

From: donotreply@mt.gov
To: LEGCmte-WPICcomment@mt.gov
Subject: Public Comment for WPIC
Date: Monday, September 19, 2022 10:06:30 AM

Public Comments for the Water Policy Interim Committee

Date: 19th September 2022 10:06

First Name:

Monte

Last Name:

Giese

Email Address:

moandjegiese@gmail.com

Subject:

Post-final decree system of judicial administration of water rights

Comment:

I live on the lower Teton River and have been actively involved in all of the organizations that were established to facilitate representation for the recent adjudication, such as Lower Teton Water Users and Lower Teton River Improvement District. We spent 10 years, thousands of man-hours and hundreds of thousands of dollars to work through the adjudication and memorialize our senior rights on the Teton. With the conclusion of the adjudication several years ago, we shifted to the administration of the river, and established a system that has worked well over the past 4 years. The system has a Chief Water Commissioner and a number of zonal water commissioners. The Teton River basin is complex. Lower users have spent decades analyzing and assessing the system, first as part of the adjudication process and then as part of the administration. The basin's commissioners are generally also very familiar with the system because of their involvement in agriculture or in the administration of water rights in the basin. These commissioners understand the system and have awareness of the DNRC's extensive work on the Teton River Basin, which has allowed them to administer water in a way that accomplishes the goal of fair administration based on the priority system. The Lower Teton Water Users (which represents 25 downstream users) concerns can be summed up in an old adage: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." The current system, while not perfect, has worked well in some very challenging years, including 2022. Our concern is that if administration is taken away from local commissioners then we would lose those decades of understanding of the system and start from square one with educating a whole new group who may not have the local knowledge required. I'm happy to discuss further and can be reached via email (moandjegiese@gmail.com) or on my cell phone (406) 868.3473. Best- Monte

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From: donotreply@mt.gov
To: LEGCmte-WPICcomment@mt.gov
Subject: Public Comment for WPIC
Date: Monday, September 19, 2022 3:26:49 PM

Public Comments for the Water Policy Interim Committee

Date: 19th September 2022 15:26

First Name:
Megan

Last Name:
Lee

Email Address:
meglee82@yahoo.com

Subject:
Water Court

Comment:

The proposed changes to the Water Court are very concerning. By all measure, the water work that has been done in Montana has been done very well and by my understanding there are very few cases that have ended up in litigation in the district courts. Most Montana's in agriculture and water use know, don't mess with something if it is working. These are local issues and as so should be addressed at the local level. A governor appointed water commissioner politicizes a process that should not be politicized. This also has the appearance of setting up water to benefit larger municipalities and companies over the traditional agricultural use. We strongly oppose any significant changes to how water is governed and strongly recommend that we stay the course that has been working. Thank you.

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From: donotreply@mt.gov
To: LEGCmte-WPICcomment@mt.gov
Subject: Public Comment for WPIC
Date: Tuesday, September 20, 2022 8:29:14 AM

Public Comments for the Water Policy Interim Committee

Date: 20th September 2022 08:29

First Name:

Clay

Last Name:

Crawford

Email Address:

jonredland@gmail.com

Subject:

State wide takeover to over see water rights

Comment:

There has never been anything good come from taking over something that is over seen locally. Every water district has it's unique challenges and problems. A centralized water court to over see every district can not know and understand every district's specific challenges. Taking over every district would be a mistake not to mention a broad over reach of power and would not benefit water users and their water rights

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