

DEQ Public Water Supply Update
June 12, 2003

SURFACE WATER SUPPLIES

- *Butte-Silver Bow* – All three watersheds serving Butte have above-average snow pack this year. The Basin Creek Reservoir is already full, and the Moulton Reservoir is expected to fill. The Big Hole River is also doing very well. Rationing may still be implemented later this summer if conditions require it, but the outlook at the moment is bright.
- *Cedar Park Water District, Billings* - Cedar Park Water District has finally connected to the City of Billings water system.
- *City of Conrad* – The City's water source, Lake Francis, is at the highest level in about 10 years. The City and a local irrigation company are still pursuing a long-term solution that will include an extended intake to improve the water supply during drought. The near-term water supply outlook for this year is very good.
- *Town of Melstone* - Melstone hopes to construct a new deep well that would provide a more reliable source of water during drought. Such a well water could require extensive treatment before it could be used, however. Melstone has retained an engineer to design the necessary improvements and to seek funding. The outlook for the Musselshell River and Deadman's Basin is improving this year, but Melstone plans to proceed regardless of whether the precipitation/runoff situation improves. Melstone also has dammed a section of the river just downstream of the intake. The dam slows the flow of water past their intake so that they can have some reserve. The town has kept the storage reservoirs full and has done a great job at keeping things running in these times of drought. DEQ & DNRC continue to provide assistance as needed.
- *Milk River* – Fresno Reservoir is full and communities that obtain water from the Milk River (Hill County, North Havre, Havre, Chinook, Harlem) are faring well.

GROUNDWATER SUPPLIES

- *Galata Water District* – A USBOR grant was utilized to rehabilitate a failing well. Construction is complete.
- *Town of Geraldine* - Geraldine obtained grants from DNRC and the US BOR, and has completed rehabilitation of their deep well. The water supply has been increased from about 15 gpm to 75 gpm.

- *Roy Water & Sewer District* - The District has secured grant assistance from the USBOR to make improvements to their water supply. Roy has completed a new deep well and should be much more immune to drought in the future.
- *Sage Creek Colony* – A new well has been constructed that improved flow by about 10 gpm. Grant funding from the USBOR was utilized.
- *Town of Big Sandy* - Big Sandy is still looking for more groundwater. A well drilled last winter may not produce enough water to augment the long-term needs of the community. Because the Rocky Boys/North Central MT rural water system has been authorized, Big Sandy's long-term needs will likely be met by future connection to this system.
- *Helena Valley* - Approximately 50 wells have either gone dry or suffered severe draw down during the past several years, but water levels stabilized and even improved in some areas last summer. However, 3 wells serving Eastgate Subdivision, a large subdivision in the east valley, began pumping air recently and were shut down. The Eastgate Water Users Association plans to drill a new well to replace these wells.
- *Fairhaven Colony, Cascade Colony* – A shallow well is drying up and the colony wants to replace it with a deep well source. DEQ and the Cascade County Health Dept. are working with the colony.
- *Pine Creek School, Park Co. (Paradise Valley)* – The school well dried up this winter, and DNRC has provided funding to help them construct a new source.
- *Ulm School, Cascade Co.* – The school well dried up last summer. A deeper well is planned. DEQ is working with the school and their consultant to obtain approval for a new well.