



## Water Policy Interim Committee

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### 65th Montana Legislature

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Feb. 21, 2018

To: Water Policy Interim Committee members  
From: Jason Mohr, committee staff  
Re: March 5 meeting

WPIC meets at 8 a.m. March 5 in room 172 of the State Capitol. In the morning, WPIC will primarily focus on the study of groundwater wells exempt from permitting. In the afternoon, the committee's study of the process for changing a water right continues.

Included in your meeting binder:

- **Tab 1** contains two documents related to the study of groundwater wells exempt from permitting, including **10 years' worth of DNRC trend data** related to exempt groundwater wells. (The department is using the term "exception" instead of "exemption.") In January, the committee asked for an analysis of certain proposals related to the exemption **by the legal director of the Clark Fork Coalition**, which is also at tab 1.
- As part of a policy discussion titled "*Montana forests: Issues of climate and law*," **tab 2** contains the executive summary of the **Montana Climate Assessment**. An author of that assessment will highlight projected effects on water and forests, as a prelude to a presentation on **federal laws and management of U.S. Forest Service lands**.
- A response from **a member of the Northwest Power and Conservation Council** to the WPIC's October letter requesting action on invasive species throughout the Columbia River Basin. The committee's original letter is at **tab 4**.
- A discussion of the effects of **HB40 (2009)** on the water rights permitting and change of water right process. That bill is at **tab 5**.

Other topics of discussion include:

- Proposed legislation from the Adjudication Advisory Committee
- An update on certain pollution discharge permit variances
- An early look at the state drought and water supply status

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J Mohr". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a yellow rectangular highlight.

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