

**PROGRAM UPDATE**  
to the  
**Water Policy Interim Committee**

**RENEWABLE RESOURCE GRANT AND LOAN  
PROGRAM**

**Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation**

March 7, 2016



WATER POLICY INTERIM  
COMMITTEE 2015-16

March 7, 2016

Exhibit 12

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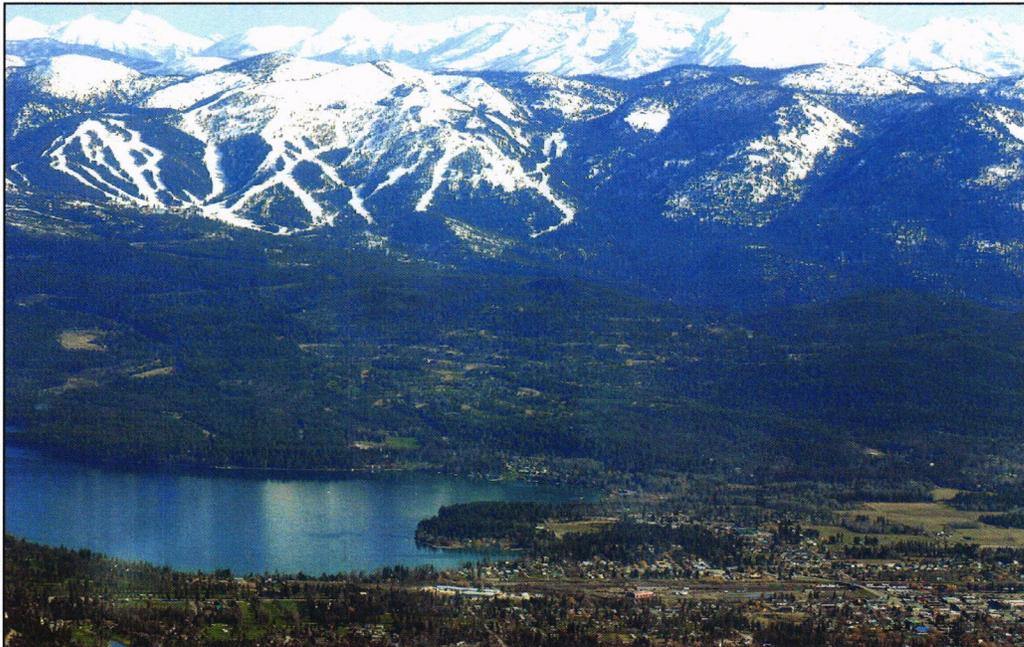
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## INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the current status of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) Renewable Resource Grant and Loan (RRGL) program. The information in this report updates DNRC's 2015 RRGL biennial report. The biennial report is Volume 6 of the Governor's Executive Budget Fiscal Years 2016 – 2017. The biennial report includes summaries of all projects recommended for funding to the 2015 Legislature and a comprehensive description of RRGL program policies and procedures. Volume 6 of the Governor's Executive Budget Fiscal Years 2016 – 2017 is available at the following website: <http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/docs/resource-development/rrgl-program/rrgl2016-2017geb.pdf>

The RRGL program is composed of six grant and two loan programs described in this document and summarized in **Table 1**.



The City of Whitefish received a \$125,000 Renewable Resource Grant to rehabilitate their waste water collection system.

**TABLE 1  
PROJECT FUNDING LIMITS & LEGISLATIVE APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE 2017 BIENNIUM  
RENEWABLE RESOURCE GRANT AND LOAN PROGRAM**

<b>Funding Program</b>	<b>Funding Limits</b>	<b>Eligible Applicants or Loan Recipients</b>	<b>Total Appropriation 2017 Biennium</b>
<b>Grant Programs</b>			<b>House Bill 6</b>
Project Grants	\$125,000	Public Entities	\$ 4,172,615
Planning Grants	\$50,000	Public Entities	\$ 700,000
Emergency Grants	\$30,000	Public Entities	\$ 100,000
Irrigation Development Grants	\$20,000	Public and Private	\$ 200,000
Watershed Grants	\$20,000	Public and Watershed Grps	\$ 300,000
Septic System Loan Grants	\$50,000	Counties	\$ 100,000
<b>Total House Bill 6</b>			<b>\$5,572,615</b>
<b>New and Reauthorized Loans</b>			<b>House Bill 8</b>
Refinance Existing Debt (typically for a better interest rate & shorter loan term)	\$5,000,000	Public entities (infrastructure projects)	HB 8 gives DNRC authority to issue coal severance tax bonds. Funding limits represent DNRC bonding authority. Interest rates for these loans are 4% or rate state bonds are sold whichever is lower.
Deadman's Basin Irrigation Structure Rehabilitation	\$500,000	Montana DNRC on behalf of water user associations	
Cottonwood Flume Rehab	\$800,000		
Wastewater Treatment Lagoon Liner Replacement	\$60,000	Highwood Water/Sewer District	
Wastewater Lagoon Improvements	\$800,000	Yellowstone Boys and Girls Club Water/Sewer District	
Drinking Water Transmission Repair at Beaverhead Crossing	\$50,000	Town of Dillon	
Replace siphon at river crossing	\$1,773,976	Bitter Root Irrigation District	
Regional Water System Infrastructure	\$6,000,000	Dry Prairie Regional Water	
	\$10,000,000	North Central Reg. Wtr.	
Bond Reserve	\$2,418,398	State of Montana	
<b>Total bonding authority House Bill 8</b>			<b>\$27,482,374</b>
			<b>85-1-6, MCA</b>
Loans to Private Individuals	\$ 400,000	Private individuals and business entities	General Obligation Bond Authority up to <b>\$30,000,000</b>
Loans to Private Associations	\$3,000,000	Associations/Groups	

### **RRGL Program Purpose**

The purpose of the RRGL program is to further the state's policies, set forth in Section 85-1-101, MCA, regarding the conservation, preservation, and beneficial use of renewable resources. The goal of the program is to invest in renewable natural resource projects that preserve economic and other benefits of the state's natural heritage for the citizens of Montana.

### **Revenue Sources for Renewable Resource Grants**

The 2007 Legislature established two Natural Resources State Special Revenue Accounts (SSRA): the

Natural Resources Projects SSRA and the Natural Resources Operations SSRA. The Projects SSRA receives revenue to be used exclusively for grants. Funds from this account are shared by the RRGL and the Reclamation and Development Grants programs. The Natural Resources Operations SSRA funds expenses incurred in the administration of these two natural resource grant programs. **Figure 1** is a flow chart summarizing revenue sources for the Natural Resources Projects and Operations SSRAs.

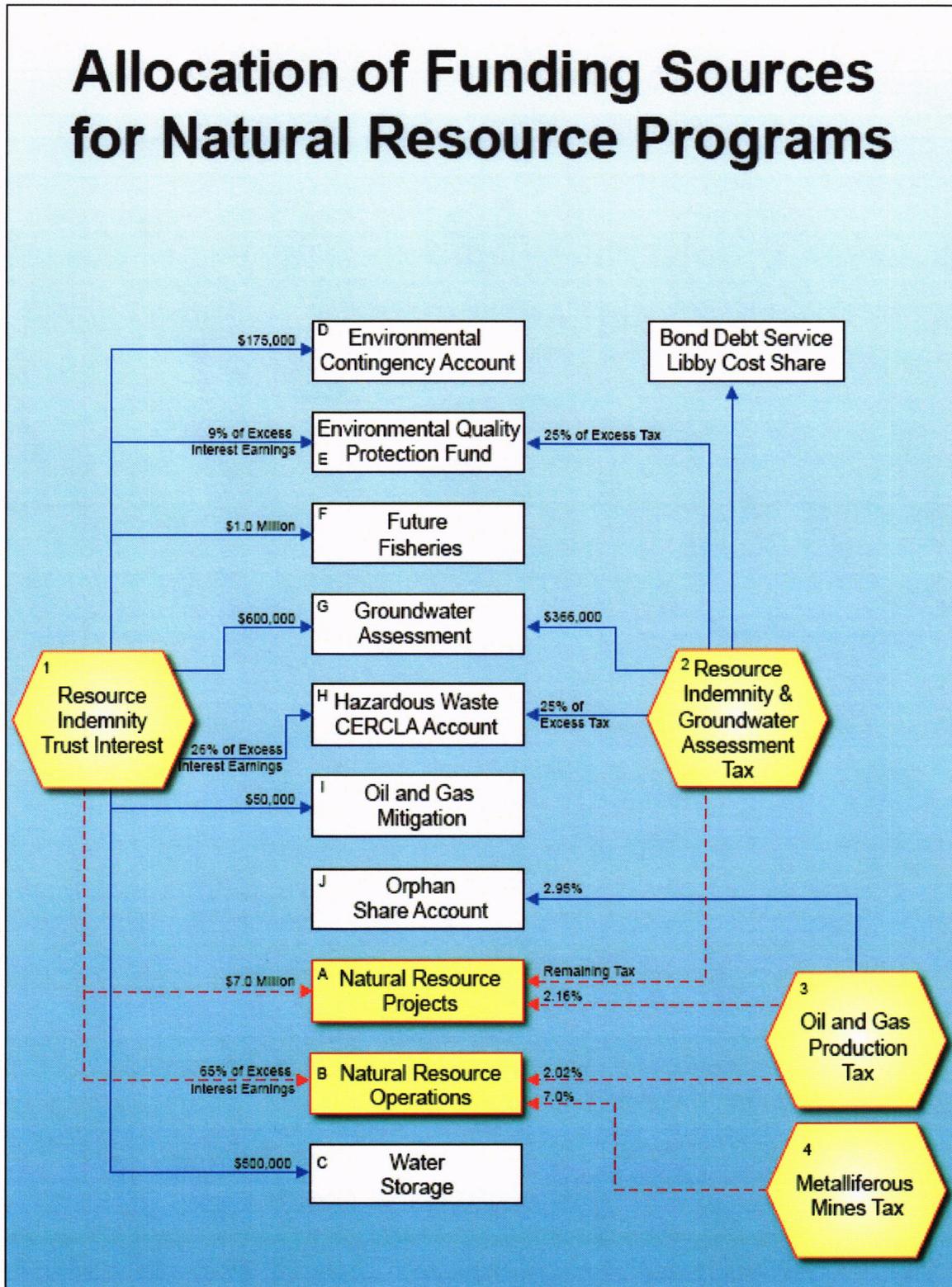
### **Funding Authority for the 2017 Biennium**

The 2015 Legislature appropriated \$5,572,615 in House Bill 6 for renewable resource grants. Of that amount, \$4,172,615 funds 33 project grants in the 2017 biennium. \$700,000 funds planning grants, \$200,000 will fund about 20 irrigation development grants, \$100,000 will fund about 6 emergency grants, \$300,000 will fund about 25 watershed grants \$100,000 will fund septic tank loan programs in 2 counties. The public and private renewable resource loan programs are funded through the issuance of general obligation and coal severance tax bonds. Public loans are authorized in House Bill 8.



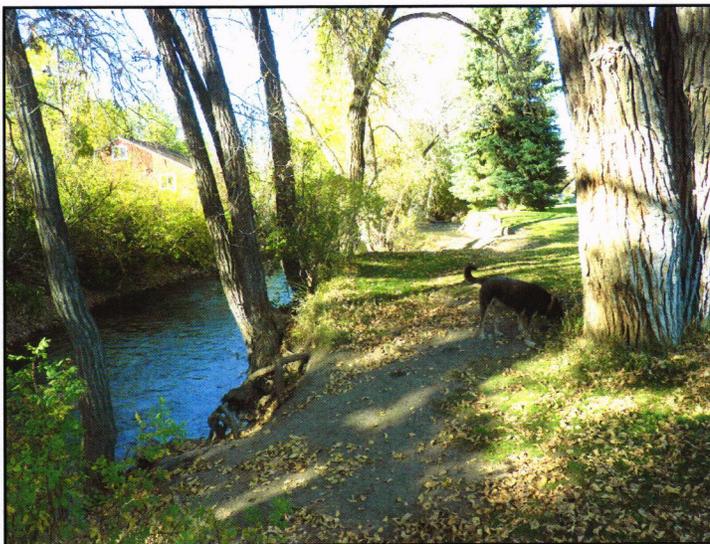
Thompson Falls recently used House Bill 8 authority to refinance existing debt that reduced their interest rate and reduced the remaining term of a drinking water improvement loan.

Figure 1.



### Project Eligibility for Renewable Resource Grants and Loans

Grants and loans are available for projects that conserve, manage, develop, or preserve the state's water, land, vegetation, fish, recreation, and other renewable resources. The majority of projects funded under this program are water resource projects; but forestry, soil conservation, renewable energy, and solid waste projects also have received funding. Project funding is available for construction, research, design, demonstration, and planning. Watershed projects that preserve and improve water quality and projects that help plan for future management and protection of water sources (such as groundwater assessment studies) have received funding in the past.



An RRGL grant supporting restoration of Bozeman Creek at Bogart Park is underway.



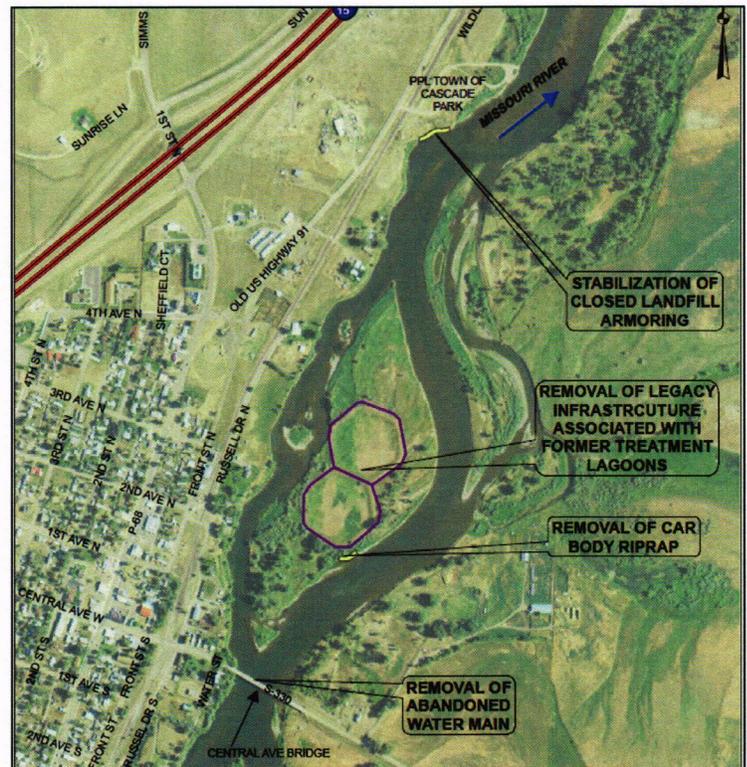
Members of the Bitter Root Irrigation District received a \$125,000 Renewable Resource grant and passed a bond to pay back a \$1.7 million Renewable Resource Loan to replace an ageing siphon and bridge across the Bitterroot River.

## What makes the RRGL Program Different from other Funding Sources?

Compared to other funding programs, Montanan's RRGL program is unique for several reasons.

- Although applicants are encouraged to seek matching funds, DNRC does not require a match for renewable resource grants to public entities.
- Project sponsors that expected additional funding from other sources do not automatically lose their RRGL funding if other funding falls through. This policy helps communities phase large projects in affordable increments.
- RRGL funds both public and private entities.
- About a quarter of RRGL grant funds go toward improving irrigation system infrastructure and water management. Producers, irrigation districts, and water user associations have very few other sources of grant funds.
- The RRGL program allows grants to be spent early in the project. This policy is in place because some grant programs will not allow their grants to be used until the project is underway. This can stall a project for months or years waiting for one grant program to go before another.

The following five sections describe the various renewable resource grant and loan programs.



Cascade received a \$125,000 renewable resource grant to remove abandoned infrastructure that put Missouri River water quality at risk.

## SECTION 1

### RENEWABLE RESOURCE PROJECT GRANTS AND LOANS TO PUBLIC ENTITIES

The DNRC Resource Development Bureau accepts applications for public grants that are submitted or postmarked by May 15 of each even-numbered year. Applications for the current biennium were received May 15, 2014. Because May 15, 2016 falls on a Sunday, applications for the 2019 biennium are due May 16, 2016 and will be considered by the 2017 Legislature. Eligible applicants are registered with the Secretary of State as a public entity and are typically a city, town, county, school district, irrigation district, water and/or sewer district, state agency, university, or conservation district. Grant programs in this category include: project grants, planning grants, and emergency grants.

#### Project Grants

DNRC solicits a wide variety of project applications to maintain the competitive nature of the program (Figure 2). Projects that most closely meet statutory priorities rank the highest and are most likely to rank above the cut-off point for available funding. Projects that do not rank competitively and fall below the projected funding line are less likely to receive legislative approval.

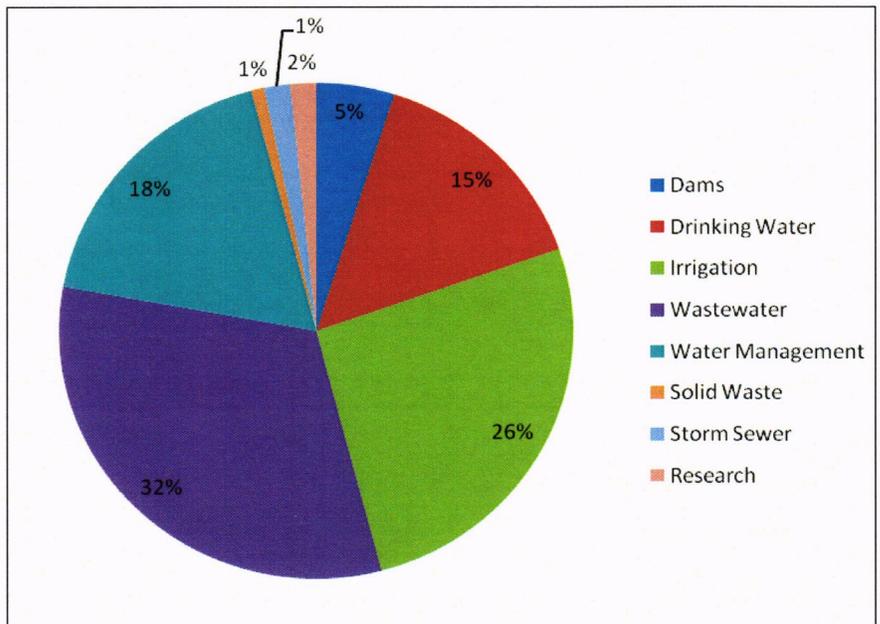


Figure 2. Typical Distribution of Renewable Resource Project Grants

#### Application Review and Ranking

DNRC contracts with engineering and natural resource specialists throughout Montana to review applications for technical and financial feasibility. Many applications are reviewed by other state agencies if a project is in response to a permitting requirement. DNRC also solicits views from local governments and other affected parties to verify public benefit.

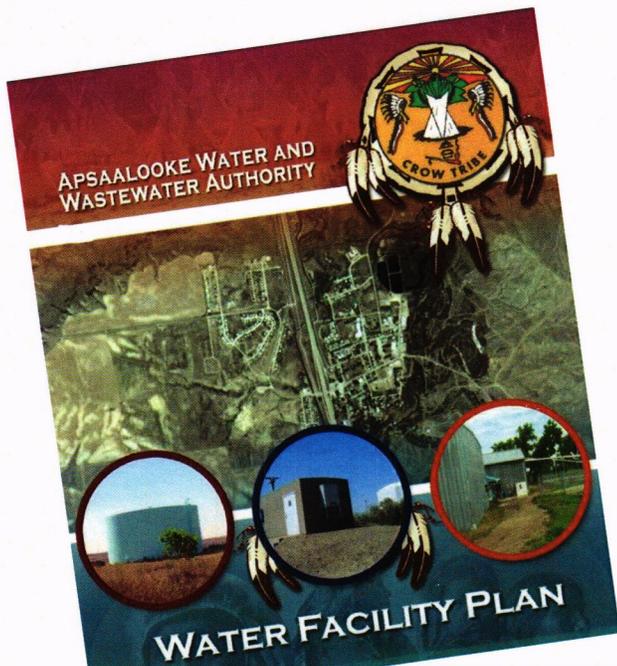
DNRC's scoring and ranking system is used to determine the relative merit of every proposal submitted for grant funding. Each project is scored based primarily on the degree to which a

project will benefit, develop or better manage a renewable resource but also on technical and financial feasibility, and project management ability.

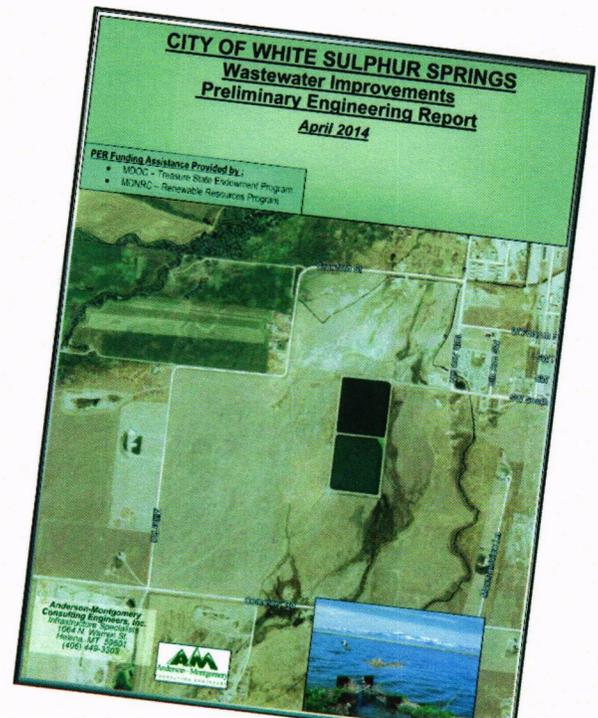
DNRC's recommendation of project rank is not binding. Either the Governor or the Legislature may make adjustments to the recommendations to reflect their assessment of natural resource and other policy priorities. An appropriations bill containing project ranking recommendations (typically House Bill 6) is drafted and introduced to the Legislature. Ultimately, grant funding decisions are made by the Legislature.

### Funding Recommendations

Grant projects recommended for funding during the 2017 biennium are listed in House Bill 6 and summarized on **Table 2** in order of ranking priority.



The Crow Tribe received a \$100,000 RRGL grant as part of a \$3 million project to upgrade a drinking water treatment facility.



White Sulphur Springs received a \$125,000 RRGL grant to upgrade their sewage lagoons.

**TABLE 2**  
**2017 BIENNIUM RENEWABLE RESOURCE PROJECT GRANTS**  
**In order of priority established in House Bill 6**  
(Shaded rows indicate unfunded projects)

<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>GRANT</b>
BITTERROOT CD	SUPPLY DIVERSION IMPROVEMENT PROJECT	\$125,000
WHITEFISH	WHITEFISH INFLOW & INFILTRATION MITIGATION PROJECT	\$125,000
WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS	WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT - PHASE 2	\$125,000
POLSON	WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
LIVINGSTON	WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT UPGRADES	\$125,000
TOWN OF CASCADE	MISSOURI RIVER RECLAMATION	\$125,000
BITTER ROOT ID	SIPHON 1 - PHASE 3 IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT	\$125,000
WESTBY	WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
BAINVILLE	WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
FALLON COUNTY WSD	WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM	\$125,000
SIDNEY	WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT PHASE II	\$125,000
TERRY	WASTEWATER TREATMENT UPGRADES	\$125,000
DNRC-WATER PROJECTS BUREAU	MUSSELSHELL BASIN INSTRUMENTATION PROJECT	\$125,000
PONDERA COUNTY CD	WASTEWAY REHAB AND WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
UPPER AND LOWER RIVER ROAD WSD	PHASE 5 WATER AND SEWER IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
MISSOULA COUNTY	MILL CREEK RESTORATION PROJECT	\$125,000
FLAXVILLE	WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
MILK RIVER JOINT BOARD OF CONTROL	HYDROMETRIC GAUGING STATION EXPANSION AND UPGRADE	\$125,000
MISSOULA	CARAS PARK OUTFALL STORMWATER TREATMENT RETROFIT, PHASE 1	\$125,000
CHESTER	WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
HYSHAM	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
SIMMS SEWER DISTRICT	WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
TEN MILE/PLEASANT VALLEY SEWER DISTRICT	WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS PHASE 3	\$125,000
LAUREL	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
PONDERA COUNTY CD	C-5 CANAL CONVERSION PROJECT	\$125,000
FROMBERG	WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
JEFFERSON COUNTY	WHITEHALL SUGAR BEET ROW WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
SWEET GRASS COUNTY CD	ELECTRIC LIGHT DITCH IRRIGATION DIVERSION REHAB PROJECT	\$125,000

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<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>GRANT</b>
BUTTE-SILVER BOW GOVERNMENT	MOULTON RESERVOIR - RECLAMATION & PROTECTION PROJECT	\$125,000
ROCKER MONTANA COUNTY WSD	SEWER CONNECTION TO TIFID WASTEWATER PIPELINE	\$125,000
TRI-COUNTY WATER DISTRICT	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
NEIHART	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
CUT BANK	WASTEWATER TREATMENT PROJECT	\$125,000
<b>HB 6 RRGL FUNDING LINE</b>	<b>\$4,172,615</b>	
MISSOULA COUNTY	BUENA VISTA TRAILER COMMUNITY WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS PHASE 1	\$125,000
DENTON	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
BUFFALO RAPIDS ID DISTRICT 1	LATERAL 19.3 PIPELINE CONVERSION PROJECT PHASE 1	\$125,000
WINIFRED	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
HIGHWOOD COUNTY WSD	WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
LOWER YELLOWSTONE IRRIGATION PROJECT	WASTEWAY PROJECT	\$65,000
DNRC-WATER PROJECTS BUREAU	EAST FORK ROCK CREEK MAIN CANAL LINING PROJECT	\$125,000
RIVERSIDE WSD	WASTEWATER FACILITY PLAN	\$125,000
LEWISTOWN	RIVERDALE SUBDIVISION WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM	\$125,000
EAST CLARK STREET WSD	WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM	\$125,000
DALY DITCHES ID	PRESERVATION AND CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES	\$125,000
BUFFALO RAPIDS ID DISTRICT 2	MAIN CANAL REHABILITATION	\$125,000
SIDNEY WATER USERS ID	HIGH CANAL PHASE 5 PROJECT	\$125,000
LOWER MUSSELSHELL COUNTY CD	SOUTH CANAL PRE-TUNNEL LINING PROJECT	\$125,000
CLINTON ID	CANAL WASTEWAY REHABILITATION	\$125,000
ROUNDUP	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
MISSOULA COUNTY WEED DISTRICT	MONTANA BIOLOGICAL WEED CONTROL COORDINATION PROJECT	\$100,500
JORDAN	WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
CROW TRIBE OF INDIANS	WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT	\$125,000
HELENA VALLEY ID	IRRIGATION EFFICIENCY AND WATER CONSERVATION PROJECT	\$125,000
FORT SHAW ID	REDUCE WASTE PROJECT	\$125,000

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<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>GRANT</b>
HYSHAM ID	RE-LIFT CANAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT	\$125,000
SOUTH WIND WSD	WATER DISTRIBUTION AND WASTEWATER COLLECTION STUDY	\$125,000
BAINVILLE	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
BLACK EAGLE-CASCADE COUNTY WSD	WASTEWATER COLLECTION SYSTEM REHABILITATION PHASE 2	\$125,000
YELLOWSTONE BOYS AND GIRLS RANCH WSD	WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT	\$125,000
FORT PECK TRIBES	LATERAL L-42M REHABILITATION PROJECT, PHASE 1	\$125,000
TOSTON ID	TOSTON CANAL REHABILITATION PROJECT	\$125,000
HOT SPRINGS	WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT	\$125,000
LOCKWOOD ID	PUMP STATION REHABILITATION	\$125,000
MISSOULA	BUCKHOUSE BRIDGE OUTFALL - STORMWATER TREATMENT RETROFIT	\$125,000
HARLOWTON	PHASE 3 WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
GREENFIELDS ID	J-LAKE REHABILITATION AND WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT	\$125,000
MALTA ID	EXETER SIPHON REPLACEMENT PROJECT	\$125,000
GARFIELD COUNTY CD	LITTLE DRY WATER USER'S ASSOCIATION- INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
GALLATIN COUNTY	SEPTIC SYSTEM REPAIR ASSISTANCE PROGRAM	\$125,000
FLAXVILLE	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
GLASGOW	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
CONRAD	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
MISSOULA ID	WATER CONSERVATION PROJECT	\$125,000
MALTA ID	PEOPLES CREEK DIVERSION DIKE REHABILITATION PROJECT	\$125,000
EAST BENCH ID	MAIN CANAL GATE AUTOMATION	\$125,000
DILLON	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
MEDICINE LAKE	WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
KEVIN	WASTEWATER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT	\$125,000
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	MONTANA TIME OF TRAVEL – INTERACTIVE WEB MAP APPLICATION FOR MONTANA	\$125,000
LIBERTY COUNTY CD	MARIAS RIVER BANK STABILIZATION PROJECT - PHASE 2	\$125,000
FOYS LAKESIDE COUNTY WSD	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
RUBY VALLEY CD	SMITH SLOUGH/SMITH DITCH FISHERIES ENHANCEMENT PROJECT	\$125,000
GREEN MOUNTAIN CD	IMPROVING WATER QUALITY AND FISH HABITAT IN THE VERMILION RIVER WATERSHED	\$120,248

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(Shaded rows indicate unfunded projects)

<b>APPLICANT</b>	<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>GRANT</b>
GLEN LAKE ID	COSTICH DROP REHABILITATION PROJECT	\$125,000
LINCOLN COUNTY	MEASURING AND MODELING SELENIUM AND NITRATE INPUTS TO LAKE KOOCANUSA	\$110,500
PETROLEUM COUNTY CD	MUSSELSHELL WATERSHED PRIORITIZED PROJECTS INITIATIVE	\$125,000
BIG SANDY	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
RAE SUBDIVISION COUNTY WSD NO 313	WOODLAND PARK WELL	\$125,000
JUDITH GAP	PHASE SEWER IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
GORE HILL COUNTY WATER DISTRICT	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
DNRC-FLATHEAD BASIN COMMISSION	FLATHEAD BASIN WATERSHED PLAN	\$125,000
HUNTLEY PROJECT ID	FEASIBILITY STUDY	\$125,000
CROW TRIBE OF INDIANS	RENEWABLE ENERGY TECHNOLOGY WASTEWATER TREATMENT FACILITY	\$117,500
PARK COUNTY CD	UPPER SHIELDS RIVER FISH BARRIER AND ROAD IMPROVEMENTS	\$120,000
BOZEMAN	SOURDOUGH CANYON NATURAL WATER STORAGE ASSESSMENT	\$125,000
DNRC-WATER RESOURCES DIVISION	WILLOW CREEK ACCESS ROAD REHABILITATION PROJECT	\$125,000
SANDERS COUNTY	MIDDLE CLARK FORK RIVER, PLAINS REACH - CHANNEL STABILIZATION	\$125,000
THOMPSON FALLS	WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
SHELBY	STORMWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS	\$125,000
MILE HIGH CD	BLACKTAIL CREEK NON POINT NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT PROJECT	\$125,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$12,484,748</b>

CD = Conservation District  
ID = Irrigation District

WSD = Water and Sewer District  
SD = Sewer District

### **DNRC's Project Management and Oversight**

Procedures for monitoring projects are governed by a grant agreement between DNRC and the project sponsor. Currently the RRGL program consists of 4.5 full-time staff responsible for overseeing about 300 grants at any given time. DNRC grant managers visit projects during the construction phase to spot check for problems or respond to a request for assistance from the project sponsor. Project sponsors are required to document expenses, provide progress reports and a final report. Evaluation through a final project report enables DNRC to measure how well the project implemented the program goals of conserving, developing, managing, and preserving Montana's renewable resources. Projects are considered successful if they complete the scope of work outlined in the grant agreement and meet claims for resource benefits.

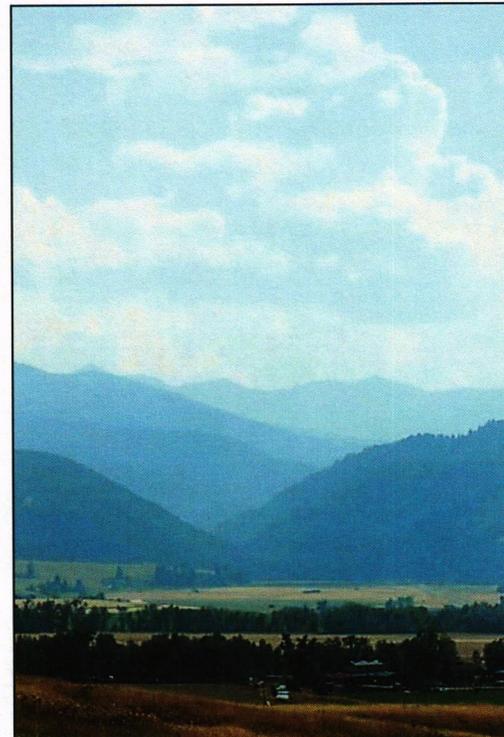
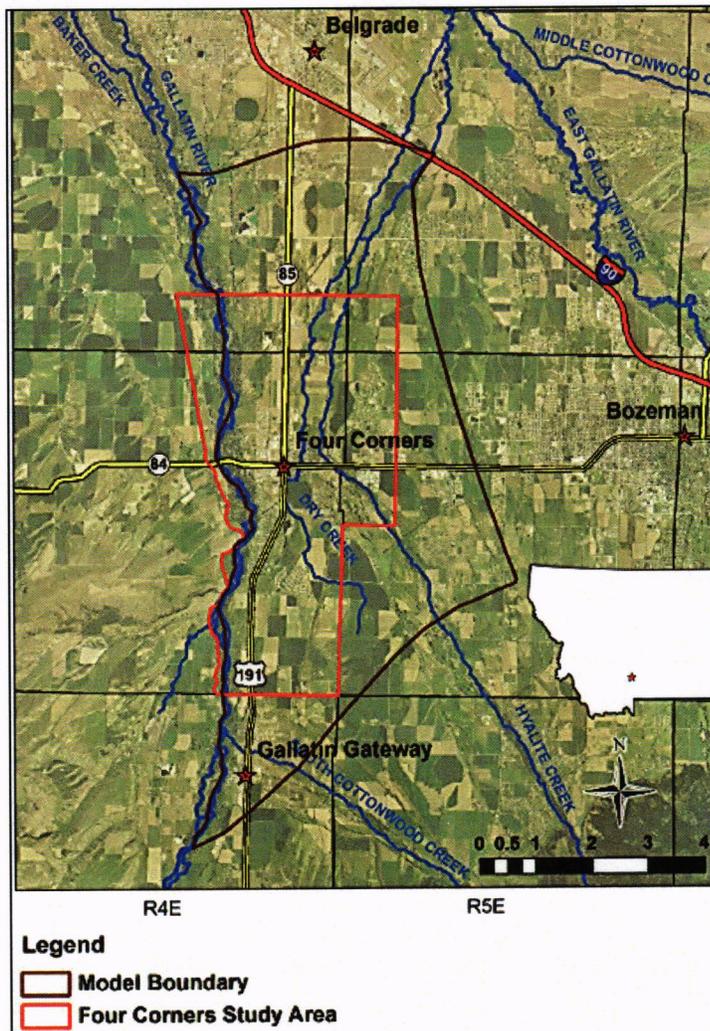


A DNRC Grant manager inspects work on the Mill Lake Dam in Ravalli County. Mill Lake supplies irrigation water to the Mill Creek Irrigation District near Corvallis

## Renewable Resource Project Planning Grants

Renewable Resource Planning Grants fund the planning of projects that will conserve, develop, manage, or protect Montana renewable resources. The 2013 Legislature authorized \$700,000 for planning grants. No match funding is required.

DNRC awarded 90 grants to public entities for planning projects during the 2015 biennium and 67 planning grants in the first eight months of the 2017 biennium (Table 3). Planning grants are typically for amounts between \$5,000 and \$10,000 and used to subsidize a planning effort such as a feasibility study, alternatives analysis, or preparation of a preliminary engineering report for infrastructure projects. This biennium, DNRC offers a limited number of larger planning grants for amounts up to \$50,000. These fund large-scale watershed planning efforts that will lead to a renewable resource project grant application.



The City of Bozeman received a \$50,000 planning grant for a groundwater model to support development of a water bank. A Gallatin Valley water bank would benefit Gallatin Valley irrigators, protect instream flows, and address growing demand for drinking water supplies in Bozeman and the Valley.

The Renewable Resource Planning Grant program helps local governments to better understand and describe their project needs. In 2015, more than half of the applications DNRC received for the larger grants were prepared by communities that used a planning grant.



The Town of Hot Springs received a \$5,000 planning grant to prepare a preliminary engineering report to increase the town’s drinking water supply by installing a new well.

<b>TABLE 3</b> <b>2015 BIENNIUM RENEWABLE RESOURCE PLANNING GRANTS</b> <b>(as of March 1, 2016)</b>			
Name	Project Type	Amount	County
<b>Round 1 (Awarded July 2015)</b>			
ABSAROKEE WSD- PER	Drinking Water	\$5,000	STILLWATER
BIG TIMBER- TECHNICAL REPORT	Drinking Water	\$10,000	SWEET GRASS
CIRCLE- PER	Waste Water	\$10,000	MCCONE
FORT SMITH	Waste Water	\$10,000	BIG HORN
FROID- PER	Waste Water	\$10,000	ROOSEVELT
GRANITE COUNTY-PER	Dam	\$10,000	GRANITE
HELENA VALLEY ID	Irrigation	\$10,000	LEWIS AND CLARK
HUNTLEY PROJECT	Irrigation	\$10,000	YELLOWSTONE
MISSOULA CITY- URBAN CLARK FORK RESTORATION	Water Management	\$50,000	MISSOULA
MISSOULA COUNTY - BONNER	Water Management	\$10,000	MISSOULA
MISSOULA COUNTY- CLARK FORK FLOOD PLAIN	Water Management	\$25,000	MISSOULA
PONDERA CD- PER	Irrigation	\$10,000	PONDERA
RED LODGE	Drinking Water	\$10,000	CARBON
SCOBEY	Drinking Water	\$10,000	DANIELS
SHELBY	Drinking Water	\$10,000	TOOLE
TWIN BRIDGES	Storm Sewer	\$5,000	MADISON
WARD ID	Irrigation	\$10,000	RAVALLI
WORDEN BALLANTINE	Waste Water	\$10,000	YELLOWSTONE

**TABLE 3  
2015 BIENNIUM RENEWABLE RESOURCE PLANNING GRANTS  
(as of March 1, 2016)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Project Type</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>County</b>
<b>Round 2 (Awarded October 2015)</b>			
ABSAROEKE WSD- PER	Drinking Water	\$5,000	STILLWATER
ALBERTON	Drinking Water	\$10,000	MINERAL
CASCADE	Waste Water	\$10,000	CASCADE
CLINTON ID	Irrigation	\$5,000	MISSOULA
CUSTER COUNTY	Floodplain	\$10,000	CUSTER
DENTON	Drinking Water	\$5,000	FERGUS
FLATHEAD CD	Watershed	\$25,000	FLATHEAD
GERALDINE	Waste Water	\$10,000	CHOUTEAU
GLEN LAKE ID	Irrigation	\$5,000	LINCOLN
HELENA VALLEY ID	Irrigation	\$10,000	LEWIS AND CLARK
HILL COUNTY	Waste Water	\$10,000	HILL
HYSHAM ID	Irrigation	\$5,000	TREASURE
BEAVERHEAD JACKSON WSD	Water	\$5,000	BEAVERHEAD
LOCKWOOD ID	Irrigation	\$5,000	YELLOWSTONE
LOWER MUSSELSHELL	Watershed	\$25,000	MUSSELSHELL
LOWER YELLOWSTONE	Irrigation	\$5,000	WIBAUX
MALTA ID	Irrigation	\$5,000	PHILIPS
MEDICINE LAKE	Waste Water	\$10,000	SHERIDAN
SHERIDAN	Water	\$5,000	MADISON
SIDNEY ID	Irrigation	\$10,000	RICHLAND
STILLWATER CD	Irrigation	\$10,000	STILLWATER
TOSTON ID	Irrigation	\$5,000	BROADWATER
VIRGINIA CITY	Water & Wastewater	\$10,000	MADISON
BOZEMAN	Water Management	\$20,000	GALLATIN
<b>Round 3 (Awarded February 2016)</b>			
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>COUNTY</b>
BAKER, CITY OF - PER	Drinking Water	\$10,000	FALLON
BIGFORK COUNTY WSD-PER UPDATE	Drinking Water	\$5,000	FLATHEAD
BROADWATER CD- PER UPDATE	Irrigation	\$5,000	BROADWATER
DUTTON, TOWN OF- PER UPDATE	Drinking Water	\$5,000	TETON
ENNIS, TOWN OF- ADMIN	Drinking Water	\$5,000	MADISON
FORT PECK TRIBES	Irrigation	\$5,000	ROOSEVELT
FORT SHAW ID-ADMIN	Irrigation	\$5,000	CASCADE
GREENFIELDS ID- STUDY	Irrigation	\$10,000	CASCADE
HARLOWTON, CITY OF - PER UPDATE	Drinking Water	\$5,000	WHEATLAND
HEART BUTTE SCHOOL-PER	Drinking Water	\$10,000	PONDERA

**TABLE 3  
2015 BIENNIUM RENEWABLE RESOURCE PLANNING GRANTS  
(as of March 1, 2016)**

Name	Project Type	Amount	County
HOT SPRINGS, TOWN OF-PER UPDATE	Drinking Water	\$5,000	SANDERS
LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY-WS	Floodplain	\$10,000	LEWIS&CLARK
LINCOLN COUNTY- WS	Watershed	\$40,000	LINCOLN
MADISON COUNTY-PER	Water Management	\$10,000	MADISON
MANHATTAN, TOWN OF-PER UPDATE	Waste Water	\$5,000	GALLATIN
MISSOULA COUNTY CD- PER	Irrigation	\$10,000	MISSOULA
PETROLEUM COUNTY CD-STUDY	Water Management	\$10,000	PETROLEUM
RAE SUBDIVISION WSD- TEST WELL	Water Management	\$5,000	GALLATIN
SAND COULEE WATER DISTRICT- STUDY	Water Management	\$10,000	CASCADE
SANDERS COUNTY SD AT PARADISE- PER	Waste Water	\$5,000	SANDERS
SOUTH WIND WSD- PER UPDATE	Water & Wastewater	\$5,000	CASCADE
TIN CUP COUNTY WSD- PER	Irrigation	\$10,000	RAVALLI
WHITEFISH COUNTY WSD- PER	Waste Water	\$5,000	FLATHEAD
WOODS BAY WSD-PER	Drinking Water	<u>\$5,000</u>	FLATHEAD
<b>TOTAL ROUNDS 1, 2, 3</b>		<b>\$650,000</b>	

CD = Conservation District  
 ID = Irrigation District  
 PER = Preliminary Engineering Report

SD = Sewer District  
 WSD = Water and Sewer District



Glen Lake Irrigation District in Lincoln County received a \$5,000 planning grant to prepare a preliminary engineer report for repairs to irrigation conveyance infrastructure.

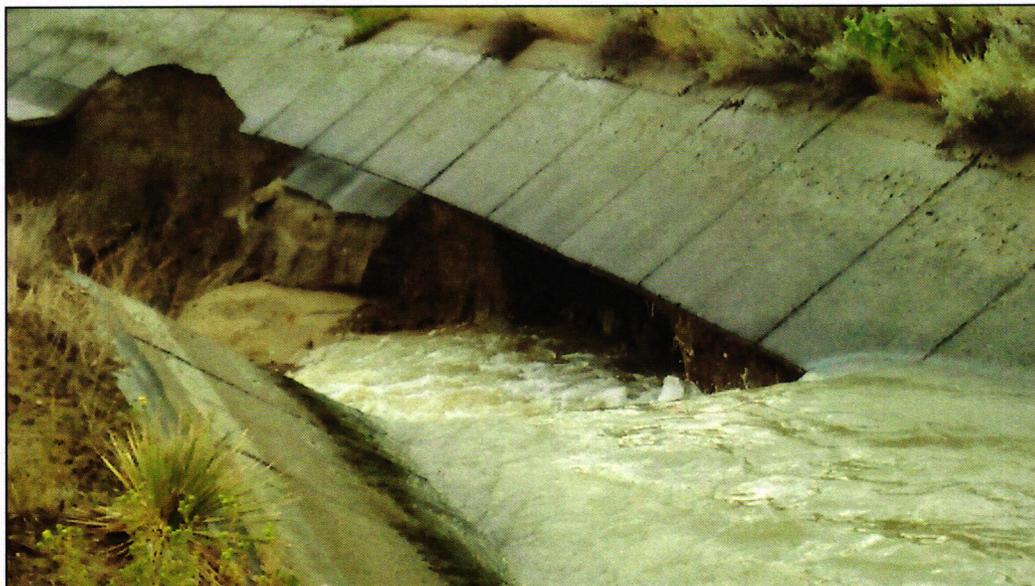
## Renewable Resource Emergency Grants and Loans

Limited funds are also available to help finance projects eligible for renewable resource grants but, if delayed, would result in substantial damages or legal liability for the project sponsor. No application fee is required.

When requesting emergency funds, applicants are required to document the community's financial condition and ability to otherwise pay for the proposed repairs.

The 2015 Legislature authorized \$100,000 in House Bill 6 to fund emergency grants for this biennium. Typically, a grant for an individual emergency project is limited to a maximum of \$30,000. The amount available for emergency loans is \$10,000,000 per biennium. The amount available per loan is based on the applicant's ability to repay the loan. As of February 15, 2016, three 2017 biennium emergency grants have been awarded. **Table 4** shows emergency grants awarded so far during the 2017 biennium.

<b>TABLE 4 RENEWABLE RESOURCE EMERGENCY GRANTS 2017 BIENNIUM as of February 15, 2016)</b>		
<b>PROJECT SPONSOR</b>	<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
<b>FY 2015 - 2016</b>		
YELLOWSTONE IRRIGATION DISTRICT	Canal Failure Emergency Repair Project	\$15,000
TOWN OF PHILLIPSBURG	Water System Emergency Repair	\$20,000
LOWER DEEP CREEK DRAINAGE DISTRICT	Rehabilitation of Lower Deep Creek Drainage Ditch	\$10,000



Yellowstone Irrigation District in Rosebud and Treasure Counties received a \$15,000 emergency grant to repair a failed concrete lined canal.

## SECTION 2 IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

The Irrigation Development Grant (IDG) Program was initiated by the 1999 Legislature to foster development of new irrigation projects and production of high-value crops. Program staff provide financial, technical and legal assistance to government entities and water user associations.

Grants range from \$400 to \$15,000 per project. Project examples include feasibility studies on irrigation system improvements or new irrigation projects, purchase and training for flow monitors to improve irrigation efficiencies and add to instream flows, and agriculture tours to educate producers on new technology.

The Irrigation Development Grant Program has assisted producers and irrigators to develop over 40,000 acres of new irrigation since 2001. Projects funded by this program have played an important role in improving the management and conservation of over 220,000 acres of existing irrigation so that more water is available for all uses.



Jefferson County coupled RRGL project grants with an Irrigation Development Grant to upgrade and repair aging irrigation headgates that contributed to flood risk in Whitehall.

### Project Solicitation and Review

To request funds, applicants are required to describe the project, identify the sources and uses of funding, and provide an implementation schedule. All submitted applications are evaluated for completeness and compliance with the intended purposes of the program. Requests for irrigation development grants funds are reviewed and ranked by DNRC staff. There is more demand than there is available funding every year. **Table 5** lists Irrigation Development Grants awarded in the first 8 months of the 2017 biennium.

<b>TABLE 5 RENEWABLE RESOURCE IRRIGATION DEVELOPMENT GRANTS CONTRACTED FY 2015 - 2016</b>		
<b>PROJECT SPONSOR</b>	<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
FORT SHAW ID	Ramp Flume Construction and Installation	14,000.00
DNRC-WATER RESOURCES DIVISION PROJECTS	Cooney Dam Weir Replacement	10,000.00
HINSDALE PUBLIC SCHOOLS	Farm to Cafeteria - Local Food Project	10,000.00
GREENFIELDS ID	Automation of SR71 Canal Gate	14,000.00
PONDERA COUNTY CD	Flowmeter Purchase	4,000.00
BIG SPRING DITCH CO	Pipeline/Montana Rail Link	20,000.00
LOWER DEEP CREEK DRAINAGE	Ditch Cleaning	17,000.00
HUNTLEY PROJECT ID	Tunnel Study	5,000.00
LOWER YELLOWSTONE IP	Conservation Plan	3,000.00
HELENA VALLEY ID	Conservation Plan	3,000.00
WARD ID	Flow measurement Study	13,822.00
LOCKWOOD ID	Floodplain Study of Intake Canal	5,500.00
MILK RIVER JOINT BOARD	Coordinator St Mary Rehab Working Group	20,000.00
LOWER MUSSELSHELL CD	Ramp Flume Design and Construction	15,000.00
LOWER DEEP CREEK DRAINAGE	Rehabilitation of Drainage Systems	15,000.00
SWEET GRASS CD	McLeod Mutual Ditch Headgate	9,900.00
BROADWATER CD	WaterSmart USBR Grant Application	7,500.00
BUFFALO RAPIDS ID #1	Flow and Volume Meter Upgrades	11,352.00
GREENFIELD ID	Flowmeter and Software Upgrades	7,500.00
JEFFERSON COUNTY	Flow Monitor Equipment Purchase	6,000.00
DEER LODGE VALLEY CD	RWUA ID Master Plan	5,000.00
SIDNEY WATER USERS IRRIGATION DISTRICT	High Canal 2.5 mile to Pipeline Conversion	4,419.00
ID = Irrigation District CD = Conservation District DNRC = Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation USBR = US Bureau of Reclamation		

### SECTION 3 WATERSHED MANAGEMENT GRANTS

The 2015 Legislature initiated a new grant opportunity as part of the Renewable Resource Grant and Loan program. Watershed management grants are available to local governments and nonprofits for planning and management activities that conserve, develop, manage or preserve renewable resources and/or support the implementation and development of the state water plan. These grants help watershed groups develop core capabilities such as staff and board leadership, financial management, fundraising, assessments of resource issues, development of self-sustaining education or outreach project or program, use of technology, and evaluation.

The legislature appropriated \$300,000 to watershed management grants for the biennium. Size of grants range from \$5,000 to \$20,000. Fourteen watershed grants have been awarded since the beginning of the 2017 Biennium. The next watershed grant deadline is April 15, 2016. Awarded grants are listed in **Table 6**.



Flathead County Conservation District and the Flathead Lakers Watershed Group received a \$15,000 Watershed Grant for a nutrient reduction project on Ashley Creek in Flathead County

**TABLE 6  
RENEWABLE RESOURCE WATERSHED GRANTS  
2017 BIENNIUM**

<b>PROJECT SPONSOR</b>	<b>PROJECT TITLE</b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
BEAVERHEAD CD	Beaverhead Watershed Committee Watershed Restoration Plan Update and Drought Management Plan Implementation	\$12,500.00
BIG HOLE WATERSHED COMMITTEE	Big Hole Watershed Drought Management Plan	\$10,000.00
BITTERROOT WATER FORUM	Collaboration Yielding Future Restoration Impact in the Bitter Root Watershed	\$10,000.00
CASCADE CD	Sun River Watershed Group New Direction	\$10,000.00
DEER LODGE VALLEY CD	Watershed Restoration Coalition of the Upper Clark Fork River Basin Restoration Plan Update	\$10,000.00
FLATHEAD CD	Watershed Restoration Plan for Ashley Creek	\$5,000.00
FLATHEAD LAKERS	Flathead Lake Critical Lands and Waters Restoration for Ashley Creek and Flathead River	\$10,000.00
GRANITE HEADWATERS WATERSHED COUNCIL	Strategic Planning & Partnership Development for Flint Creek	\$12,500.00
GREATER GALLATIN WATERSHED COUNCIL	Water Restoration Plan Project Development, host a Big Sky Watershed member	\$5,000.00
LOLO WATERSHED GROUP	Lolo Creek Watershed Capacity Building Through Stakeholder Collaboration	\$10,000.00
MADISON CD	Madison River Watershed Restoration Plan	\$15,000.00
MONTANA AQUATIC RESOURCES SERVICES	Program and project support for Yellowstone River Channel Migration Easements	\$10,000.00
NORTH POWELL CD	Blackfoot Challenge Integrated Water and Land Stewardship for the Blackfoot River Watershed	\$10,000.00
PETROLEUM COUNTY CD	Implementation of the Musselshell Watershed Coalition Plan	\$20,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$150,000.00</b>



Petroleum County Conservation District received a \$20,000 Watershed Grant to support efforts of the Musselshell Watershed Coalition. The Coalition is composed of 4 conservation districts and 3 ditch companies and will use the funds to address the highest priorities of their watershed management plan.

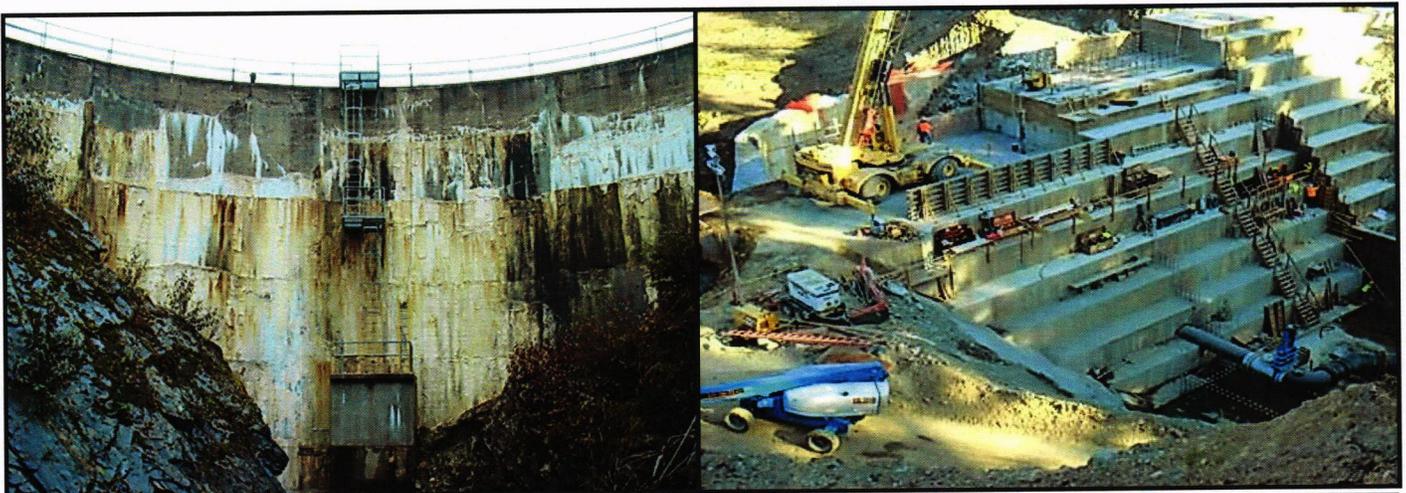
## SECTION 4 LOANS TO PUBLIC ENTITIES

The Resource Development Bureau also accepts applications for public loans at the same time grant applications are due for RRGL project grants. These loans are funded with proceeds from the sale of coal severance tax secured bonds and frequently are offered at a subsidized interest rate.

### **Application Review**

The RRGL team follows the same methodical review process for the project grants described in Section 1 with the exception of comparative ranking. DNRC assigns a favorable funding recommendation to all feasible public loan applications that are eligible for funding. The DNRC recommendation includes the amount of financing needed to meet project and financing expenses and a suggested interest rate. There is no maximum allowable loan amount. Public loans are limited to the amount an applicant has the ability to repay under the standard repayment terms and by the bonding capacity of DNRC.

The interest rate on coal severance tax loans is determined by the bond market at the time coal severance tax bonds are sold. The rate of interest on most loans from the program will vary in accordance with the rate on the State coal severance tax bonds. The basic rate of interest for each public loan financed from the proceeds of a single bond issue is the same. Subsidies may vary depending on legislative authorization.



In addition to a federal grant, the City of Libby coupled an \$800,000 RRGL loan with a \$100,000 RRGL grant to rebuild the Flower Creek Dam. Flower Creek Reservoir stores the drinking water supply for the Town of Libby. The project was recently completed in less than two years.

## Project Management

After a public loan is authorized by the Legislature and the project sponsor is ready to secure financing, DNRC performs a more thorough review of the applicant's ability to repay the loan. If the borrower provides documentation of the ability to repay a loan and all legal requirements to incur debt are met, a bond purchase agreement is prepared and executed. The agreement includes specific requirements and covenants with respect to a project or improvements to the project being financed. Borrowers must acquire all property rights necessary for the project, including water rights, rights-of-way, and interest in land needed for a project's construction, operation, and maintenance. As appropriate, these and other stipulations also are contained in a bond resolution.

Active Renewable Resource loans to public entities are presented in **Table 7**. Loans authorized by the 2013 Legislature are listed in **Table 1**.

<b>TABLE 7 RENEWABLE RESOURCE ACTIVE LOANS TO PUBLIC ENTITIES as of February 15, 2016</b>	
<b>GOVERNMENT ENTITY – BORROWER</b>	<b>LOAN BALANCE</b>
BEAVERHEAD COUNTY/RED ROCK WATER & SEWER DISTRICT	\$ 727,766
BITTERROOT IRRIGATION DISTRICT	\$ 389,269
BRADY COUNTY WATER & SEWER DISTRICT	\$ 120,373
BRIDGER, TOWN OF	\$ 81,270
BRIDGER PINES WATER & SEWER DISTRICT	\$ 1,086,301
BROADWATER POWER PROJECT	\$ 3,155,000
BUFFALO RAPIDS IRRIGATION DISTRICT	\$ 418,243
DALY DITCHES IRRIGATION DISTRICT	\$ 114,228
DALY DITCHES IRRIGATION DISTRICT	\$ 271,286
DNRC/STATE WATER PROJECTS BUREAU	
ACHLEY LAKE DAM REHABILITATION	\$ 124,405
BAIR DAM	\$ 334,563
COTTONWOOD, MIDDLE CREEK WUA	\$ 773,135
DEADMAN'S BASIN WUA	\$ 30,695
DEADMAN'S BASIN WUA	\$ 297,829
DEADMAN'S BASIN WUA	\$ 483,209
EAST FORK ROCK CREEK DAM	\$ 100,000
EAST FORK SIPHON	\$ 165,562
MARTINSDALE RESERVIOR	\$ 59,005
NEVADA CREEK DAM REHABILITATION	\$ 198,343

**TABLE 7**  
**RENEWABLE RESOURCE ACTIVE LOANS TO PUBLIC ENTITIES**  
as of February 15, 2016

<b>GOVERNMENT ENTITY – BORROWER</b>	<b>LOAN BALANCE</b>
NORTH FORK OF THE SMITH RIVER	\$ 237,165
PETROLIA DAM	\$ 54,286
RUBY DAM REHABILITATION	\$ 1,789,072
RUBY RIVER WATER USERS ASSN	\$ 1,571,783
RUBY RIVER WATER USERS ASSN	\$ 2,707,299
TOSTON DAM	\$ 1,727,396
EAST BENCH IRRIGATION DISTRICT	\$ 56,591
FAIRFIELD, TOWN OF	\$ 54,203
FORT BENTON, CITY OF	\$ 94,553
FOUR CORNERS COUNTY WATER SEWER DISTRICT	\$ 3,060,000
HUNTLEY IRRIGATION DISTRICT 1	\$ 102,084
HUNTLEY IRRIGATION DISTRICT 2	\$ 93,127
HUNTLEY IRRIGATION DISTRICT 3	\$ 8,532
HUNTLEY IRRIGATION DISTRICT 4	\$ 23,312
HYSHAM, TOWN OF	\$ 23,180
LIBBY, CITY OF	\$ 229,140
LIBBY, FLOWER CREEK DAM	\$ 739,693
LOCKWOOD WATER & SEWER DISTRICT	\$ 643,544
MALTA IRRIGATION DISTRICT	\$ 896,444
MANHATTAN, TOWN OF	\$ 1,003,322
MILL CREEK IRRIGATION DISTRICT	\$ 396,628
MILL CREEK WATER & SEWER DISTRICT	\$ 108,221
ST IGNATIUS, TOWN OF	\$ 154,770
SUNBURST, TOWN OF	\$ 33,126
SUNBURST, TOWN OF	\$ 221,098
THOMPSON FALLS, CITY OF	\$ 186,120
TIN CUP WATER DISTRICT	\$ 38,758
TONGUE RIVER	\$ 6,374,359
TROY, CITY OF	\$ 1,872,698
	<b>\$ 33,430,985</b>

## SECTION 5 GRANTS AND LOANS TO PRIVATE ENTITIES

According to the Montana Constitution, the Legislature may not appropriate funds to private individuals. However, State entities have the authority to distribute public funds to private individuals. The Legislature made provisions in Statute to provide renewable grants and loans to nongovernment entities.

Water-related projects conducted by an individual, association, for-profit corporation, or not-for-profit corporation, may be funded by a private renewable resource grant or loan. Non-government projects must have quantifiable benefits that will exceed costs and provide public benefits in addition to private benefits. Private grants must be matched by 75% of project costs.

DNRC reviews and screens grant requests to determine whether the proposed projects are technically feasible. Grant funding for any project may not exceed 25% of the total cost of the project or \$5,000 whichever is the lowest amount.

### Private Grant Activity

In the period from January 2014 to February 15, 2016, DNRC awarded 33 private grants in calendar primarily for individual septic system projects that protect groundwater, for water development projects and dam safety inspections.



Rattlesnake Reservoir & Water Company received a \$5,000 private grant to offset the cost of a dam rehabilitation project.

## Renewable Resource Loans to Private Individuals and Groups

Renewable resource loans to private entities became available in 1981 when the Legislature earmarked \$350,000 under the former Renewable Resource Development program to finance loans to private individuals. At the same time, DNRC was given the authority to issue general obligation bonds to finance private loans. Loans to private individuals must promote and advance the beneficial use of water and allow Montana citizens to fully use State waters.



Projects must be technically and economically feasible, and must pay for themselves over the life of the installation through water savings, increased crop production, or other measurable benefits. Applications that meet feasibility and eligibility criteria are funded if the applicant demonstrates the ability to repay the loan. Most DNRC private loans go to producers to convert from flood to sprinkler irrigation.

The maximum loan amount allowable for private individuals under the RRGL is \$400,000. Water user associations may borrow up to \$3,000,000 based on ability to pay. Loans are for a term not longer than either 30 years or the estimated useful life of the equipment purchased or materials installed. For new irrigation equipment, the allowable term is 15 years; for used irrigation equipment, the term usually is 10 years or shorter.

The rate of interest on the State's general obligation bond determines the interest rate for private loans. The basic rate for private loans has typically varied from 4.03% to 9.5 %. In fiscal year 2014, the program has delivered a lower rate of 3.3%.

Borrowers must acquire all property rights necessary for the project, including rights-of-way and interest in land needed for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the project. Title insurance, a title opinion or other documents showing the ownership of the land, mortgages, encumbrances, or other liens must be provided to DNRC. Loans must be secured with real property valued higher than the loan amount requested.

As of February 15, 2016, about 525 private loans have been approved and about \$50 million has been advanced since the beginning of the program. In Fiscal Years 2015 and 2016 (to date), DNRC approved 8 private loans (**Table 9**). Loans are typically used to finance new and refurbished irrigation systems to increase irrigation efficiencies, drill irrigation wells, and refurbish private drinking water systems.

<b>TABLE 8</b>		
<b>PRIVATE LOANS AUTHORIZED FISCAL YEARS 2015 AND 2016 (to date)</b>		
<b>CONTRACT NUMBER</b>	<b>LOCATION BY COUNTY</b>	<b>LOAN AMOUNT</b>
WDL 14-3664	TETON	\$95,000.00
WDL 14-3665	TETON	\$101,702.00
WDL 14-3667	TETON	\$80,000.00
WDL 15-3669	TETON	\$103,886.00
WDL 15-3672	TETON	\$95,224.00
WDL 16-3673	TETON	\$158,000.00
WDL 16-3677	TETON	\$161,923.00
WDL 16-3678	BEAVERHEAD	\$400,000.00
WDL 16-3680	DAWSON	\$290,750.00
WDL 16-3681	LAKE	\$45,609.00
TOTAL		\$1,532,094.00

## SECTION 6

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Volume 6 of the Governor's Executive Budget Fiscal Years 2016 – 2017 includes summaries of each project recommended for funding to the 2015 Legislature and contains a comprehensive description of RRGL program policies and procedures. It is available at the following website:  
<http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/docs/resource-development/rrgl-program/rrgl2016-2017geb.pdf>

Every grant program under the Renewable Resource Grant and Loan umbrella has an application and guidelines for applicants. These are available by contacting the Resource Development Bureau and at the following website:  
<http://dnrc.mt.gov/grants-and-loans>

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