canals area Wednesday and part of Thursday. CITT members were invited to attend.

CSKT updates

- Brian gave project updates for CSKT-managed projects:
 - North Fork Jocko/Tabor Diversion project construction crews are done for the winter and plan to pick back up in March 2026;
 - There will be a site visit tomorrow to look at newly constructed Falls Creek structures;
 - The Jocko Pipeline Project is going according to plan;
 - The Crow Pumping Plant fishway forms are in the ground, this project is still on track for 2026 completion.
- The Water Measurement Program installed a new gage at Tabor Feeder Canal Below North Fork Jocko, the site is ready to measure water as soon as it's turned out. The team installed new equipment and used the old USGS recorder house at Big Knife Creek to get that site back online, which will be good data for CSKT and FIIP.
- The water law summit in Helena in October was informational and went over possible water law legislation for the coming year, Flathead Reservation Water Management Board was present.

FIIP updates

- Nick Belcourt gave updates on the 22C project they have a small crew working on that
- FIIP is also working on realigning the #2 pump at the Flathead River Pumping Plant
- FIIP is clearing brush at Lower Dry Fork, and will be soon at Pablo Feeder Canal and possible canal shaping.
- Additionally, FIIP is in the process of increasing inventory of precast structures at the Ninepipe camp.

On-Farm Efficiency Specialist – Hiring Process [00:16:36]

- Brian gave updates on the hiring process. The candidate that had advanced to the in-person interview removed himself from consideration prior to the interview.
- Of the 4 original applicants none are able to accept the position. Brian mentioned altering the recruitment process to get the job application to a wider audience. The application process is open indefinitely at this time.
- Brian had asked Patrick Mangan if there is any flexibility on bachelor's degree requirement and was informed that is not a possibility because it is considered a faculty position.
- CITT members discussed the challenges associated with this recruitment -- including housing and work location -- and the path forward which includes a re-posting of the position description. Patrick will be invited to the CITT meeting in December to discuss some of these ideas discussed.

Water Management Coordination [00:23:04]

- Amanda Courville (CSKT) gave a presentation on reservoir levels as of November 12, 2025, in comparison with the same time in 2024. The current levels are generally below the previous year.
- Amanda presented on the climatic indicators, which point to a colder and wetter than average winter due to the projected La Nina conditions. This will likely change in the spring/summer months of 2026 as El Nino becomes dominant.

- Historical El Nino/La Nina conditions in relation to the snow totals for each year was presented to put these projections into context.
- Maya asked why the reservoir levels are lower than last year, and Nick mentioned specific reservoir conditions such as Pablo Reservoir being higher this year than last year. For others, Nick mentioned that it has been drier and FIIP delivered as much water as they could this year, so elevations reflected that.

Stock Water Mitigation Grant Program [00:33:42]

- Maya gave updates on the Stock Water Mitigation Grant Program. Samantha Kemp (DNRC grant manager) has been in Ronan every other week helping grantees with questions and reimbursements, she will suspend this over the winter and pick back up in spring. So far there have been \$127k dispersed to grantees.
- There were 30 grant contracts fully executed, 18 special use permit consultations completed, 1 or 2 special use permits granted, 80 environmental reviews completed, 23 water rights issued as of the end of September, and inspections were done on three completed projects. The feedback from the grantees has been positive.
- Maya and Samantha are planning on going on-site to inspect completed projects in the near future.

CITT Attendance at District Meetings [00:37:57]

- Maya initially suggested to wait until Dave is present to discuss this topic. The team did move on to discuss some of the main elements of this conversation, including whether the districts have specifically invited CITT to district meetings.
- Nick questioned if formal attendance by CITT is a priority, although he is usually at the district meetings representing FIIP rather than the CITT. Nick mentioned that some of the irrigation districts should be using Dave Lake as a representative at CITT. Keeping them informed is important, but it may not be necessary to attend every meeting.
- In summary, it was suggested that the team consult with Dave on this and continue the conversation.

Jocko Pipeline Rehabilitation and Betterment Project Update [00:45:35]

- Brian gave an update on the Jocko Pipeline Project, there has been good progress so far. Prospect Engineering (phases 1 & 2) and Knife River (phases 3 & 4) are the contractors. Anyone that wants to do a site visit should reach out to Brian or Mark Simpson. There is interest from Maya and members of her team for a site visit.
- Moving forward, Brian mentioned that the CITT should reflect on the Rehabilitation and Betterment-driven Water Reallocation guidelines. Brian put together a document that contains all references to reallocated water in the Compact, and Brian recommended consulting those guidelines for CITT responsibilities on water reallocation.
- CSKT has conducted 3 years of seepage studies done in the Jocko and the findings were presented to CITT in February 2024. These findings show loss of water, which aligns with historical studies. Further conversations are needed to move this along to the voting stage at CITT.

- There was discussion on the quantitative loss/seepage from the studies, which were estimated at a spatially applied loss rate of approximately 3.0 ft/day - which corresponds to approximately 28-acre feet per day across the footprint of the project. The number changes throughout the season, but losses are averaged across the irrigation season.
- The team discussed reallocation in terms of readiness and stressed the amount of attention and thought that needs to go into it, as it will change instream flow numbers and RDAs. Dan mentioned that MEFs and RDAs aren't for Jocko area aren't fully enforceable until 9/17/2029 and considered whether IMEFs could be modified as an interim approach.
- There is a need to understand all considerations moving forward. It would be valuable to get together and go through seepage reports during a technical work session, Brian offered to schedule one.

Discuss Next Steps and Schedule [01:32:30]

- Brian will reach out to Patrick at the MSU Extension office to discuss hiring process and ask for link to job advertisement.
- During next CITT meeting discuss with Dave Lake about expectations for CITT presence at district meetings.
- Plan a work session to look at seepage study results and request a schedule to tour Jocko Pipeline Project.
- Look at a quick reference on Appendix 5 - water right abstracts and points of diversion. It was suggested by Brian that these lists should be vetted and voted on for use by FIIP personnel.

Public Comment [01:36:48]

The CITT received no public comment.

End Meeting [01:37:17]

Motion to end the meeting by Maya, second by Nick. Motion carries unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.