

SUMMARY OF COMPACT IMPLEMENTATION TECHNICAL TEAM (CITT) MEETING

April 15, 2026

1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Mission West Community Development 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)
David Lake, Irrigator Representative

Call to Order [00:00:00]

Chair Brian Hogenson called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Five of the five CITT members were present, and a quorum was established.

Approve Agenda [00:02:06]

Motion by Maya to modify agenda to change location of meeting from SKC to Mission West Community Development, seconded by Dan, approved by all 5 members present.

Informational updates [00:03:25]

FIIP Updates (Nick Belcourt)

- FIIP hired 12 employees through CSKT:
 - 10 ISO positions, 1 fish screen tech support, and 1 land admin support;
 - 2 more hires were approved this morning.
- A letter was sent to districts on how users should order water. The spring meeting went over the process. FIIP has new tract maps to assist ISOs, districts, and water users.
- Pablo Feeder Canal has been cleared of brush and debris and is ready for operation. Placid Canal started diverting water today. Moiese Valley and Camas are getting charged/turned on today.
- Jocko pipeline and canals will start charging on April 20th and on the 22nd they will start charging gravity feed canals. Mission and Post Creek are the only areas not getting started up right now.
- BiOp meeting yesterday the 14th, committee decided to conduct bankfull discharge schedules (flushing flows) on Post Creek and Mission Creek.
- Flathead River Pumping Plant will be getting started soon, they are still doing some maintenance; the Bureau of Reclamation is coming in May to work on shaft, plant will have 2 operational pumps this season.

BIA Updates (Dan Lozar)

- The BIA Division of Water and Power will be visiting the week of April 20th, meeting with FIIP and CSKT.
- ITRC will be here the first week of May to train FIIP personnel on Mission B and Mission C Canal measurement.

- The first week of May, Dan is hosting the BIA NW Region, who set the process for O&M rates. There are 3 irrigation projects in the NW Region. The 2027 proposed O&M rates are posted on federal register through May 22nd.

CSKT Updates (Brian Hogenson)

- The Little Bitterroot Lake bubbler orifice was fixed March 30th, the site is now operational.
- CSKT staff took DNRC staff on a field trip around sites in the Jocko and Mission South areas on March 31st.
- The FIIP spring meeting on April 7 was a good chance to coordinate across agencies.
- Mission 6C Canal was surveyed by CSKT DEWR staff to check for a drop from the Cipolletti weir and the highway culvert. There is ~1ft drop between them. It was asked for FIIP to let CSKT know when they turn the canal on so DEWR staff can measure flows.
- Crow pump was one of the sites visited on March 31 with DNRC. The intake structure is poured and construction is going to plan.
- North Fork Jocko project is on hold until the team can mobilize, depending on the weather.

Irrigator Updates (David Lake)

- Spring planting is getting started, today is the 1st day of irrigation season. Irrigators received the letter from FIIP about the water ordering process. Irrigators are considering opposing rate increases.

DNRC Updates (Maya Rao)

- The March 31st trip with CSKT to the Jocko and Mission South was a good opportunity to see on the ground conditions.
- DNRC continues to support the Flathead Reservation Water Management Board with water rights files and pump fund progress.
- DNRC is helping host Montana Range Tour in Gold Creek June 17th.

Water Management Coordination [00:35:04]

- Amanda Courville, Hydrologist with CSKT DEWR, gave an update on water supply forecast. Snowpack is below average for this time of year. NRCS forecasts near-normal streamflow for most of local geographic area, Mill Creek is forecast to be below average at 68% of normal.
- The team discussed determination of water year type (per Appendix 3.7 of the Compact). They will create a memo for 2026 that will reflect the determination made today. The water year type is for informational purposes rather than making water management decisions. It is important to use a science-based approach because in the future the decision will inform FIIP on water management decisions. The Little Bitterroot area experienced a melt out event March 17-30th, conditions on the ground are better than last year at this time. The last two years' streamflow forecasts for Mill Creek were more optimistic than reality.
- Motion by Maya to categorize the Jocko area as a normal water year, seconded by Dan, passed unanimously. Motion by Dan to categorize the Mission area as a normal water year, seconded by Dave, passed unanimously. Motion by Maya to categorize Little Bitterroot area as a normal

water year, seconded by Nick, passed unanimously. These decisions will be reflected in a memo that will have an April 15, 2026 date.

- Maya requested to see last year's stream forecast table compared to this year in May's presentation.

Incremental Implementation of MEFs [01:16:16]

- The team discussed the completeness of operational improvements that establish the Incremental Minimum Enforceable Flows (IMEFs), including those that have been advanced in the last year.
- The team went over the Appendix 3.4 operational improvement table, which was broken down in excel by geographic areas and percent complete. Discussion on ITRC projects and existing measurement on old structures contributing to better understanding of water measurement and farm delivery accounting in particular.
- Mission A Canal is in planning phase for 27 gravity feeds. New irrigation diversion points must be fitted with measurement devices to be approved.
- Additional discussion is helpful to document the operational improvements for this year, even though the team decided to use same IMEFs as the previous two years. An update to the previous year's operational improvement table will be forthcoming to document these improvements.

On Farm Efficiency Specialist Position Recruitment [02:18:30]

- Maya handed out her most recent email correspondence with Dan Lucas regarding increasing salary for the position. His response was that it's possible, but they would reclassify job as associate specialist and CITT would have to readdress the cost split. From MSU's perspective, adjusting the degree requirements is probably not the direction to go.
- The team discussed options. There already is an 80/20 cost split between CITT and MSU extension office. Other options should be explored, including working with another organization and potentially hiring someone on contract. Dave mentioned a local who is already doing on-farm measurement that is free. The team will follow up with other options, and Maya will follow up with Dan Lucas.

Operations Model [02:42:01]

- Dan updated that the work plan for the DST slowed down due to other priorities; keeping it prioritized is important. There is a plan for additional discussion for next month's meeting. Maya sent DST draft documents and the team will plan a virtual meeting to go over the DST.

Jocko Canal Pipeline Conversion Project Seepage Study [02:46:31]

- The team discussed the seepage loss rate for the Jocko Pipeline Project Phases 1-4 existing condition before the pipeline project, which represents open-earth ditch conditions. A 3 ft/day seepage rate was determined in a seepage study using industry standards for measurement and data evaluation. Brian proposed that CITT vote to adopt the findings of the seepage study, which found a rate of 3 ft/day.

- Maya mentioned that CITT is putting together a memo that draws from the seepage study, and prefers to adopt the seepage rate memo instead. Dave noted that it is a product of the CITT to memorialize the rate. Brian said they should consider adopting the seepage rate today and continue efforts working on CITT memo.
- Maya supported adopting the seepage rate, but noted that the seepage study report was a CSKT work product, not a CITT work product.
- Dan asked for clarity on how the topic was brought up today for action. Brian mentioned that the report establishes the study framework and findings, and typically bodies such as CITT will adopt a report of findings rather than a singular phrase. Ultimately, after discussion, the CITT arrived at a decision to vote on the seepage rate itself rather than an adoption of the full study.
- Upon full discussion and consideration by the CITT, a motion was made by Maya that CITT accept a rate of 3.0 ft/day as the historical seepage rate for canals replaced by pipeline in phases 1-4 of the Jocko K Pipelines Project, and that CITT will vote on the memo memorializing this action at the next CITT meeting. Seconded by Dave, passed unanimously.

(Note: Due to disk space limitations on the recording device, the remainder of this agenda item and subsequent agenda items were not recorded.)

Next Steps and Schedule

- The team will finalize the memo on determination of water year type and post to website, continued refinement of the water year determination will occur in May.
- The team will work to advance the Appendix 3.4 Operational Improvement table.
- The team will look at other collaboration options for the on-farm efficiency specialist position.
- The team will continue to build the operations model and will plan a work session in the near future.
- The team will plan a working session to move forward with acceptance of the seepage loss rate for Jocko Pipeline Projects Phases 1-4 and vote on the CITT memo in the May meeting. The team will plan a working session to finalize this.
- Next meeting scheduled for May 13th at 1pm the MVP boardroom

Public Comment

- The CITT received no public comment.

End Meeting 4:31pm

- Motion by Dave to end the meeting, seconded by Dan. Motion carries unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:31 p.m.