

SUBCOMMITTEE F PUBLIC COMMENT

FRIDAY 1/22/2021

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: WET

Name: John Babcock

Email: jbabcock@waterenvtech.com

Phone: (406) 490-4570

City, State: Butte, MT

Written Statement: Attending as informational witness.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: No

Zoom Method: N/A

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: WET

Name: John Babcock

Email: jbabcock@waterenvtech.com

Phone: (406) 490-4570

City, State: Butte, MT

Written Statement: Attending as informational witness.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: No

Zoom Method: N/A

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Ackley Lake Water Users Association

Name: Mark McNearney

Email: mmcnearney@mt.gov

Phone: (406) 444-6693

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-14: Long-Range Building Bonding Program 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: MT DOR-Alcoholic Beverage Control
Name: Becky Schlauch
Email: becky.schlauch@mt.gov
Phone: (406) 465-5367
City, State: Seeley Lake, MT
Written Statement: informational on the liquor warehouse expansion
Files:
Testify via Zoom: Yes
Zoom Method: Computer

Details:
Bill: HB-14: Long-Range Building Bonding Program 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning
Position: Informational Witness
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: MT DOR-Alcoholic Beverage Control
Name: Becky Schlauch
Email: becky.schlauch@mt.gov
Phone: (406) 465-5367
City, State: Seeley Lake, MT
Written Statement: informational on the liquor warehouse expansion
Files:
Testify via Zoom: Yes
Zoom Method: Computer

Details:
Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning
Position: Proponent
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: Upper Musselshell Water Users Association
Name: Mark McNearney
Email: mmcnearney@mt.gov
Phone: (406) 444-6693
City, State: Helena, MT
Written Statement: Not Provided
Files:
Testify via Zoom: Yes
Zoom Method: Computer

Details:
Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning
Position: Proponent
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: Missoula County/Buena Vista Community Inc.
Name: Deborah Evison Bell
Email: dbell@missoulacounty.us

Phone: (406) 258-3702

City, State: Missoula

Written Statement: Able to provide technical testimony for the Buena Vista Community Inc remediation of sludge ponds and new collection system.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: USFS

Name: Allison Russell

Email: allison.russell@usda.gov

Phone: (719) 321-5807

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: Testimonial witness for the Beaver Creek Restoration Project presented by the Lewis and Clark Conservation District.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Deadman's Basin Water Users Association

Name: John Connors

Email: jhconnors@mt.gov

Phone: (406) 461-8795

City, State: Clancy, MT

Written Statement: The Deadman's Supply Canal Rehabilitation Project is a joint effort between the State Water Project Bureau and the Deadman's Basin Water Users to restore the supply canal to its original capacity.

Many of the farms and ranches along the Musselshell River, in Wheatland, Golden Valley, Musselshell and Rosebud Counties have depended on water from the Deadman's Supply Canal and Deadman's Basin Reservoir for the last 80 years. Over this same time, sediment accumulation in inaccessible sections of the canal and has slowly reduced the amount of water that can be diverted into the reservoir.

In recent years, the Deadman's Basin Water Users and the DNRC SWPB have expended considerable resources restoring the capacity and dependability of the canal. In 2019, the water user's association spent \$84,000 to complete Phase 1 of this project. Other recent rehabilitation projects, such as the headgate replacement, have depleted funding reserves. For this reason, we are seeking grant funding through the DNRC so Phase 2 of the rehabilitation project can be initiated and the full capacity of the canal restored.

The photo that you can see shows both the complexity and the before and after conditions of the project. There is no access to the canal in the project area, so excavated material was removed using the canal as a haul route. More

than 20,000 cubic yards of material has been removed from the canal utilizing equipment typically used for mining operations. You can see the width of the canal increased from 6 feet in some area to the originally designed 21 feet.

Giving the water users the ability to divert high spring flows from the river into the reservoir is vital to the area's economy. Knowing there will be a steady supply of water from a full reservoir gives producers a sense of stability and allows them to maximize development of their irrigated lands.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: City of Havre - Clear Creek Court

Name: Casey Kinyon

Email: colts432@outlook.com

Phone: (406) 460-1238

City, State: Havre, MT

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Phone

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Montana Correctional Enterprises

Name: Ross Wagner

Email: rwagner2@mt.gov

Phone: (406) 560-1337

City, State: Deer Lodge, MT

Written Statement: Good Morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am Ross Wagner w-a-g-n-e-r, Montana Correctional Enterprises (MCE) Agriculture Director and am here to speak on behalf of the Powell Dam project, located on the MCE Ranch West of Deer Lodge.

The primary goal of this project is to maintain safe use of the full capacity of Powell Reservoir by controlling seepage and remediating steep embankments that, together, put the dam at risk of failure. The picture on the screen is showing the inundation of Interstate 90 South of town on the right side along with the seepage areas and steep face of the dam on the left. High toe seepage has been observed since the reservoir's construction in 1981, and dam embankments are significantly steeper than state and Bureau of Reclamation norms, even after the addition of a toe berm in 1993. Recent slope stability analyses in April 2020 indicate that existing factors of safety against slope failure are inadequate and the dam embankment is marginally stable under existing conditions. Powell Dam is classified as high hazard by the Montana DNRC, indicating probable loss of life in a dam failure event.

With a capacity of 200 acre-feet, Powell Reservoir currently provides one quarter of the total ag water storage for the MCE Ranch, and reservoir restrictions would significantly impair Ranch conservation, public recreation, and ag production capabilities. In Fiscal Year 2018, MCE Ranch hunting access was estimated to have contributed \$112,000

to the state's economy. The MCE Dairy provides products to 10 government institutions with the majority of the feed coming from the MCE Ranch.

To maintain the availability of the present stored water resource and the viability of the existing sprinkler irrigation systems of Powell Reservoir, remediation is proposed consisting of flattening the embankment slopes, installing a deep toe drain to intercept and control seepage, and installing riprap on the upstream dam face.

This proposal exceeds minimum safety factors, requires minimum maintenance and meets all Montana Dam Safety Standards. The project will maintain and preserve crop production and recreational opportunities on the MCE Ranch while greatly reducing the current risk of loss of human life and the turbidity, erosion and sedimentation to Powell Creek and the Clark Fork River if the dam fails.

The MCE Ranch falls under the Department of Corrections and is 100% self-supporting. MCE has spent \$46,000 last year on this dam alone for repairs, maintenance and geotechnical assessments in preparing for the inevitable task of this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration for this funding in the amount of \$125,000 and I am here for any questions you may have.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: No

Organization: N/A

Name: Sarah Peck

Email: sarahahp@earthlink.net

Phone: (406) 899-6350

City, State: Black Eagle

Written Statement: I would like to give a short history and update on the Black Eagle-Cascade County Water & Sewer District project that was funded through the last legislative session with the bonding bill.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Milk River Watershed Alliance

Name: `Jeff Pattison

Email: pattison@nemont.net

Phone: (406) 263-5333

City, State: Glasgow

Written Statement: The Joint Board of Controll has done a stellar job in coordinating the drop failure replacement at St.Marys Milk River project last may 17. Without the funding, technical help, and support from DNRC and the Renewable Resource Grants, far to many of the states most critical water needs and projects would be unable to float. I strongly urge funding for HB 6 along with HB 11 and14.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Greenfields Irrigation District

Name: Drew Pearson

Email: dpearson@wwcengineering.com

Phone: (406) 443-3962

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: I will be an informational witness for the GID Arnold Coulee Hydroelectric project, the GID SRS-71 Headworks & SRS re-regulation project, and the GID Spring Coulee Headworks Replacement Project.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Fort Peck Tribes and Stillwater CD

Name: Drew Pearson

Email: dpearson@wwcengineering.com

Phone: (406) 443-3962

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: An informational witness for the Fort Peck Tribes Frazer and Wiota pump automation and monitoring project and for the Stillwater CD Mendenhall Ditch Intake and Drop Structure Rehabilitation Project.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: PCCRC, HVID, and LMCD

Name: Shawn Higley

Email: shigley@wwcengineering.com

Phone: (406) 443-3962

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: Informational witness for the HVID Terminal Wasteway & Lateral Automation & Measurement Project, HVID Lateral 11.9 Canal Conversion and Gate Rehabilitation Project, and LMCD-DMWUA Main Canal Diversion Gates Automation Project.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project

Name: James Whitcomb Brower

Email: jbrower@midrivers.com

Phone: (406) 478-4502

City, State: Savage, Montana

Written Statement: The Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project Grant Request would Conserve approximately 437 million Gallons Per Year of Water diverted from the Yellowstone River by Replacing two Dangerous & Difficult to Operate Manual Water Control Structures in 2 Very Remote & hard to Get To Locations, with Automatic water level control Langemann Gates that the LYIP has been successfully using in other locations for over 25 years. These Automatic Water Level Control Gates would greatly improve Public Safety by reducing the potential for Public Flooding by Automatically lowering water levels during a large rain or water runoff situation. The more uniform water levels would provide more uniform irrigation and increase crop yields, improving the communities economy and public tax revenues.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Phone

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Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Hill County

Name: Jonathan Weaver

Email: jweaver@greatwesteng.com

Phone: (406) 495-6171

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Hill County

Name: Jonathan Weaver

Email: jweaver@greatwesteng.com

Phone: (406) 495-6171

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Teton Conservation District

Name: Ross Salmond, Chairman

Email: tetoncd@yahoo.com

Phone: (406) 466-5722

City, State: Choteau, MT

Written Statement: Others on the call include Kevin Grabinski, WWC Engineering, 406-443-3962 Nancy Moorhouse, Teton Conservation District Administrator, 406-466-5722 x103

Files: Eureka Dam Reservoir Funding Letter from TCD.pdf Eureka Reservoir Location Map.pdf Eureka Reservoir

Photo.pdf Testify via Zoom: Yes Zoom Method: Phone

January 19, 2021

Honorable Mike Hopkins, Chairman
Long-Range Planning Subcommittee
Montana 67th Legislative Session - 2021

Subject: HB 6 - Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program
2023 Biennium Ranking and Funding
Request for \$125,000 grant funding for the Eureka Dam Safety Improvements

Dear Honorable Hopkins and Committee Members:

Teton Conservation District is requesting your full support for the Eureka Dam Safety Improvements grant request. We are sponsoring this grant on behalf of local producers who are shareholders of the Teton Cooperative Canal Company.

Background:

The Teton Cooperative Canal Company (TCCC) provides irrigation water to 7,650 acres and 20 water users that grow crops essential for Montana's agricultural community. Water is diverted from the Teton River into Eureka Reservoir, located 7 miles northwest of Choteau, MT.

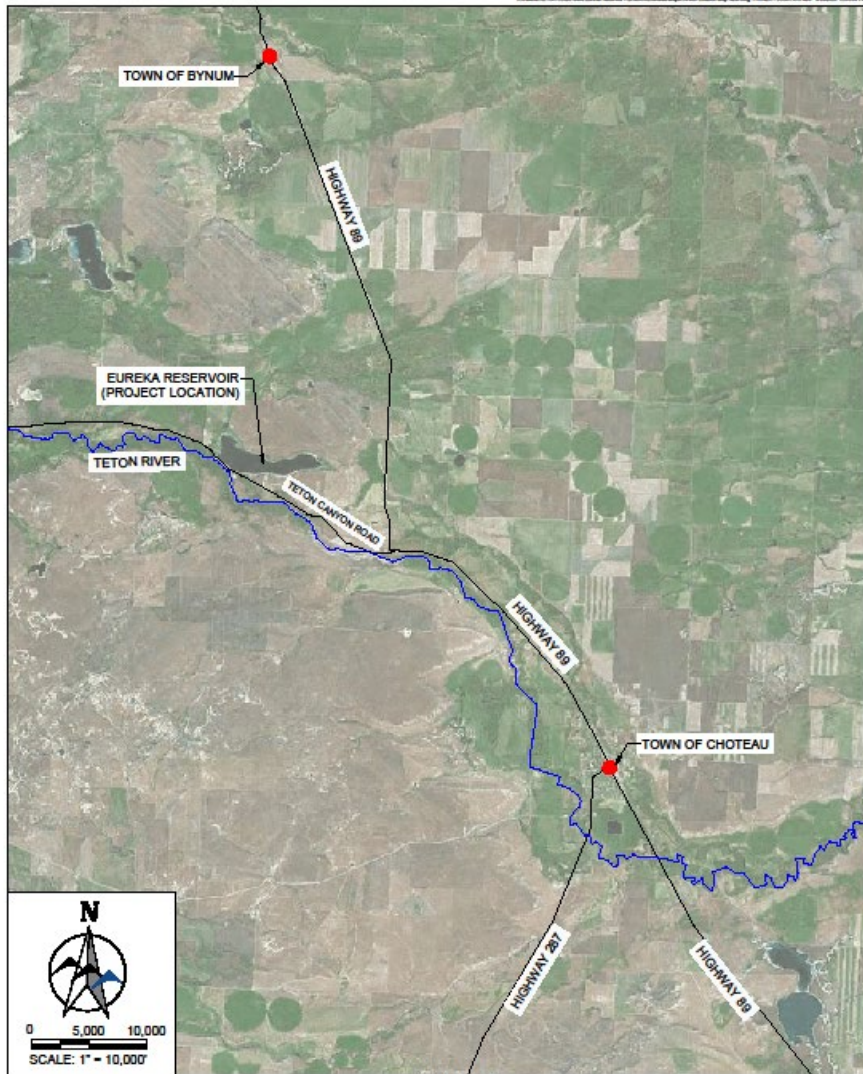
Problem Identification:

Eureka Reservoir was designed by the Montana State Water Conservation Board and constructed in 1937 for the purpose of storing water from the Teton River and releasing it downstream through the TCCC ditch system to its users. The dam was constructed without typical modern practices to control seepage. Seepage below the toe of the main dam and high uplift pressures have been noted in inspections and is believed to have occurred since the original construction of the dam. The Eureka Dam is classified as a high-hazard dam due to the potential of flooding downstream property as identified in a Corps of Engineers report and DNRC classifications. Based on breach inundation mapping developed by DNRC, a failure of the dam would flood the county road (Teton Canyon Road) next to the Main Dam and West Dike, Highway 89, and portions of the City of Choteau.


Excessive seepage and sand boils have been identified by the DNRC Dam Safety Program as a concern for Eureka Reservoir. The proposed improvements will consist of excavating and constructing a toe drain to control seepage and a toe berm to provide resistance to the uplift pressures. Without these improvements, water level restrictions will likely be placed on the Eureka Reservoir operating permit from the DNRC Dam Safety Program until the safety concerns are addressed. This will have a significant negative impact on TCCC's ability to store water and to provide water at the end of the irrigation season, reducing the water users crop yields and revenue by an estimated 10%.

Funding Benefits:

Implementation of the proposed project would preserve the ability to store 538 million gallons of water within the reservoir (39% of the available volume), and the ability to intercept and conserve 34 million gallons of seepage water for irrigation use.



**TETON CD EUREKA RESERVOIR PER
LOCATION MAP
TETON COUNTY, MONTANA**

PREPARED FOR TETON CONSERVATION DISTRICT	1102 MAIN AVENUE NORTH CHOTEAU, MT 59422	DESIGNED BY: <u>EJS</u> DRAWN BY: <u>JGC</u> CHECKED BY: <u>STH</u> DATE: <u>05/22/2010</u>
PREPARED BY  WWC ENGINEERING	1275 MAPLE STREET, SUITE F HELENA, MT 59601 (406) 443-3962 www.wwcengineering.com	MAP 1



Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Missoula County/Buena Vista Community, Inc.

Name: Sindie S. Kennedy

Email: skennedy@missoulacounty.us

Phone: (406) 396-2510

City, State: Missoula, Montana

Written Statement: Montana 67th Legislative Session Long-range Planning Committee

HB-6 Wastewater Project Testimony

Good morning. I am Sindie Kennedy, Grants Administrator with the Missoula County Community and Planning Services Department. With me today is Deborah Bell, Assistant Director of the Missoula County Public Works Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, on behalf of the Buena Vista Community. This community is located just west of the Missoula International Airport on Highway 10 and is a low-income Resident-owned mobile home community, which seeks to upgrade its wastewater system while maintaining affordable housing for its low-income residents.

The first phase of the wastewater system improvement was completed in spring 2020, that included installing a lift station and abandoning the three sewage-lagoon system.

Phase II (this project) will involve replacing the aging and structurally volatile collection system that is currently located within a narrow corridor between and in several locations, beneath some of the trailer homes. The location of the main limits access and puts the community at risk for sanitary sewer overflow and groundwater contamination.

The solution to this problem is open cut replacement of the collection system, to include:

- ☐ 2,500 lineal feet of new PVC main
- ☐ Pipe removed from under homes
- ☐ 9 New Manholes
- ☐ New Sewer Services for up to 48 lots
- ☐ Lagoon sludge removal

The project is estimated to cost \$1,267,000. So far, \$575,000 in Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding has been secured. The proposed funding package, to include DNRC funding, will result in a monthly user fee of \$51.73 (lower than the \$79.39 target rate); however, this user fee will still be challenging for the majority of the Buena Vista residents. It is critical that we secure this DNRC grant funding to keep the user fees as low as possible.

Thank you for your consideration and your time.

Sindie S. Kennedy, Missoula County Grants Administrator Deborah E. Bell, Missoula County Public Works Assistant Director

Files: Buena Vista Community Board Letter of Support.pdf Missoula County HB-6 DNRC RRGL Testimony 1-25-2021.pdf MT Legislative Public Hearing - Missoula County DNRC RRGL Testimony.pdf Neighbor Works_LetterOfSupport2021_01.doc.pdf

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Buena Vista Community, Inc.
6308 Buena Vista Loop East
Missoula, MT 59808

January 12, 2021

Letter of Commitment in Support of Buena Vista Sewer Project CDBG Application

To Members of the Long-range Planning Committee:

Thank you for your consideration to fund the Buena Vista DNRC Renewable Resource Grant proposal.

The Buena Vista Community purchased our trailer court just west of the Missoula International Airport in 2014. With the support of and guidance from NeighborWorks Montana, we incorporated as a non-profit resident-owned community. Since becoming a resident-owned community we have made some great improvements in our neighborhood and are committed to continuing to make Buena Vista a good place to live that is affordable to low-income people. Most of us living in the community are low-income, many are elderly.

When we purchased the property, the wastewater system included a three-lagoon collection system. We knew this system needed to be upgraded in order to protect the health and safety of our neighbors and to protect public and environmental health and safety for the community at large. We successfully raised grant funding to support installing a lift station and abandoning the lagoon system. The second phase of the wastewater improvement project includes finishing remediating the lagoons and upgrading the main and service lines to improve quality and access, with the ultimate goal of the City of Missoula taking on the maintenance of the system. Most importantly, we are in a position to add service lines, meaning we could contribute to the demand for low-income housing in Missoula County. For many low-income Montanans, modular homes are the only affordable housing option.

Without grant funding, we will not be able to make these needed improvements. If we were to have to pay for these improvements with loans rather than grants, many of us would not be able to afford the increase in lot rents that would be required to service additional debt. Right now, our lot rents are some of the lowest in Missoula. We want to keep it that way.

We are committed to moving this project forward. We appreciate your consideration of funding this project.

The Buena Vista Community, Inc Board of Directors



MISSOULA COUNTY COMMUNITY AND PLANNING SERVICES
Mailing: 200 W. BROADWAY
Physical: 127 EAST MAIN STREET
MISSOULA, MONTANA 59802-4292
PHONE: (406) 258-4657 FAX: (406) 258-3920

Planning • Grants and Community Programs • Parks, Trails and Open Lands • Sustainability

Montana 67th Legislative Session
Long-range Planning Committee
HB-6 Wastewater Project Testimony

Good morning. I am Sindie Kennedy, Grants Administrator with the Missoula County Community and Planning Services Department. With me today is Deborah Bell, Assistant Director of the Missoula County Public Works Department.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, on behalf of the Buena Vista Community. This community is located just west of the Missoula International Airport on Highway 10 and is a low-income Resident-owned mobile home community, which seeks to upgrade its wastewater system while maintaining affordable housing for its low-income residents.

The first phase of the wastewater system improvement was completed in spring 2020, that included installing a lift station and abandoning the three sewage-lagoon system.

Phase II (this project) will involve replacing the aging and structurally volatile collection system that is currently located within a narrow corridor between and in several locations, beneath some of the trailer homes. The location of the main limits access and puts the community at risk for sanitary sewer overflow and groundwater contamination.

The solution to this problem is open cut replacement of the collection system, to include:

- 2,500 lineal feet of new PVC main
- Pipe removed from under homes
- 9 New Manholes
- New Sewer Services for up to 48 lots
- Lagoon sludge removal

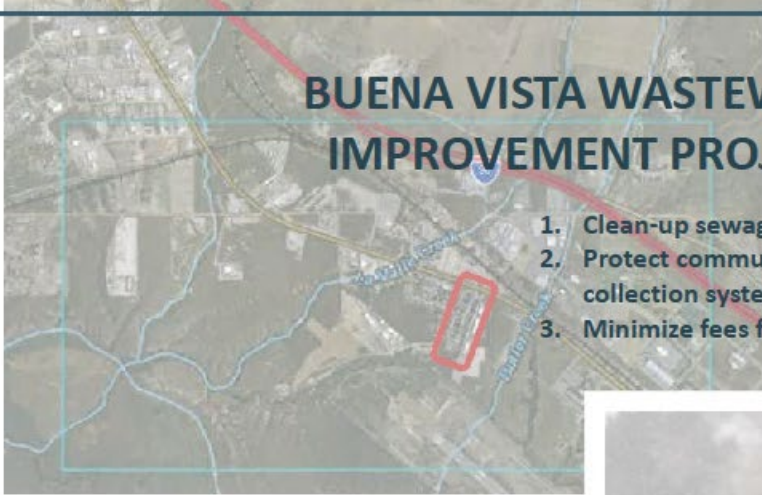
The project is estimated to cost \$1,267,000. So far, \$575,000 in Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding has been secured. The proposed funding package, to include DNRC funding, will result in a monthly user fee of \$51.73 (lower than the \$79.39 target rate); however, this user fee will still be challenging for the majority of the Buena Vista residents. It is critical that we secure this DNRC grant funding to keep the user fees as low as possible.

Thank you for your consideration and your time.

Sindie S. Kennedy, Missoula County Grants Administrator
Deborah E. Bell, Missoula County Public Works Assistant Director

BUENA VISTA WASTEWATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, PHASE II

1. Clean-up sewage collection lagoons near residents
2. Protect community and ground water from effluent with new collection system
3. Minimize fees for low-income households





January 12, 2021

Letter of Commitment in Support of Buena Vista Sewer Project

To Whom It May Concern:

NeighborWorks Montana (NWMt) works with homeowners who live in manufactured housing communities (mobile home parks) helping form non-profit cooperatives to purchase and operate their communities. When a community is owned by an investor, it is very vulnerable to rapid rent increases, deferred maintenance and, worst of all, closure for redevelopment.

We have worked with the residents of the Buena Vista Community in Missoula since April of 2013. In May 2013, the Buena Vista residents formed a non-profit member-based corporation, governed by democratic principles. Through this corporation the resident members purchased the property and now own and operate their community. NWMt worked with the Buena Vista residents through the purchase process and continues to serve as an advisor to the membership and board of directors, a liaison with the primary mortgage lender (ROC Capital), and a direct lender with a second mortgage position on the property. NWMt has a financial interest, but also a mission interest in the success of this community and their residents.

As part of the purchase process a property conditions report was conducted that identified the sewer as an inadequate long-term system, and the need for connection to municipal sewer. Prior to purchase the residents agreed to complete connection to city sewer and committed to this as part of their ROC USA Capital loan agreement. (The City of Missoula has stressed they will not take on the entire system until the existing sewer lines and connections are accessible for maintenance.) Phase I of the project was completed last year primarily with grant sources. NWMt continues to support Buena Vista in securing funding for Phase II. The goal is not only to upgrade the sewer system but to do so in a way that maintains housing affordability for the residents, the vast majority of whom are low-income.

NWMt continues to be involved in the community at least for the life of the existing mortgage through 2023. NWMt is willing to consider providing additional financing for infrastructure if warranted, however our financing may not support the level of affordability needed – our rate is about 6.00% on up to a 30-year amortization.

We are committed to the success of this project, and the success of this community. I respectfully request your assistance in helping this community by awarding RGGL funding to support the second phase of the Buena Vista Wastewater System Improvement Project.

DocuSigned by:
Danielle Maiden
2021.01.12 09:01

Danielle Maiden, ROC Program Manager

509 1st Avenue South • Great Falls, MT 59401
E-mail: info@nwsmt.org Website: www.nwsmt.org
(406) 761-5861 • Fax (406) 761-5852



Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Lolo Watershed Group

Name: Travis Ross

Email: travis59801@gmail.com

Phone: (406) 543-3873

City, State: MISSOULA

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files: 2021_01_22 Lolo Watershed Group HB6.pdf Testify via Zoom: No Zoom Method: N/A



Lolo Watershed Group
PO Box 1354
Lolo, MT 59847

January 22, 2021

RE: Support for HB006 – Watershed Management Grant Program

Dear Committee Members –

I am writing on behalf of the Lolo Watershed Group, a small volunteer-based watershed group whose mission is to improve the health of our local watershed. We have been recipients of watershed management grants (WMG) and have witnessed the benefits of this program. This small program pays great dividends by allowing us to pull together local restoration projects on private property. We work with landowners to secure other grants to complete projects that improve the fishery and water health in our watershed. The WMG allows us to:

- Fund a part time coordinator that:
 - puts together restoration projects with interested landowners
 - applies for other grants to fund restoration (WMG's are the seed money that brings in many times (approx. 10X the funding awarded through WMG).
 - Serves as a local contact for watershed issues and questions
 - Coordinates with DNRC on education projects and research

For a small organization like ours, a watershed management grant of \$10K can do so much. This amount of funding allows us to have some cash to qualify us to apply for federal grants for registration. Those grants require a large match that must be non-federal. This is hard to find for a small watershed group. DNRC watershed management grants are a HUGE investment in our natural resource health. It allows smaller groups to work with a helpful grant administrator to identify projects that will have on-the-ground impacts and support the local groups that can get it done. We urge you to support this bill and program.

Sincerely,

Travis Ross
Chair, Lolo Watershed Group

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: City of Havre - Clear Creek Court

Name: JOSEPH N MURPHY

Email: jmurphy@bigskyce.com

Phone: (406) 727-2185

City, State: Great Falls

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files: Neighbor Works_LetterOfSupport2021_01.pdf Testify via Zoom: Yes Zoom Method: Computer



January 15, 2021

Letter of Commitment in Support of Clear Creek Sewer System Improvement Project

To Whom It May Concern:

NeighborWorks Montana (NWMT) works with homeowners who live in manufactured housing communities (mobile home parks) helping form non-profit cooperatives to purchase and operate their communities. When a community is owned by an investor, it is very vulnerable to rapid rent increases, deferred maintenance and, worst of all, closure for redevelopment.

We have worked with the residents of the Clear Creek Community in Havre since June 2019. In July 2019, the Clear Creek residents formed a non-profit member-based corporation, governed by democratic principles. Through this corporation the resident members purchased the property and now own and operate their community. NWMT worked with the Clear Creek residents through the purchase process and continues to serve as an advisor to the membership and board of directors, a liaison with the primary mortgage lender (ROC Capital), and a direct lender with a second mortgage position on the property. NWMT has a financial interest, but also a mission interest in the success of this community and their residents.

As part of the purchase process a property conditions report was conducted that identified the sewer lines as an inadequate long-term system, and the need for replacement of their system. Prior to purchase the residents agreed to complete the projects and committed to this as part of their ROC USA Capital loan agreement. NWMT continues to support Clear Creek in securing funding for the replacement project. The goal is not only to upgrade the sewer system but to do so in a way that maintains housing affordability for the residents, the vast majority of whom are low-income.

NWMT continues to be involved in the community at least for the life of the existing mortgage through 2029. NWMT is willing to consider providing additional financing for infrastructure if warranted, however our financing may not support the level of affordability needed – our rate is about 6.00% on up to a 30-year amortization.

We are committed to the success of this project, and the success of this community. I respectfully request your assistance in helping this community by awarding RGGL funding to support the Clear Creek Sewer System Improvement Project.

Danielle Maiden

Danielle Maiden, ROC Program Manager

509 1st Avenue South • Great Falls, MT 59401
E-mail: info@nwsf.org Website: www.nwmt.org
(406) 761-5861 • Fax (406) 761-5852



Details:

Bill: HB-14: Long-Range Building Bonding Program 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: No

Organization: N/A

Name: John Palm

Email: info@bozemangreenbuild.com

Phone: (406) 580-6068

City, State: Bozeman, MT

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files: HB 14 Testimony Letter, Belgrade School District.pdf Testify via Zoom: Yes Zoom Method: Computer

January 22, 2021

To: Long Range Planning Committee

From: John Palm
Bozeman Green Build
350 Heidner Ln.
Bozeman, MT 59718
E-Mail: info@bozemangreenbuild.com
Phone: 406-580-6068

RE: HB 14
RRGL Project: Belgrade School District Solar PV System

Dear Committee Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to say a few words about the renewable resource project that we are proposing to complete in partnership with the Belgrade School District.

Solar PV Systems have both environmental and financial benefits. The system we have proposed will offset the power consumed by Ridgeview Elementary School by 63,000 kilowatt hours per year. This amount of power will reduce coal-fired CO2 emissions by approximately 70 tons per year. To place the power production in perspective, 63,000 kilowatt hours is the amount of power that six average Montana households will consume over the course of one year.

The financial benefit is also impressive. The System, over its 25 year lifespan, will produce approximately 1,400,000 kilowatt hours of electricity worth \$172,000.00.

Please feel free to contact us with questions.

Thanks again for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
John Palm
Bozeman Green Build

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Gardiner Park County Water and Sewer District

Name: Josh Wells

Email: Gardinerws@outlook.com

Phone: (406) 848-7734

City, State: Gardiner Montana

Written Statement: Project No. 2

Applicant Name Gardiner Park County Water and Sewer District Project Name Wastewater System Improvements

Amount Requested \$ 125,000 Other Funding Sources \$ 150,000 Resort Tax

\$1,000,000 Other

\$2,841,900 SRF Loan

\$ 50,000 Applicant In-kind

Total Project Cost \$4,166,900

Amount Recommended \$ 125,000

*Josh Wells Manager Gardiner Park County Water and Sewer District *Laura Gundlach Morris and Merle Gardiner
Park County Water and Sewer District

Files: RRGL Written Testimony - Gardiner.pdf Testify via Zoom: Yes Zoom Method: Computer

Gardiner Park County Water and Sewer District

Wastewater System Improvements

Why is this project needed?

- Need to responsibly dispose of 50 years of arsenic-laden sludge, 95% of the arsenic originated in Yellowstone National Park's thermal features
- Lagoon liners have holes which are causing leaks
- Protect drinking water wells from possible sewer contamination



Gardiner Park County Wastewater Treatment Facility

Final Project Design Solutions

- Dewater, remove, and dispose of sludge
- Install new lagoon liners
- Line the gravity sewer main which passes within 250 feet of the drinking water supply wells
- Improve aeration system

Project Benefits

- Protect the surface water and groundwater quality at the headwaters of the Yellowstone River
- Elimination of permit violations by the Gardiner Water and Sewer District
- Protect public health and safety by removal of arsenic from the banks of the Yellowstone River and creating sewer system resiliency near the drink water wells



Tears in the Aging Lagoon Liner

SATURDAY 1/23/2021

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Water and Environmental Technologies

Name: Shawn Arthur

Email: sarthur@waterenvtech.com

Phone: (406) 770-0443

City, State: Great Falls, MT

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Phone

Details:

Bill: HB-14: Long-Range Building Bonding Program 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Ten Mile Creek Estates/Pleasant Valley WSD

Name: Thomas Stockton

Email: stockton.thomas@gmail.com

Phone: (406) 465-3487

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: I plan to likely testify in person, but can requesting the zoom link. Copy of testimony main points are attached. I am requesting a copy of the detailed schedule.

Files: TMPV-Legislative Testimony.pdf

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Phone

Ten Mile Creek Estates/Pleasant Valley Water and Sewer District

Lewis and Clark County, Montana

Wastewater System Improvements (Replace or Rehabilitate Manholes)

- I am Tom Stockton, President of the District Board.
- Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify about our important project for the Ten Mile Creek Estates/Pleasant Valley Water and Sewer District.
- Our community, located in the Helena Valley, currently has over 310 houses and about 800 people in the Helena valley.
- The DNRC-RRGL grant will greatly assist the District in completing replacements and rehabilitation of several sewer manholes in our community that have been shown to be leaking.
- There are issues associated with our sewer system and specifically the sewer manholes identified with in PER, that will be remedied with this wastewater project, including:
 - The existing concrete sewer manholes located in the Ten Mile Subdivision show evidence of Infiltration and Inflow as seepage within existing concrete base sections determined from visual evidence.
 - The original manhole bases were constructed using cast-in-place methods around the piping, and these sections are corroding and are not watertight.
 - With the manholes not being watertight and subject to infiltration during periods of high groundwater, they are also subject to leakage, exfiltration, and contamination of the groundwater.
 - Tenmile Creek water levels are hydro geologically connected to the local groundwater table. The PER determined that when stream levels increase in the Creek, the groundwater levels rise, and the sewer flow rates correspondingly increase.
 - This clear groundwater water adds several thousand more gallons per day of non-system flows to the sewer system. The sewer flow meter at the main lift station shows a direct correlation between increasing groundwater levels and lagoon influent flows.

We have completed several projects to upgrade our treatment system over the last ten years - including replacing a leaking treatment lagoon system, obtaining a discharge permit and installing a new effluent pump station, and replacing over 4,000 feet of sewer main. As such, we have outstanding debt service related to two SRF and two Coal Severance Tax loans for the recent improvements. We now have a combined sewer and water rate of over \$144 (which is over 134% of the Department of Commerce target rate). Without this grant, it is simply too costly proceed without further burdening our users with more rate increases.

Details:

Bill: HB-14: Long-Range Building Bonding Program 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Great West Engineering - Consultant

Name: Matthew Mudd, PE

Email: mmudd@greatwesteng.com

Phone: (406) 490-3909

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: I am available as a technical consultant in support of the client and project. Can be called upon as needed. I am requesting the detailed project by project hearing schedule which I haven't come across or emailed yet.

Thanks,

Matt
Files:
Testify via Zoom: Yes
Zoom Method: Computer

Details:
Bill: HB-14: Long-Range Building Bonding Program 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning
Position: Proponent
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: Great West Engineering - Consultant
Name: Matthew Mudd, PE
Email: mmudd@greatwesteng.com
Phone: (406) 490-3909
City, State: Helena, MT
Written Statement: I am in support of the project and client and can be called up as the technical consultant if needed.
I am requesting a copy of the detailed project by project schedule.
Thanks,
Matt
Files:
Testify via Zoom: Yes
Zoom Method: Computer

Details:
Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning
Position: Proponent
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: Milk River Joint Board of Control
Name: Jennifer D Patrick
Email: jenn@mrjbc.com
Phone: (406) 945-3383
City, State: HAVRE
Written Statement: Not Provided
Files:
Testify via Zoom: Yes
Zoom Method: Computer

Details:
Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning
Position: Proponent
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: Lower Musselshell Conservation District
Name: Lynn Rettig
Email: rettig@midrivers.com
Phone: (406) 947-3131
City, State: Musselshell, MT
Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Fort Belknap, Beaverhead CD, Glen Lake ID, LYIP

Name: Shawn Higley

Email: shigley@wwcengineering.com

Phone: (406) 443-3962

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: Informational witness for the Fort Belknap Milk River Diversion Gate Automation Project, Beaverhead County CD Irrigation Efficiency and Water Measurement Project, Lower Yellowstone irrigation Project Lateral V Check Structure and Lateral W Headgate Rehabilitation Project, Clinton Irrigation Project Schoolhouse Lateral Pipeline Conversion Project, Glen Lake Irrigation District Rolling Hills Canal Rehabilitation and Infrastructure Modernization Study

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Ackley Lake Water Users Association

Name: Douglas Hitch

Email: dhitch@itstriangle.com

Phone: (406) 423-5651

City, State: Hobson, MT

Written Statement: This testimony is in support of HB-6, The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Water Resources Division, Ackley Lake outlet canal rehabilitation grant.

The canal section in this project was intended to return excess water from the reservoir to the river and also serve as an emergency outlet should the reservoir overflow. Because of porous soils the canal doesn't work as designed. When the canal is full of water, seepage causes damage to a county road and a cemetery that are down slope from the canal. Since we don't have a reliable way to discharge excess water, we hold back on filling the reservoir to leave space for unexpected run off or storms that might dump a large amount of water into the reservoir. Also, we have a winter storage limit which protects the structures and the dam from ice damage. If we have too much water in the reservoir at the end of the irrigation season, we need a way to safely discharge the excess water.

Our goals for this project are to improve our ability to store and manage water for the irrigation season and to reduce or eliminate the water damage caused to the road and cemetery by water seepage from the canal. We encourage you to fund this grant request so that we can use our reservoir and canals more effectively.

Ackley Lake Water Users Association

Douglas Hitch, president

Files:

Testify via Zoom: No

Zoom Method: N/A

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Musselshell Watershed Coalition

Name: Laura Nowlin

Email: musselshellwc@gmail.com

Phone: (406) 429-4832

City, State: Winnett

Written Statement: The Musselshell Watershed Coalition (MWC) would like to offer support for the LMCD-DMWUA Main Canal Diversion Gates Automation Project, the MT DNRC Deadman's Supply Canal Rehabilitation Project, the MT DNRC Two Dot Canal Rehabilitation Project, and the Petroleum County Petrolia Dam Outlet Works Headgate Replacement Project. The MWC serves local residents and works toward collaborative resource management of the Musselshell River Watershed. The Musselshell River Watershed contains approximately 9,500 square miles. The entire area is home to approximately 9,325 people. The main stem of the Musselshell River flows from the confluence of the North and South Forks near Martinsdale for nearly 340 miles to Fort Peck Reservoir and provides irrigation water for nearly 85,000 acres and 250 farms and ranches and 388 water rights holders.

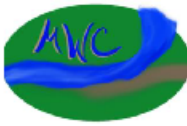
The above projects are critical to maintaining significant infrastructure for irrigators in the Musselshell Watershed. Additionally, these projects all contribute to water use efficiency and meet MWC water quality and quantity goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, Laura Nowlin, Coordinator

Files: Deadmans_testimony.pdf DelphiaMelstone_testimony.pdf Petrolia_testimony.pdf TwoDotCanal_testimony.pdf

Testify via Zoom: Yes Zoom Method: Computer

Musselshell Watershed Coalition
Board members: President Shirley Parrot, Vice-President Bill Bergin, Jr., Diane Ahlgren, Shane Moe, Lynn



Rettig, Leon Hammond, Craig Dalgarno

Coordinator: Laura Nowlin

P.O. Box 118

Winnett, MT 59087

<http://musselshellwc.wix.com/musselshellwc>

January 23, 2021

Subject: Deadman's Supply Canal Rehabilitation Project

To Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long-Range Planning:

The Musselshell Watershed Coalition (MWC) would like to offer this letter in support of the Deadman's Supply Canal Rehabilitation Project.

The MWC serves local residents and works toward collaborative resource management of the Musselshell River Watershed. The Musselshell River Watershed contains approximately 9,500 square miles. The entire area is home to approximately 9,325 people. The main stem of the Musselshell River flows from the confluence of the North and South Forks near Martinsdale for nearly 340 miles to Fort Peck Reservoir and provides irrigation water for nearly 85,000 acres and 250 farms and ranches and 388 water rights holders.

Water diverted and stored in Deadman's Basin Reservoir is a vital part of water management in the Musselshell River system. If the Deadman's Basin Water Project is unable to take full advantage of the spring runoff, many farms and ranches suffer the consequences later in the summer. Removing the supply canal diversion impediments helps ensure more irrigation water is available, which in turn reduces conflicts between users.

Increasing irrigation efficiency and water quantity is a priority of the MWC. The efficiency of Deadman's Supply Canal fits into the Musselshell Watershed Plan. We have been working hard to find areas where water use efficiency can be increased. The Deadman's Supply Canal Rehabilitation Project has become a high priority because of the direct, positive effect it has on overall system efficiency and the large number of people that will benefit.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura Nowlin".

Laura Nowlin
MWC, Coordinator

Board members: President Shirley Parrot, Vice-President Bill Bergin, Jr., Diane Ahlgren, Shane Moe, Lynn

Rettig, Leon Hammond, Craig Dalgarno

Coordinator: Laura Nowlin

P.O. Box 118

Winnett, MT 59087

<http://musselshellwc.wix.com/musselshellwc>



January 23, 2021

Subject: Petrolia Irrigation District Lower Headgate Replacement

To Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long-Range Planning:

The Musselshell Watershed Coalition (MWC) would like to offer this letter in support of the Petrolia Irrigation District Lower Headgate Replacement Application.

The MWC serves local residents and works toward collaborative resource management of the Musselshell River Watershed. The Musselshell River Watershed contains approximately 9,500 square miles. The entire area is home to approximately 9,325 people. The main stem of the Musselshell River flows from the confluence of the North and South Forks near Martinsdale for nearly 340 miles to Fort Peck Reservoir and provides irrigation water for nearly 85,000 acres and 250 farms and ranches and 388 water rights holders.

The Petrolia Irrigation District serves irrigators along Flatwillow Creek in Petroleum County, a main tributary to the Musselshell River. Efficient use of Flatwillow Creek water is of benefit to the Musselshell River and the rest of the watershed. The MWC supports this project to address water delivery issues as well as safety issues.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Laura Nowlin
MWC, Coordinator

Musselshell Watershed Coalition
Board members: President Shirley Parrot, Vice-President Bill Bergin, Jr., Diane Ahlgren, Shane Moe, Lynn

Rettig, Leon Hammond, Craig Dalgarno

Coordinator: Laura Nowlin

P.O. Box 118

Winnett, MT 59087

<http://musselshellwc.wix.com/musselshellwc>



January 23, 2021

Subject: LMCD-DMWUA Main Canal Diversion Gates Automation Project

To Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long-Range Planning:

The Musselshell Watershed Coalition (MWC) would like to offer this letter in support of the Delphia Melstone Water Users Association Main Canal Diversion Gates Automation Project.

The MWC serves local residents and works toward collaborative resource management of the Musselshell River Watershed. The Musselshell River Watershed contains approximately 9,500 square miles. The entire area is home to approximately 9,325 people. The main stem of the Musselshell River flows from the confluence of the North and South Forks near Martinsdale for nearly 340 miles to Fort Peck Reservoir and provides irrigation water for nearly 85,000 acres and 250 farms and ranches and 388 water rights holders.

The MWC completed a Musselshell Watershed Plan in the fall of 2015. The plan was a grassroots effort to identify and prioritize projects for completion along the Musselshell River. This project is part of a larger canal efficiency project identified and described in the plan. The project includes improving water conservation on the South Canal and was prioritized to be completed by 2020. This project meets both Musselshell Watershed Plan priorities, as well as MWC goals of increasing water quantity and holistic management of the river resources, through conserving 16 acre-feet of water per day and augmenting up to 12 cfs of Musselshell River flows during late August and early September.

The MWC fully supports this project for its benefits to the Delphia-Melstone Canal Water Users and for its benefits to the Musselshell River.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura Nowlin".

Laura Nowlin
MWC, Coordinator



Musselshell Watershed Coalition

Board members: President Shirley Parrot, Vice-President Bill Bergin, Jr., Diane Ahlgren, Shane Moe, Lynn Rettig, Leon Hammond, Craig Dalgarno
Coordinator: Laura Nowlin
P.O. Box 118
Winnett, MT 59087

<http://musselshellwc.wix.com/musselshellwc>

January 23, 2021

Subject: Two Dot Canal Rehabilitation RRGL Application

To Joint Appropriations Subcommittee on Long-Range Planning:

The Musselshell Watershed Coalition (MWC) would like to offer this letter in support of the Two Dot Canal Rehabilitation Project.

The MWC serves local residents and works toward collaborative resource management of the Musselshell River Watershed. The Musselshell River Watershed contains approximately 9,500 square miles. The entire area is home to approximately 9,325 people. The main stem of the Musselshell River flows from the confluence of the North and South Forks near Martinsdale for nearly 340 miles to Fort Peck Reservoir and provides irrigation water for nearly 85,000 acres and 250 farms and ranches and 388 water rights holders.

The MWC has worked with water user associations in the Musselshell Watershed to identify opportunities for irrigation infrastructure projects that will result in increased water use efficiency. In 2017, the MWC partnered with the Upper Musselshell Water Users Association to complete a canal seepage study. This study identified the Mexican John Creek portion of the Two Dot Canal as a priority for rehabilitation addressing canal seepage.

The MWC fully supports this project for its benefits to the Upper Musselshell Water Users system and for its benefits to the Musselshell River Watershed through water conservation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Laura Nowlin
MWC, Coordinator

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Centennial Valley Association

Name: Kara Maplethorpe

Email: communityorg@centennialvalleyassociation.org

Phone: (715) 681-0795

City, State: Dell, Montana

Written Statement: Kara Maplethorpe, Executive Coordinator, is submitting an electronic letter of support for the Watershed Management Grant program, within House Bill 6, on behalf of the Centennial Valley Association.

Files: HB6_LetterofSupport_WMGProgram_CVA.pdf

Testify via Zoom: No

Zoom Method: N/A



Centennial Valley Association
Dell, MT 59724

715-681-0795

PO Box 240077

TO: Chairman Mike Hopkins, Senators Cuffe, Smith, and Boldman, and Representatives Hamilton, and Vinton
FROM: Centennial Valley Association
RE: House Bill 6: Renewable Resource Grants

January 22nd, 2021

Please accept this letter of support from the Centennial Valley Association (CVA) for the Watershed Management Grant (WMG) program within House Bill 6.

The CVA is a landowner-driven, nonprofit organization located in the Centennial Valley of southwestern Montana. We strive to preserve traditional ranching as a way of life, and to maintain quality open space, wildlife habitat, water quality, and wildlife migration corridors, as they exist today, for future generations. Many of our constituents reside year-round within the Red Rock River watershed, which is the utmost source of the Missouri River. Water is an extremely valuable resource to the local community, wildlife, fishery, recreation, and local, state, and federal agencies. The CVA has benefited from the support of the Watershed Management Grant program and believes in the program's ability to support other rural, locally-driven projects in the future.

Through the Watershed Management Grant Program, the CVA was able to finalize and implement the Centennial Valley Drought Outreach Plan. Funding for projects and programs in a small, rural nonprofit are tough to come by. The WMG allowed the CVA to create a Plan that supports a watershed approach to drought resilience, while increasing the local voices dedicated to water and drought awareness in the Centennial Valley. We were able to accomplish the following during our WMG term:

- Increase drought awareness and education opportunities, providing a high degree of literacy about drought among community members, agency partners, and stakeholders.
- Expand hydrological monitoring to better understand hydrological patterns and collect data that is proved beneficial to proactive water management decisions at a local level.
- Provide educational resources to all stakeholders of the Centennial Valley to increase individual resiliency to future drought.

Water availability and the threat of drought is a natural resource concern that will always have an impact on Montanans into the future. The Watershed Management Grant program is a significant contributor to proactive and collaborative local drought resiliency solutions throughout this great state. Without it, some rural Montana communities will rely on retroactive solutions to drought that may not be effective until years later. Please consider funding the Watershed Management Grant program as a part of House Bill 6.

We appreciate your time, attention and consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kara" followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line.

Kara Maplethorpe
Executive Coordinator
Centennial Valley Association

SUNDAY 1/24/2021

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Trout Unlimited

Name: Rob Roberts

Email: rroberts@tu.org

Phone: (406) 540-2944

City, State: Missoula

Written Statement: Trout Unlimited supports the project.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: No

Zoom Method: N/A

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Montana Association of Conservation Districts

Name: Rebecca Boslough

Email: rebecca@macdnet.org

Phone: (406) 443-5711

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: The Renewable Resource Grants help Montana's conservation districts implement local, common-sense conservation projects across the state. The Montana Association of Conservation Districts and our members strongly support HB6.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Montana Association of Conservation Districts,

Name: James G Simpson, President of MACD

Email: jim.g.simpson@gmail.com

Phone: (406) 871-6011

City, State: Polson

Written Statement: HB6 helps get Conservation Districts get natural resource projects on the ground

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Water Users Irrigation Co.

Name: Allen Martinell

Email: allenmartinell@gmail.com

Phone: (406) 276-3380

City, State: Dell, MT

Written Statement: Allen C. Martinell, President, Water Users Irrigation Co., is submitting an electronic letter of support for the Watershed Management Grant, within House Bill 6, on behalf of the Centennial Valley Association.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: No

Zoom Method: N/A

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Helena Valley Irrigation District

Name: Jim Foster

Email: sharonfoster@hvid-mt.com

Phone: (406) 442-3292

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: HVID Lateral 11.9 Pipeline Conversion and Gate Automation Project and the HVID Terminal Wasteway and Lateral Automation & Measurement Project

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Montana Watershed Coordination Council

Name: Ethan Kunard

Email: ethan@mtwatersheds.org

Phone: (406) 600-6771

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-14: Long-Range Building Bonding Program 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Montana Watershed Coordination Council

Name: Ethan Kunard

Email: ethan@mtwatersheds.org

Phone: (406) 600-6771

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Big Hole Watershed Committee
Name: Pedro Marques
Email: info@bhwc.org
Phone: (406) 552-2369
City, State: Missoula, MT
Written Statement: Not Provided
Files: 2021_HB6 Testimony_BHWC.pdf
Testify via Zoom: No
Zoom Method: N/A



Post Office Box 21
Divide, Montana 59727
(406) 960-4855
info@bhwc.org
<https://bhwc.org>

January 24, 2021

Steering Committee

Randy Smith- Chair
Rancher - Middle Big Hole
Jim Hagenbarth- Vice Chair
Rancher - Middle Big Hole
Roy Morris- Secretary
George Grant Trout Unlimited
Steve Luebeck- Treasurer
Sportsman

Governing Board

Dave Ashcraft
Rancher- Lower Big Hole
Sierra Harris
The Nature Conservancy
Peter Frick
Rancher- Upper Big Hole
Jim Dennehy
Butte-Silver Bow Water Dept.
Eric Thorson
Fishing Guide & Outfitter
John Jackson
Beaverhead County
Rancher- Upper Big Hole
Hans Humbert
Rancher- Middle Big Hole
Liz Jones
Rancher- Middle Big Hole
Mark Kambich
Rancher- Middle Big Hole
Brian Wheeler
Big Hole River Foundation
Erik Kalsta
Rancher- Lower Big Hole
Dean Peterson
Rancher- Upper Big Hole
Phil Ralston
Rancher- Middle Big Hole
John Reinhardt
Rancher- Middle Big Hole
Bill Kempf
Fishing Guide
Paul Cleary
Resident
Andy Suenram
Resident and Sportsman
Mark Raffetty
Rancher- Lower Big Hole
Ray Weaver
Rancher- Upper Big Hole

TO: Chairman Hopkins; Senators Cuffe, Smith, and Boldman; and
Representative Hamilton and Vinton
FROM: Missouri Headwaters Partnership
RE: House Bill 6 – Renewable Resource Grants

Dear Honorable Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Please accept this letter of support from the Big Hole Watershed Committee (BHWC) for the Watershed Management Grant (WMG) program within House Bill 6.

Established in 1995, BHWC is a watershed group and central hub of diverse viewpoints on resource and community concerns. Over the last 25 years, we've created a culture of cooperation and collaboration in the Big Hole, recognizing that maintaining the health of the river and surrounding communities is vital to all who live, work, and recreate here. Our Drought Management Plan (DMP) and conservation efforts by BHWC and partners have so far prevented ESA listing of our native Arctic grayling; instead, we work as a community to find solutions that benefit all river stakeholders.

In 2016, BHWC hosted a Watershed Management Grant, which we used to update our existing DMP, est. 1997. The update included revising the DMP, publishing and distributing it to local water users and businesses, adding a [River Conditions webpage](#) to our website, and hosting stakeholder outreach and coordination meetings. Now, we are on the cusp of strengthening connections with our lower river stakeholders to bolster water conservation efforts, a process that could benefit greatly from future WMG funding.

Please consider funding the WMG program as a part of House Bill 6.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Pedro Marques
Executive Director, Big Hole Watershed Committee

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-25 10:00 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: Missouri Headwaters Partnership
Name: Tana Nulph
Email: tnulph@bhwc.org
Phone: (406) 267-3421
City, State: Divide, MT
Written Statement: Not Provided
Files: 2021_HB6 Testimony from MHP.pdf Testify via Zoom: No Zoom Method: N/A



Missouri Headwaters Partnership
P.O. Box 21, Divide, MT 59727
(406) 267-3421
tnulph@bhwc.org

January 24, 2021

Missouri Headwaters Partnership

Tana Nulph- Chair
Big Hole Watershed Committee

David Laufenberg
Madison Conservation District

Audra Bell
*Ruby Valley Conservation District/
Ruby Watershed Council*

Zach Owen
*Beaverhead Watershed Committee/
Beaverhead Conservation District*

Kara Maplethorpe
Centennial Valley Association

Bob Sims
*Lower Jefferson River Watershed
Council*

Ted Dodge
Jefferson River Watershed Council

Holly Hill
Gallatin Watershed Council

Kristin Gardner
Gallatin River Task Force

TO: Chairman Hopkins; Senators Cuffe, Smith, and Boldman; and
Representative Hamilton and Vinton

FROM: Missouri Headwaters Partnership

RE: House Bill 6 – Renewable Resource Grants

Dear Honorable Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Please accept this letter of support from the Missouri Headwaters Partnership (MHP) for the Watershed Management Grant (WMG) program within House Bill 6.

MHP is a regional collaborative that promotes economic and ecologic sustainability by supporting the natural resource integrity, water quality, water quantity, and economic and ecologic values of the landscapes and communities of the Missouri River headwaters basin. MHP's intent is to provide information, education, and coordination to the individual watershed groups comprising the MHP and to pursue funding, collaboration, and support for basin wide projects that are mutually beneficial for each of the included groups and downstream neighbors. Several of MHP's member groups have been awarded Watershed Management Grants the past.

Grant opportunities for drought planning and watershed stewardship are few and far between, making the WMG program all the more valuable for the gap that it fills in funding availability. Rural watershed groups like those that comprise MHP depend on this funding to address critical planning and drought resiliency needs in their respective watersheds. Please consider funding the Watershed Management Grant program as a part of House Bill 6.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tana Nulph". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Tana Nulph
Chair, Missouri Headwaters Partnership

Details:

Bill: HB-14: Long-Range Building Bonding Program 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Montana Association of Conservation Districts

Name: Jeffrey Tiberi

Email: Tiberi52@gmail.com

Phone: (406) 465-8813

City, State: Helena

Written Statement: HB 14 helps a number of Conservation Districts get "conservation on the ground." These are irrigation related projects that deal with our state's infrastructure. We must continually invest in our infrastructure to keep our natural resources healthy and economy functioning. The Montana Association of Conservation Districts supports this bill. Thank you.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: No

Organization: N/A

Name: Ed Lieser

Email: liesered@yahoo.com

Phone: (406) 471-2082

City, State: Whitefish, Montana

Written Statement: Support private grants in HB6.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Yellowstone Conservation District

Name: Ray Beck

Email: beck_ray2001@yahoo.com

Phone: (406) 431-4465

City, State: Helena

Written Statement: Mr. Chairman, members of the committee my name is Ray Beck, I work for the Yellowstone Conservation District (YCD) out of Billings Montana. The YCD would like to go on record supporting the Huntley Project Irrigation District Yellowstone River Bank Stabilization Project. The Yellowstone River ecosystem as well as the agricultural infrastructure of the valley is a high priority for the YCD. Please support this project. Thank You!

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-14: Long-Range Building Bonding Program 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Glasgow Irrigation District

Name: Matthew R Selvig

Email: msevig@wwcengineering.com

Phone: (406) 599-3736

City, State: Helena, MT

Written Statement: The following testimony is from David Mix, the Glasgow Irrigation District field manager.

Glasgow Irrigation District is looking to replace the failing Spaniard Check in our Main Canal. In its current state, the check is highly inefficient. We have issues with building adequate head pressure due to water leaking through the concrete structure. The cracking and spalling is also creating issues with our metal gates that we use to raise and lower the water levels. Our ability to maintain and keep the check working is diminishing every year. All this leads to longer irrigation times for the irrigators which then leads to longer wait times for other irrigators. This then causes issues with crop production including drowning out crops or not being able to irrigate at all before having to cut crops like alfalfa.

This grant would help us replace a failing piece of infrastructure. It would increase our efficiency in delivering water by allowing us to keep the head pressure up where it needs to be, decreasing watering times. This would translate to more acres being irrigated with less water and in a timely manner. Which should boost production by allowing time for a second and a possible third cutting with alfalfa and increased yields in grain crops.

And added benefit to replacing this check would be giving local contractors an opportunity to work close to home. This translates to more money being spent in our community by way of supplies and materials.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Stillwater CD/Mendenhall Ditch Co

Name: Polly Rex

Email: polly@montana.net

Phone: (406) 860-9363

City, State: Absarokee

Written Statement: Mendenhall Ditch Company Intake and Drop Structure Rehabilitation Project RRGL Grant

Testimony, via Zoom at SCD, Columbus January 26, 2021

9:12 a.m.

Committee Members: good morning; I am Polly Rex, Mendenhall Ditch Sec.-Treas. and largest shareholder on the Ditch. The Mendenhall Ditch has been in operation for 125 years and my family has been irrigating out of the ditch for the past 66 years. The Ditch serves 13 irrigators on approximately 900 acres, half of which are under conservation easement.

We are seeking funding to replace our existing intake structure on the Stillwater River, which will include a new concrete headwall and slide gates. The headgate was built in 1968 and, although the concrete has been patched numerous times, signs of age, including gate and structure leakage, cannot be overlooked much longer.

We will relocate the water measuring flume closer to the intake for efficiency and better management of water delivery. In addition, we will replace three drop tubes, and add a fourth, at the terminal end of the ditch where excess water flows into Rosebud Creek. These drops were installed in 1954 by the State Highway Dept. to reduce

water velocity and limit erosion. They are significantly corroded and eroding adjacent soil which gets transported directly into Rosebud Creek and on into the Stillwater River.

Hay, crop and forage production on land irrigated by the Mendenhall Ditch provides income to 13 ranch families with an estimated \$270,000 in annual revenues. These dollars are multiplied several times through the purchase of supplies and fuel, helping to support local businesses, local government and schools. Funding for, and completion of this project, will ensure economic benefits from agriculture long into the future.

The Mendenhall diversion is located on a highly desirable section of the Stillwater River used by fishermen and rafters. Pro-active replacement of these facilities will benefit the Stillwater River and Rosebud Creek fisheries through better management of irrigation flows, conservation and water quality. With this project we expect to conserve about 950 acre ft. of water per irrigation season. Water quality will be improved on just under a mile (0.9) of Rosebud Creek and 12 miles of the Stillwater River

Without significant increases in our yearly shareholder dues, or taking on significant debt, a project like this would be years in the making. We are grateful that the Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program is available for projects like this. On behalf of all the Mendenhall Ditch Shareholders and myself, thank you for taking the time to hear about our project and we hope you will consider it for funding.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: No

Organization: N/A

Name: Holly Phelps

Email: hphelps@ci.lewistown.mt.us

Phone: (406) 535-1760

City, State: Lewistown

Written Statement: The project includes lining the ditch immediately upstream and adjacent to the Joyland Road Lift Station. The City is working cooperatively with the Ditch Company on this project. This project is very simple but has the important goal of keeping the water in the ditch and out of the City's wastewater lift station and Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The influent at the City of Lewistown's Wastewater Treatment plant is approximately 50% clean water.

When the Lewistown Ditch is Running, water from this ditch seeps through the joints in the sewer pipe and gets into the lift station. A tremendous amount of "extra water" is pumped to the Wastewater treatment plant and them must be treated. The City of Lewistown has and will continue to make infrastructure improvements to reduce the amount of I & I going into our Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The ditch company has no real reason to make improvements and prevent this water loss from the ditch, therefore the City has taken the lead on this project. The funding provided by DNRC is critical for this project to move forward.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-14: Long-Range Building Bonding Program 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning
Position: Proponent
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: Montana Association of Conservation Districts
Name: Rebecca Boslough
Email: rebecca@macdnet.org
Phone: (406) 443-5711
City, State: Helena
Written Statement: Not Provided
Files:
Testify via Zoom: Yes
Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning
Position: Proponent
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: Fort Peck Water Users Association
Name: Cole Sibley
Email: zg77_lignite@yahoo.com
Phone: (406) 263-7022
City, State: Nashua MT
Written Statement: Water Monitoring:

The Fort Peck Irrigation Project has been working on improving and modernizing water monitoring for years, but it has proven very difficult and very expensive because our Water Project is a flood irrigation system designed roughly 80 years ago, when there was no thought at all given to worrying about amounts of water used. We have an engineering firm working for us now, WWC, that has come up with a new direction to move in, namely electronic monitoring of the output and status of our pumps. This will give us an exact amount of water pumped, and allow for cross checking and improved delivery monitoring in the future.

This directly affects all of the Water Users on this project, such as myself, as well as the Fort Peck Tribes whose water rights are used to irrigate this land, and the State of Montana which is responsible for the Missouri river system, as well as downstream interests, because water availability and fair-use becomes more and more important in these modern times.

Pump Automation:

The other aspect that this grant will allow is Pump Automation. This will be a vast improvement over what we have now, which is 50 year old switch gear. The automation will warn, by cell phone, when a power outage occurs (which happens often, caused by any lightning storms, wind storms, etcetera) and allow the pumps to be restarted immediately without having to drive all the way to the pumping plant to do it by hand (as is currently required of our employees, who could be at home in the middle of the night 20-30 miles away). What this means to the Water Users is that pump outages will be dramatically reduced. Where-as in the past the pumps would be off for hours, sometimes many hours, now they will be able to be restarted immediately and with minimal effort (even in the middle of the night). Currently when the pumps are off for a few hours due to a power outage, the canals and ditches will lose their charge and all progress on a field will be lost, with as many as 20-30 fields being watered by different water users at one time. This can be devastating in the heat of the summer on crops like alfalfa and wheat, as the time it takes to re-flood a field that lost it's progress can be extremely damaging to the roots of the crop. This is especially damaging to Water Users like myself at the "tail end" of a canal, where these time fluctuations are amplified even more-so than the 'top end' of the canal, many hours or even days can be lost.

In conclusion, I hope that I got my point across as to how important these additions will be to the Fort Peck Irrigation Project here in north east Montana. Our project was designed nearly 80 years ago, and has always been self-funded through Operation and Maintenance charges to the Water Users, but we actively search out alternative funding such as this RRG grant to help increase efficiency and modernize our aging system in areas that were never dreamed of in the past.

If there are any questions I'd be glad to do my best to answer them.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Phone

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: No

Organization: N/A

Name: Kent Myers

Email: kent.myers@bresnan.net

Phone: (406) 381-4236

City, State: Hamilton, MT

Written Statement: Testimony providers:

Kent Myers - Bitterroot Conservation District Al Pernichele - Bitterroot River water commissioner Molly Davidson - Senior Water Resources Engineer, Morrison-Maierle - will be available to respond to technical questions

Testimony:

My name is Kent Myers, and I am a supervisor with the Bitterroot Conservation District. The District shares jurisdictional boundaries with Ravalli County and encompasses approximately 80% of the Bitterroot River drainage. The Bitterroot River plays an important role in the economy of Ravalli County since it is both a source of irrigation water for farm lands and is also a blue ribbon trout fishery that attracts anglers from all over the world. The ability to effectively manage water entitlements throughout the drainage, for both irrigation and in-stream flows, is critical to the health of the river and the economic sectors that depend on it. The District is therefore requesting RRG funding for the Bitterroot River Irrigation Management Study, to assess the condition of irrigation intake diversion structures and associated flow measurement devices on a 60 mile reach of the Bitterroot River. Additionally, the Study will identify infrastructure in the greatest need of improvement, and will provide detailed recommendations, including concept level hydraulics, that could form the basis for future projects to improve the management of surface water. Since the study section includes twenty irrigation diversions, accounting for approximately 90% of the total water diverted from the Bitterroot, the improvements identified by this study have the potential to provide significant benefits for irrigation and river water management, aquatic habitat, and surface water conservation in Ravalli County. Thank you and at this time I am transferring the testimony to Al Pernichele.

My name is Al Pernichele. I have been the water commissioner on the Bitterroot River for the past 17 years. As water commissioner I am responsible for monitoring and controlling water diverted into 20 headgates located between Painted Rocks Reservoir and Bell Crossing. This includes diversion and protection of adjudicated water rights and ensuring that diversions are in accordance with the rate, volume and other provisions specified in each water right. I am also responsible for releasing water from Painted Rocks reservoir that is used to maintain instream flow and to delivering water entitled to irrigators through purchase of stored Reservoir water. Infrastructure at many diversions is no longer in a condition that allows accurate water control and flow measurements. This makes it

impossible to accurately divert water into many headgates. The proposed study will identify, and prioritize work needed to upgrade water control structures and water measurement devices needed at each diversion so that they meet requirements specified in applicable Montana State codes. Due to the extents of this system, we need a study to understand priorities to make the greatest impact to renewable resource management and conservation. This study will allow us to target the most impactful projects and would provide a comprehensive resource management tool affecting the entire basin.

We therefore respectfully request your support for the Bitterroot River Irrigation Management Study.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Beaverhead Conservation District and Watershed

Name: Zach Owen

Email: zach@beaverheadwatershed.org

Phone: (406) 461-1846

City, State: Dillon, MT

Written Statement: Chairman Hopkins and members of the Joint Subcommittee on Long Range Planning, I'm writing in support of the Beaverhead Conservation District Irrigation Efficiency and Water Measurement Project. The Conservation District, Watershed Committee, and our community, agency and conservation organization partners have identified the Red Rock as a high priority in our county. The highest priority for us in the Red Rock area are the irrigators along that river. We've been working to build relationships with ranchers and irrigators, to help upgrade their diversions and improve water rights administration, and by allowing them to better track their water, we can work on drought plans, fish passage and late season stream flow, which impact both the irrigators and all downstream users in our community.

The irrigators on the Red Rock realize that the days of opening the headgate and letting water flow unrestricted are coming to an end. With water shortages and more people coming to Montana, water use will be and should be more closely tracked and managed. This project is their first step toward proactively improving their water measurement and management. The last time I checked the ranking and budget, we were recommended for funding but fell just below the funding line. Please consider including this project in the current budget.

Thank you.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: No

Zoom Method: N/A

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Water Users Irrigation Co.

Name: Allen Martinell

Email: allenmartinell@gmail.com

Phone: (406) 276-3380

City, State: Dell, MT

Written Statement: Allen Martinell, President of Water Users Irrigation Company, is submitting an electronic letter of support for the Renewable Grant & Loan Program, within House Bill 6, on behalf of Water Users Irrigation Company.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Informational Witness

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Fort Belknap Indian Community

Name: kristal fox

Email: kristalfox78@gmail.com

Phone: (406) 390-3908

City, State: harlem

Written Statement: Not Provided

Files: Part 2_MilkRiver_Proposal Abstract.pdf Testify via Zoom: Yes Zoom Method: Phone

Part 2: Proposal Abstract

Proposal Abstract

The Fort Belknap Indian Community (FBIC) is proposing to replace their main diversion structure gates and add an automation system with flow management capabilities (SCADA). The FBIC uses the Milk River for irrigation water used during the irrigation season. Replacing the old diversion gates and installing an automation system will provide for remote control of the gates and better management of the irrigation flows supporting the 9,000 acres of FBIP (Fort Belknap Irrigation Project).

Many depend on the Milk River. The Milk River is important not only because of irrigation needs but also because of the fish and wildlife habitat within its canal banks. The proposed replacement and automation of the diversion gates would conserve 784 million gallons of water a year and help support the Milk River fisheries and wildlife habitat.

Alfalfa hay, grass hay and cattle are the main crops in the FBIP. Currently, most crops are underperforming due to water shortages during times when the diversion gates are not monitored. The proposed SCADA system will deliver information to FBIC staff so they can make critical real time irrigation decisions. Automation will allow the gates to be maneuvered remotely and will eliminate daily trips to the gates.

Waters diverted into the FBIP from the Milk River supports reservoirs and wetlands. These waterbodies depend on the Milk River. The reservoirs get 40% of their water from the Milk River. The wetlands can run dry during low flow periods creating stress on sensitive wetland species. The reservoirs provide a holding facility for irrigation waters for downstream users of the FBIP as well as outdoor recreation for the area.

The Milk River is the main source of irrigation waters for the 9,000 acres of the FBIP. New automated gates will increase water conservation in the Milk River and increase crop production in the FBIP. The SCADA system will monitor flows diverted from the Milk River into the FBIP canal system and help manage both agricultural and non-agricultural activities. The new diversion gates with automation and SCADA will improve management, increase conservation, and increase crop production.

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Bitter Root Irrigation District

Name: Molly Davidson

Email: mdavidson@m-m.net

Phone: (406) 542-8880

City, State: Missoula, MT

Written Statement: Bitter Root Irrigation District Water Efficiency, Modernization, and Planning Study RRG Testimony

Testimony provided by:

Molly Davidson, Morrison-Maierle

John Crowley, Bitter Root Irrigation District

Molly Davidson – Engineering consultant with Morrison Maierle

Good morning chairperson and committee. My name is Molly Davidson. That is spelled [...]. I am an engineer who assisted Bitter Root Irrigation District with this grant application.

The District is the largest irrigation system in the Bitterroot valley managing nearly 17,000 irrigated acres and serves approximately 1,500 users. The District serves irrigation via a single 72-mile long Big Ditch connecting Lake Como to irrigators on the east side of the valley.

The current condition of system presents issues related to reliable and efficient water delivery. These issues include urbanization, inefficient wasteways, operational safety concerns, age of infrastructure, and need for modernization. An evaluation of the system will identify priorities in surface water delivery management and conservation along with preservation of arable lands. The identification of priorities will result in smart expenditures of water user rates set aside for capital investments in consideration of renewable resource benefits.

The identification conservation projects will have a direct impact on the duration of the irrigation season as stored water in Lake Como frequently falls short of the target end of season delivery date.

This Study will provide the District with a comprehensive plan that outlines flow and monitoring needs, structure rehabilitation or replacement prioritization and cost estimates, methods to enhance operation efficiency and urbanization issues, and a strategy for implementing water conservation efforts.

John Crowley – Manager with Bitter Root Irrigation District

My name is John Crowley. That is spelled [...]. I am the manager of Bitter Root Irrigation District. I have been with the District for 17 years. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

The Bitter Root Irrigation District is a large system with a tremendous amount of infrastructure which includes Como dam, 8 large steel siphons, 8 diversions 97 headgates and a 72-miles of main canal. We are a proactive irrigation district who values and understands the value of asset management. Our rate structure includes a component for replacement projects, and we are constantly updating infrastructure; however, we lack a management document that provides guidance / road map on which projects are priority based on resource value. Due to the sheer volume of project needs, we need a study to understand priorities to make the greatest impact to renewable resource management and conservation to best expend the water user assessments.

With this list of project priorities in place, the District will be prepared for grant opportunities as they arise.

We are struggling with urbanization, which is the impact of urban development around our system and we struggle with a system that was built over a 100 years ago and lacks modernization.

Bitter Root Irrigation District therefore respectfully request your support on this grant.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning

Position: Proponent

Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes

Organization: Hill County

Name: Jake Strissel

Email: strissel@hillcounty.us

Phone: (406) 399-1332
City, State: Havre, MT
Written Statement: Not Provided
Files:
Testify via Zoom: Yes
Zoom Method: Computer

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning
Position: Proponent
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: Hysham Irrigation District
Name: Molly Davidson
Email: mdavidson@m-m.net
Phone: (406) 542-8880
City, State: Missoula, MT
Written Statement: Hysham Irrigation District Intake Improvements Project RRG Testimony

Testimony provided by:

Molly Davidson, Morrison-Maierle
Bart Icopini, Hysham Irrigation District (separate link)

Molly Davidson – Engineering consultant with Morrison Maierle

Good morning chairperson and committee. My name is Molly Davidson [spelled M-o-l-l-y D-a-v-i-d-s-o-n] and I am an engineer that assisted with this grant application for Hysham Irrigation District.

This Intake Improvements Project provides multiple resource benefits. Delivery of irrigation water into the into the Hysham Irrigation District is in jeopardy. Migration of the Yellowstone River, erosion, and elevation constraints places the Irrigation District at risk of losing their ability to divert irrigation water into the entire irrigation system. This project seeks to incorporate bank stabilization measures in combination of river training to protect the intake works from erosive forces.

This project provides significant impacts to renewable resources. A failure of the diversion facility would be detrimental and would result in the inability to serve the entire irrigation district. The Hysham Irrigation District Intake Improvements Project provides significant renewable resource benefits and ensures a dependable future for irrigators. At this time, Bart Icopini would like to testify on behalf of Hysham Irrigation. We will be logging in via a separate zoom link.

Files:
Testify via Zoom: Yes
Zoom Method: Comp

Details:

Bill: HB-6: Renewable Resource Grants 2021-01-26 08:30 AM - (H) JAS on Long-Range Planning
Position: Proponent
Representing an Entity/Another Person: Yes
Organization: Hysham Irrigation District
Name: Bart Icopini
Email: icopini@rangeweb.net
Phone: (406) 690-8567

City, State: Hysham, MT

Written Statement: Hysham Irrigation District Intake Improvements Project RRG Testimony

Testimony provided by:

Molly Davidson, Morrison-Maierle (completed first via separate zoom link) Bart Icopini, Hysham Irrigation District

Bart Icopini – Board Member with Hysham Irrigation District

My name is Bart Icopini. That is spelled [...]. I am the board member of Hysham Irrigation District. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Hysham Irrigation District manages the irrigation network that provides water to approximately 6,300 acres of row crops, small grains, and hay. The main headgate diverts irrigation water from the Yellowstone River into a single diversion facility.

We have witnessed aggressive bank erosion upgradient of their intake at a rate of 6 feet per year and we are aware of the reality of complete loss of these intake works. The erosion is threatening the intake structure, supply canal, protection levee and pumphouse that conveys water to the entire system. High water events and damaging velocities threaten washout of the diversion facility that supplies the entire District. If the upstream buffer of land erodes away, strong forces will be in direct contact with the levee, which is the final protective measure before reaching the supply canal. This project is necessary to preserve irrigation supply to the District.

We therefore respectfully request your support for the Hysham Irrigation District Intake Improvements Project.

Files:

Testify via Zoom: Yes

Zoom Method: Phone