

NEW SECTION. Section 1. Surface water assessment and monitoring program steering committee. (1)

There is a surface water assessment and monitoring program established in the montana bureau of mines and geology as provided in [yyyyyy].

(2) There is a steering committee consisting of an employee of each of the following state agencies that have responsibility for surface water protection, management, or information who is appointed by the head of the respective state agency:

(a) the department of natural resources and conservation;

(b) the department of environmental quality;

(c) the department of agriculture; and

(d) the Montana state library, natural resource information system.

(2)(a) The committee may include representatives of the following agencies and units of government with expertise or management responsibility related to surface water:

(i) the legislative services division;

(ii) the board of oil and gas conservation;

(iii) the Montana bureau of mines and geology;

(iv) a unit of the university system, other than the Montana bureau of mines and geology, appointed by the board of regents of higher education for the Montana university system;

(v) a county government, appointed by an organization of Montana counties;

(vi) a city, town, or city-county government, appointed by an organization of Montana cities and towns;

(vii) each principal federal agency that has responsibility for surface water protection, management, or research, appointed by the Montana head of the respective federal agency;
and

(b) The committee may include one representative of each of the following organizations and groups, appointed by the governor, to serve as ex officio members:

(i) agricultural water users;

(ii) industrial water users;

(iii) a conservation or ecological protection organization; and

(iv) the development community.

(3) The surface water assessment and monitoring program steering committee shall elect a presiding officer from its voting members.

(4) ~~The department of natural resources and conservation and the~~ Montana bureau of mines and geology shall provide staff support to the committee.

(5) The surface water assessment and monitoring program steering committee shall:

(a) oversee expenditures from the surface water assessment and monitoring program account and organization plans and work plans proposed by the ~~department of natural resources and conservation and the~~ Montana bureau of mines and geology;

(b) approve surface water monitoring sites;

(c) develop plans for surface water information management and dissemination;

(d) coordinate surface water information collection projects sponsored by individual units of state, federal, or local government with the surface water assessment and monitoring program; and

(e) evaluate reports and other information produced by the department of natural resources and conservation and the Montana bureau of mines and geology.

Surface Water Assessment and Monitoring program -- advisory committee. (1) The Montana bureau of mines and geology shall develop and implement a surface water assessment and monitoring program for the purpose of collecting and compiling surface water data. The program shall gather data, compile existing information, conduct field studies, and prepare a detailed hydrogeologic assessment report for each subbasin. The program shall develop a monitoring plan and a hydrogeologic model for each subbasin for which a report is prepared.

(2) The surface water assessment and monitoring steering committee, established by [LCwp10], shall prioritize subbasins for investigation based upon current and anticipated growth of agriculture, industry, housing, and commercial activity. Permit applications for the development of surface water or ground water and the timing of adjudication of water rights may be taken into account in prioritizing subbasins.