



GROUND WATER ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology

CHARACTERIZING MONTANA'S AQUIFERS

The Ground Water Assessment Program (GWAP), established by the 1991 Legislature, is tasked to improve the understanding of Montana's groundwater resources by collecting, interpreting, and disseminating essential groundwater information. This information is vital for making science based management decisions.

Ground Water Assessment Act (85-2-902 MCA) "Findings and Purpose"

- "Montana's citizens depend on groundwater..."
- "groundwater supplies are threatened..."
- "there is insufficient information characterizing..."
- "groundwater information deficiencies are hampering..."
- "...focus on preventing groundwater contamination...but better ground water information is required"
- "there is a need for better coordination among those numerous units of state, federal, and local government..."

Program Components:

1. Ground Water Monitoring: to produce and maintain long-term water-level and water-quality records,
2. Ground Water Characterization: to systematically assess and document the hydrogeology and quality of the state's major aquifers,
3. Ground Water Information Center (GWIC): to make groundwater information widely available.

Program Oversight:

An interagency Steering Committee selects study areas, coordinates groundwater research among state, federal, and local government units, and oversees Assessment Program progress.



Voting Members (by statute):

Department of Natural Resources
 Department of Environmental Quality
 Department of Agriculture
 Montana State Library

Ex Officio Members (Governor Appointees):

Agricultural water users
 Industrial water users
 Conservation or ecological organization
 Development community

Other:

MT University System, Legislative Services Division, Board of Oil and Gas Conservation, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Program Funding:

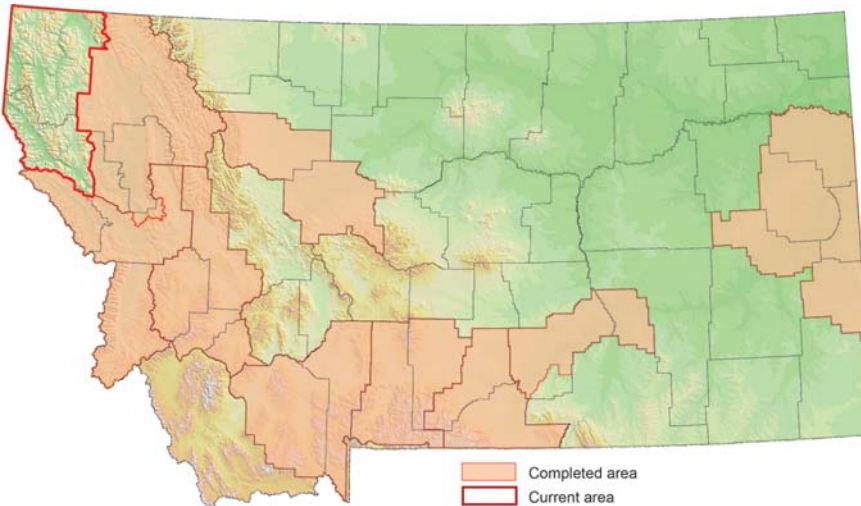
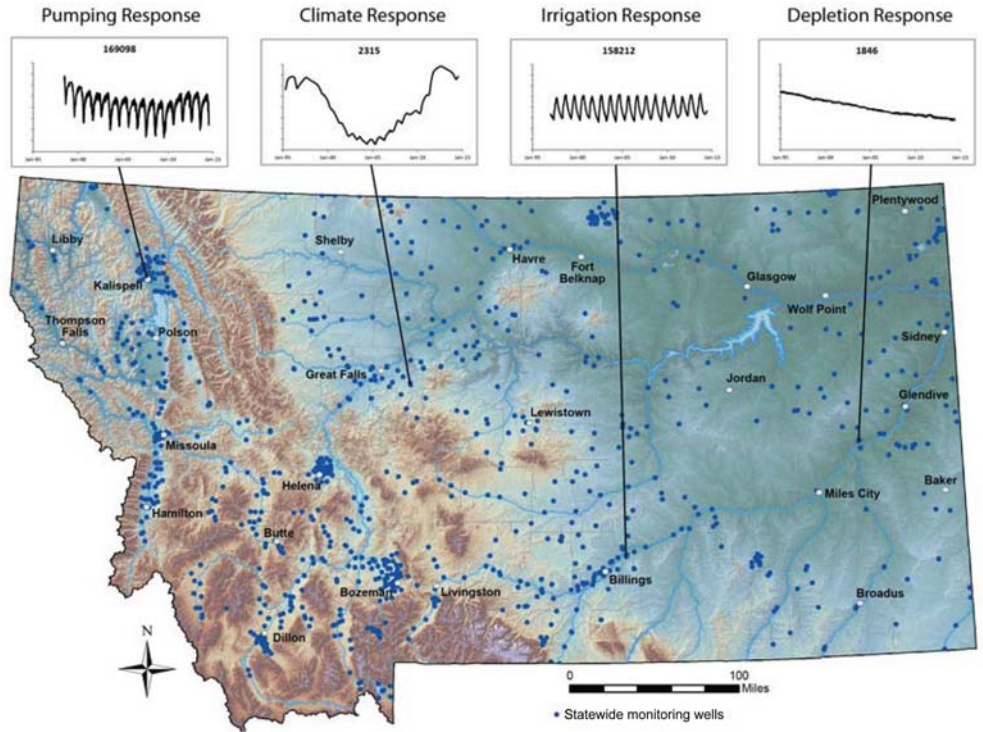
\$300,000	from RIT interest (MCA 15-38-202)
\$366,000	from RIGWAT proceeds (MCA 15-38-106)
<u>\$248,968</u>	from the Natural Resources Operations (NRO) account
<u>\$914,968</u>	TOTAL HB2 Appropriation

Ground Water Monitoring

Collecting Baseline Water-Quality and Water-Level Data

Long-term data collection from 900+ strategically located wells provides the data necessary to track changes in water levels and water quality in Montana's major aquifers.

All data, maps, and reports are available at no charge from the GWIC database.



Characterization Program

Compiling information on Montana's groundwater resources

- Fieldwork complete in 9 areas (26 counties)
- High-quality data from more than 9,400 wells
- Groundwater samples from more than 3,200 wells
- Released 78 maps and reports describing groundwater conditions

Ground Water Information Center—GWIC

Montana's official repository for groundwater information

- Data and other information are available online
- Well logs, water-quality and water-level data, hydrographs, maps, and reports are stored in the database and can be accessed online at no charge. New capabilities include an interactive web mapping application.

