Montana Association of Dam and Canal Systems

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MADCS

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Message from the President

2008 was a year filled with accomplishments for MADCS; including an increase in membership (almost doubling that of 2007), and a very successful October conference. We hope to improve on these achievements as we are planning new and interesting programs for the year ahead.

With the 2009 legislative session in progress we will be supporting funding for dam rehabilitation projects, both within the state and on the national level. As always, I encourage and welcome your ideas and suggestions as MADCS interacts with the Montana State Legislature on both current issues and future concerns.

Additionally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the presenters, staff members, and sustaining affiliates who contributed in making the 2008 MADCS a success. Your efforts are greatly appreciated! Finally, I want to remind you all that our sustaining affiliates provide financial support to MADCS. Please consider them in the products and services you use.

Grant Program for Privately Owned Dams & Canals

The Montana State Legislature established the Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program to fund the conservation, management, development and preservation of Montana's renewable resources. Administered by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), the program provides both grant and loan funding for public facility and other renewable resource projects. The source of funds to this program comes from the Natural Resources Projects State Special Revenue Account (SSRA). This money is generated by the interest earnings from the resource indemnity tax trust fund, from oil and gas taxes, and the resource indemnity and groundwater assessment tax.

The DNRC has requested the legislature to authorize $50,000 to fund the Grants to Private Entities Program. As provided by Montana State Law, grants are limited to 25 percent of the project cost or $2,500 (5 percent of the total money appropriated), whichever is less. This program is available to privately-owned water systems that are also used by the public. Eligible projects must be associated with a regulatory requirement such as safety inspections or repairs. Feasibility studies, research, and/or public information projects will not be recommended for funding. This program is allowed by statute (MCA 85-1-606) and funds, (pending legislative approval), should be available starting July 1st 2009. Grants will be distributed on a first-come, first-serve basis.

To date, the most frequently asked question regarding this grant program has been:
Question: "Why is only $2,500 available when I use to get $5,000?"

Answer: In 2001, $100,000 was allocated for the Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program which, as per Montana State Law, made available 5 percent of the allocated grant money (or $5,000) to each recipient. The $100,000 appropriation was adequate to fund all eligible requests over a 5-year period. Enough dam and canal owners did not take full advantage of this grant program. As a result, money was left over in 2005. Funds were exhausted by the end of 2008. Due to this, the following has occurred:

1) Because the previous $100,000 appropriation was adequate for more than a four-year period, this amount was reduced to $50,000 for the next biennium; and
2) Since the last appropriation for this program, another private grant program for irrigators has been initiated that can be used by private dam owners (called the "Irrigation Development Grant Program" aimed to increase the acreage of value based crops).

The Long-Range Planning subcommittee will hold a hearing on this and other grant programs in House Bill 6 on the morning of January 20 in Room 350. Public testimony is invited. For additional information on this grant program please call Alice Stanley, the Bureau Chief of the Resource Development Bureau at (406) 444-6687 or Larry Bloxsom, Private Grants and Loans Program Manager, 406-444-6686.

Sharing Information Between Montana Dam and Canal Owners

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MONTANA LEGISLATURE

2009 Session

For information on laws, bills, committees, members etc., please refer to the following web-site: http://leg.mt.gov/css/sessions/61st/default.asp

Thanks To Our Sustaining Affiliates!

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Recap of 2008 MADCS Workshop

Another great success! We had 137 attendees to our most recent workshop held in Helena on October 8-9, 2008. Thanks to everyone who put in time and effort. Special thanks to the Helena Valley Irrigation District for a tour of their dam and unique pumping plant. Additional thanks to the Bureau of Reclamation for a fascinating tour of Canyon Ferry Dam, and Godwin Pumps for organizing a tour of their new facility.

Many thanks to our speakers! *We learned valuable information on a variety of subjects:*

- Vegetation control in canals
- Operation and Maintenance of Gates and Valves
- Construction dewatering
- Liability Insurance
- Concrete repair
- Pros and Cons of using different pipe materials
- Canal conveyance structures
- Unique water delivery techniques
- Recent and on going dam and canal construction projects

Suggestions for the next workshop included:

- Spillways hydraulics (engineers)
- Understanding spillways (for dam owners)
- Design, operation and maintenance of relief wells
- Design Standards – friend or foe?
- Funding options for major rehabilitation and system improvements; How to prepare and apply for grants.
- Geomembranes and geotextile use in dams
- Concrete basics (types of concrete, strength, placement etc.)
- Benefits and uses of shotcrete
- Bendable concrete
- Water Rights for dummies
- Forum for communicating with FWP and USFS
- More discussion on aquatic invaders and weed control
- Safety in gatehouses (ladders, confined space)
- Hebgen Lake Gate Failure
- State of nation's dam infrastructure
- Consider separate technical session for engineers
- Selecting the right equipment for your construction project (size, load rating, cost)
- Analyzing canal seepage using Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler
- Update on the Saint Mary's project
- Update on the Dodson Dam Rehabilitation project
- Automation of gates, canal measuring devices
- Rehab of remote access dams

If you have expertise in any of the topics and would be willing to do a presentation at next years workshop please give us a call.

National News (source: Association of State Dam Safety Officials)

Storm takes out Washington Dam

The Mill Creek dam burst on Nov. 12, breaking a pedestrian bridge and flooding nearby residential areas. The Department of Ecology determined that dislodged root balls from falling trees collapsed a 3' by 6' section of the dam. No homes were evacuated and no injuries were reported, but up to 12 residences in Cosmopolis may have sustained some flooding. Permanent repairs to the dam won't be made until summer 2009; replacement is an option.

Ruby Dam Rehabilitation

Ruby Dam

A major rehabilitation is proposed for the Ruby River Dam and Reservoir. This state-owned DNRC storage project is located on the Ruby River in Madison County approximately 7 miles south of Alder. The project has been operated by the Ruby River Water Users Association since the dam was built in 1938. The dam was originally constructed by the now defunct State Water Conservation Board, predecessor of the current DNRC State Water Projects Bureau. The State Water Projects Bureau has management oversight of the Ruby Dam, one of 21 state-owned active water storage projects located throughout Montana.

The Ruby Dam is an earthen embankment structure, 111 feet high, 846 feet long with a reinforced concrete chute spillway, a 72-inch diameter slide gate (emergency gate) upstream from a 72-inch butterfly valve (operating gate), a reinforced concrete 90" outlet conduit and a 96-inch diameter concrete dry tower, from which both gates are operated. Storage at full pool (top of the existing flashboards) is 37,642 acre-feet. Two privately owned canals deliver water to purchasers: The West Bench Canal, which is 12 miles long with an 85 cfs capacity; and the Vigilante Canal, which is 26 miles long with a 115 cfs capacity. 149 water users have 219 contracts for 38,845 acre/feet of water. The reservoir is also a popular recreation site.

The spillway condition has been deteriorating for many years. A 1981 Army Corps of Engineers inspection found the spillway capacity inadequate, with the spillway showing serious deterioration. For this reason, the Corps classified the dam as unsafe according to the National Dam Inspection Act standards. The spillway has since deteriorated to the point that replacement of the entire structure is needed.

The proposed rehabilitation calls for the construction of a new spillway that meets all current state dam safety requirements. The existing low level outlet control gate would be removed and the downstream portion of the outlet works conduit slip lined with a steel penstock. A new control gate will be installed on the downstream end of the penstock, and a new outlet terminal structure would be constructed to replace the existing deteriorating structure. Sedimentation has reduced the storage capacity of the reservoir by approximately 2,000 acre-feet. In order to reestablish the original storage capacity, the project would include raising the spillway crest 7 feet above the existing flashboards and raising the dam crest by 4 feet. This would increase the capacity from 37,642 to 45,115 acre-feet, provide an additional 7,473 acre-feet of storage (recovers the 39,850 a/f original water right plus 5,265 acre-feet). The additional 5,265 acre-feet of storage will establish 2,600 acre-feet as the minimum pool for the reservoir for fisheries and recreational uses, and allow 2,665 acre-feet of new water for marketing purposes.

Spillway showing

Benefits from this project include providing water for agricultural irrigation, recreation, fisheries and wildlife habitat and enhanced public safety. The estimated total cost is $12 million dollars. Funding for the project is not yet secured but is being pursued from the 2009 Legislature. Funding sources currently identified include grants, loans and possible private contributions.

For more information see the DNRC State Water Projects Bureau web site at www.dnrc.mt.gov, or call (406) 444-6646.

RRGL Projects continued

Daly Ditches Irrigation District – Hedge Canal Diversion Dam replacement, Ravalli County
At an age of 100+ years, the Hedge Canal Diversion Dam is significantly past its design life of 60 – 75 years. Proposed improvements include the replacement of the diversion dam (using reinforced riprap); the replacement of abutment walls, canal intake structure, and headgates; and installation of a fish screen, fish passage, and a flow measurement device. These improvements are being proposed to occur in two phases.

Deadman's Basin Terminal Outlet Replacement: Wheatland and Golden Valley Counties
Deadman's Basin Water User's Association is proposing an outlet rehabilitation project for 2009 – 2010. The proposed project includes the removal of the outlet structure, extending the conduit, and installing a drainage system alongside the new conduit extension; the construction of a new energy dissipation outlet; and the construction of a 15 foot-high toe berm with a filter blanket drain.

East Bench Irrigation District Sweetwater Seepage Area Canal Lining: Beaverhead County
The East Bench Irrigation District has submitted plans for the design and construction of canal lining in the main irrigation canal for the Sweetwater Seepage Area. The purpose of the lining is to conserve water resources through the reduction of canal seepage, reduce or eliminate property damage to adjacent lands, and increase crop production through maximizing the beneficial use of canal supplied water.

Flathead Joint Board of Control Jocko K Canal Lining: Missoula & Lake Counties
The Flathead Joint Board of Control is proposing a rehabilitation project for the Jocko K Canal below the Jocko K Canal Siphon. This project is being proposed to conserve water resources and reduce/eliminate damage to adjacent lands by reducing canal seepage; to increase in-stream flows available to threatened Bull Trout populations; and to increase crop yields by maximizing the beneficial use of water supplied by current irrigation systems.

Helena Valley Irrigation District Main Canal Lining Project: Lewis & Clark County
The Helena Valley Irrigation District (HVID) is requesting funds for design and construction of canal lining in the main irrigation canal. The goal of the project is to provide the HVID with an irrigation infrastructure improvement that will conserve water resources, decrease seepage to adjacent property, and increase crop yields.

Martinsdale Dam Drain Project: Wheatland County
The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) has submitted plans for rehabilitating the drain system for the Martinsdale Dam. This work is being proposed to allow accurate and safe measurements of flow and sedimentation rates. Excessive seepage and/or sedimentation cannot currently be measured with the existing drain configuration.

Nevada Creek Canal Design and Construction Project: Powell County
Currently the delivery canals at the Nevada Creek Dam are in poor condition. The DNRC is proposing both rehabilitation and new construction to line roughly 2000 feet of the Dougless Canal and to install new drop structures on the North Canal.

Ruby Dam Rehabilitation: Madison County
The DNRC is proposing to bring Ruby Dam into compliance with National Dam Safety standards by replacing the spillway and rehabilitating the outlet works. A dam raise is also planned to recover lost storage capacity from sedimentation. See page 5 for a full account of this proposed project.

Twodot Canal Rehabilitation: Wheatland County
Due to deterioration over time, design deficiencies, and insufficient repairs, the Twodot Canal requires substantial rehabilitation. The Upper Musselshell Water Users propose to stabilize the hillside and stem the loss of water from the system by lining the unstable and pervious section of canal perched above U.S. 12.

Specialized Insurance for Water, Sewer & Irrigation Districts

Montana's Worst Natural Disaster reprinted in part from an article written by Aaron Parrett and published in a 2004 edition of *Montana: The Magazine of Western History*:

"In the second week of June 1964, the worst natural disaster in Montana's recorded history descended on the state in the form of heavy rains that quickly turned picturesque creeks into raging, mile-wide rivers. Dams, roads and railroads washed out, home and ranches were swept away, and thirty people perished. The area affected by the flooding amounted to nearly thirty thousand square miles or roughly 20 percent of the entire state. By Thursday, June 11, President Lyndon Johnson had declared nine counties in northwest and north-central Montana a federal disaster area. When mopping-up operations ended, damages stood at an estimated $62 million."

Have you been thinking about affordable insurance for your special water, irrigation or sewer district? After reading the opening paragraph, have you prioritized your consideration? For years, special districts have relied on Rural Special Districts Insurance Services (RSDIS), a division of Glatfelter Insurance Group, for quality insurance coverage and service. Their mission is simple: they strive to provide their customers with innovative, affordable, and stable products, prompt and considerate claims handling and professional personal service. With more than 3,500 clients nationally, they are recognized as the industry leader.

Property and Casualty coverage for the RSDIS program is underwritten by American Alternative Insurance Corporation (AAIC), an admitted subsidiary of Munich Reinsurance America, Inc. AAIC has an A.M. Best rating of "A" (Excellent) with a "XV" financial size and insurer financial strength rating of "AA-" (Very Strong) from Standard and Poor's.(www.americanalternativeinsurancecorporation.com)

This product is sold and serviced in Montana by Western States Insurance Agency, Dale A. Hanson, Agent, (406) 327-6572 or dahanson@wsi-insurance.com. Hanson grew up on a farm and ranch in north central Montana and he has worked in the Montana agricultural arena for over 35 years. Western States Insurance Agency is proud to be a sustaining affiliate member of the ***Montana Association of Dam and Canal Systems.***

Current Renewable Resource Grant and Loan (RRGL) Applications Before the 2009 Legislature

A total of 89 projects have been recommended for funding under the Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program for the 2009 Legislative Session. We have included a cross-section of interesting rehabilitation projects that are being proposed across Montana. Featured in this issue is the Ruby Dam Rehabilitation Project (page 5).

The Long Range Planning Subcommittee will hold a hearing on this and other grant programs near the end of January. For additional information on this grant program (as well as individual projects), please visit the Governors Executive Budget Fiscal Years 2010 – 2011 Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program, Volume 6, at http://dnrc.mt.gov/cardd/default.asp, or call Bob Fisher at (406) 444-6688.

Bitterroot Irrigation District (BRID) Siphon I: Phase I, Ravalli County
The proposed project addresses repairing 812 linear feet of the 100 year-old "Siphon I." Constructed in 1909, the 5,654 foot Siphon I is still used to transport almost all of the BRID's irrigation water. Additionally, this proposal includes the final design and construction plans for repairing/replacement of the entirety of Siphon I.

Clinton Irrigation District Main Canal Rehabilitation, Missoula County
The Clinton Irrigation District is applying for RRGL funds to assist in the design and rehabilitation for a portion of the district's Main Supply Canal. The proposed project will address issues of irrigation efficiency, water conservation, and crop yields within the district.

Continued on page 4