

CONSTRUCTION FIELD REPORT



Project Name: NCMRWA Segment W4-B1 Shelby to Conrad

◇ **Report Date:** 11/3/2017

Owner: NCMRWA

Project Location: Shelby to Conrad, MT

KLJ Project No: 4615048

Contractors: Downing Construction Inc.

Reporter: Aaron Peters

Weather & Site Conditions

- Cool through the week with highs in the 40's and 50's.

Construction Activities

- The week of October 29th Downing Construction did cleanup, backfilling, fencing, finished the last ARV valve, and placed reflective tape on the bollard posts. Downing will begin connecting to bore pipe starting Monday 11-6-17.
- CTI ran the 30" reamer with a 28" barrel through the bore successfully. The 28" barrel was pulled through the bore next to simulate the pipe and confirm a clear path. The pipe was then pulled through the bore hole on Wednesday 11-1-17 with no issues.

Construction Pictures

Reamer and Barrel



Fence Installation



Lori Stratton

From: Larry Bonderud
Sent: Tuesday, November 07, 2017 9:27 AM
To: Lori Stratton
Subject: Fwd: US 2 Rest Area Siting Study

Packets

Sent from my iPhone

Mayor Lar

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lorette Carter <shbcdc@3rivers.net>
Date: November 7, 2017 at 9:01:36 AM MST
To: <snicolai@dowl.com>
Cc: Larry Bonderud <larry@shelbymt.com>
Subject: US 2 Rest Area Siting Study

Good Morning Sarah,
Mayor Larry Bonderud asked me to follow up on the DOWL study of rest areas along Highway 2. Shelby is very interested in the study and hope we might offer input. Please feel free to contact me or Mayor Bonderud. Mayor Bonderud can be reached at Shelby City Hall – 406-434-5222 and I am at 406-424-8799.

Thank you,
Lorette Carter

Lorette Carter
City of Shelby
112 1st St. South
Shelby, MT 59474
(406) 424-8799
shbcdc@3rivers.net

Lori Stratton

From: Larry Bonderud
Sent: Wednesday, November 08, 2017 11:25 AM
To: Lori Stratton
Subject: Fwd: Montana Water Court Case No. 41P-188
Attachments: 171108 status report.pdf; ATT00001.htm

Packets

Sent from my iPhone

Mayor Lar

Begin forwarded message:

From: "Abigail St. Lawrence" <abigail.stlawrence@gmail.com>
Date: November 8, 2017 at 11:16:20 AM MST
To: <larry@shelbymt.com>
Subject: FW: Montana Water Court Case No. 41P-188

FYI

Abigail St. Lawrence
Attorney at Law
(406) 431-9032
PO Box 2019
Helena, MT 59624

This message may contain confidential privileged material, including attorney-client communications and attorney work product. This electronic transmission does not constitute a waiver of privilege. Please contact sender immediately if you have received this message in error. Thank you.

From: "Abigail St. Lawrence" <abigail.stlawrence@gmail.com>
Date: Wednesday, November 8, 2017 at 11:15 AM
To: <watercourt@mt.gov>
Cc: <james.dubois@usdoj.gov>, <scbeede@aol.com>, <blf@helenalaw.com>
Subject: Montana Water Court Case No. 41P-188

Please find attached for filing in the above-referenced case the City of Shelby's status report. By delivery and return receipt notification, you are acknowledging receipt and filing of the attached. Thank you.

Abigail St. Lawrence

Attorney at Law

(406) 431-9032

PO Box 2019

Helena, MT 59624

This message may contain confidential privileged material, including attorney-client communications and attorney work product. This electronic transmission does not constitute a waiver of privilege. Please contact sender immediately if you have received this message in error. Thank you.

Abigail J. St. Lawrence
ATTORNEY AT LAW
PO Box 2019
Helena, MT 59624
Telephone: (406) 431-9032
Email: abigail.stlawrence@gmail.com
Attorney for City of Shelby

**MONTANA WATER COURT, UPPER MISSOURI DIVISION
MARIAS RIVER BASIN (41P)**

CLAIMANTS: Gary A. Buffington; Gay Buffington; Jess Leach; Stefanie B. Leach

OBJECTORS: City of Shelby; United States of America (Bureau of Reclamation)

NOTICE OF INTENT TO APPEAR: Pondera County Canal & Reservoir Co.

CASE NO. 41P-188

41P 156361-00

STATUS REPORT

COMES NOW Objector City of Shelby (hereinafter referred to as "City"), by and through its undersigned counsel of record, and pursuant to and in accordance with this Court's October 10, 2017 Order Extending Settlement Deadline, hereby submits the following status report.

The City had previously been informed that Claimants Jess and Stefanie Leach (hereinafter collectively referred to as "Leach") had in their possession and were reviewing the paperwork necessary for withdrawal as presented by the United States of America (Bureau of Reclamation). Such withdrawal is anticipated to resolve the City's objections. Last week, counsel for the City left messages for both Leach and the Bureau of Reclamation inquiring as to the status of that paperwork. Counsel for the City has received no response to those inquiries. The City has nothing further to report at this time.

DATED this 8th day of November, 2017.

/s/ Abigail J. St. Lawrence
Abigail J. St. Lawrence
Attorney for City of Shelby

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I certify I served on November 8, 2017, a true and correct copy of the foregoing *Status Report*, filed with the above-identified Court, on the following:

_____ Hand delivery
_____ Overnight delivery service
4 U.S. mail, first-class
_____ Fax (to the number indicated below)
1-3 Email (to the address indicated below)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. James J. DuBois
United States Department of Justice
Environmental and Natural
Resources Division
james.dubois@usdoj.gov | 2. John E. Bloomquist
Rachel K. Meredith
Rick C. Tappan
Bloomquist Law Firm, P.C.
blf@helenalaw.com |
| 3. Jess and Stefanie B. Leach
250 4800 Road South
Ledger, MT 59456
scbeede@aol.com | 4. Gary A. and Gay Buffington
5441 Broadhurst Road
Ledger, MT 59456-9037 |

/s/ Abigail J. St. Lawrence
Abigail J. St. Lawrence



PO BOX 201706
Helena, MT 59620-1706
(406) 444-3064
FAX (406) 444-3036

Local Government Interim Committee 65th Montana Legislature

SENATE MEMBERS

ROGER WEBB--Chair
CYDNIE (CARLIE) BOLAND
MARGARET (MARGIE) MACDONALD
FRED THOMAS

HOUSE MEMBERS

MARY ANN DUNWELL--Vice Chair
DAVE FERN
ADAM HERTZ
JEREMY TREBAS

COMMITTEE STAFF

LEANNE KURTZ, Lead Staff
K. VIRGINIA ALDRICH, Staff Attorney
KATYA GROVER, Secretary

DRAFT AGENDA

Local Government Interim Committee

November 8-9, 2017

Room 152, State Capitol

NOTE: Agenda times are approximate. Some items may take more or less time than is allotted.

Wednesday, November 8, 2017

- 1:00 **Call to order, roll call** - Sen. Roger Webb, Chair
- 1:05 **Agenda review, work plan updates** - Leanne Kurtz, Committee staff
- 1:15 **SJR 21 study of emergency management and volunteer firefighter systems**
- Review study resolution and previous discussions
 - EMS Grant Program administered by Montana Department of Transportation - Janet Kenny, MDT Highway Traffic Safety Supervisor
 - SJR 32 study of community paramedicine: overview of Economic Affairs activities - Leanne Kurtz, Local Government Committee staff
 - 2008 EMS Program Audit: DPHHS/DLI responses and updates, Jim DeTienne, Section Supervisor, DPHHS EMS and Trauma Systems Section; Ian Marquand, Executive Director, Board of Medical Examiners
 - DNRC County Co-op program overview - Mike DeGrosky, DNRC Fire and Aviation Bureau Chief
 - Mutual Aid - Bob Drake, Chief, Tri-Lakes Fire Department
 - Volunteer firefighters by the numbers -- number of districts, total number of firefighters, total enrolled in VFR, estimated with/without workers comp - Leonard Lundby, Montana Fire Alliance
 - Local authority to regulate fireworks - Ginger Aldrich, Staff Attorney
 - Public comment
 - Committee questions, next steps

- 3:00 **HJR 25 Study of Municipal Fire Departments**
- Review study resolution and previous discussions
 - Municipal classifications - Leanne Kurtz
 - History of municipal fire statutes - Leanne Kurtz
 - Overview of Washington's Regional Fire Authority - Leanne Kurtz
 - Public comment
 - Committee questions, next steps

- 3:45 **Panel Discussion: 2017 Fire Season and Impacts to Local Fire Departments (portions of SJR 21 and SJR 25 studies).** Panelists will be asked to:
- recap 2017 season and local resources, response, costs to state and local entities
 - describe what worked, what didn't
 - describe where gaps may be in the system
 - offer ideas on policies the Legislature could pursue to strengthen local entity response
 - discuss emerging service delivery models with paid/volunteer combination
- Panelists: Fire Chiefs Association and Fire Council Association members
- Public comment
 - Committee questions, next steps

5:00 **Recess**

Thursday, November 9, 2017

- 8:00 **Reconvene**
- 8:05 **MSU Local Government Center overview** - Dan Clark, Director, Local Government Center
- 8:45 **Local Government Budgeting Workshop** - Harold Blattie, Executive Director, Montana Association of Counties; Kim Smith, Bureau Chief, Department of Administration Local Government Services Bureau
- 11:45 **Lunch**
- 12:30 **Entitlement Share - origins**

- Local Government Funding and Structure Committee members - Harold Blattie, Bob Story, Susan Nicosia

1:30

Land Use and Housing

- DEQ Subdivision and Development Advisory Council - Tim Davis, Department of Environmental Quality Water Quality Division Administrator

2:00

Bridge and Road Safety and Accountability Act (HB 473)

- Guidance document - Eric Bryson, Assistant Director, MACo; Kelly Lynch, Deputy Director, Montana League of Cities and Towns; Larry Flynn, Administrator, Department of Transportation Administration Division
- Projected March 2018 distribution
- Public comment
- Committee questions

3:00

HJR 18 TIF study

- RTIC activity update - Megan Moore, RTIC staff
- Joint meeting with RTIC in March - what to expect

3:30

Public comment on any item within the Local Government Committee's subject matter jurisdiction

4:00

March meeting preview

4:15

Adjourn

*Public comment provided in person to the committee is a public record that is videotaped, archived, and available on the Internet. Public comment submitted in writing at a committee meeting is a public record that will be posted to the legislative Web site as part of the minutes log for the committee meeting.

*The Montana Legislative Services Division will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in this public meeting. For questions about accessibility or to request accommodations, please contact Lenore Adams at 406-444-4456 or leadams@mt.gov as soon as possible before the meeting date.

Lori Stratton

From: Larry Bonderud
Sent: Thursday, November 09, 2017 11:22 AM
To: Lori Stratton
Subject: Fwd: Project Transition
Attachments: image001.jpg

Council

Sent from my iPhone

Mayor Lar

Begin forwarded message:

From: Brad Koon <brad.koon@kljeng.com>
Date: November 9, 2017 at 11:13:21 AM MST
To: "Larry Bonderud (larry@shelbymt.com)" <larry@shelbymt.com>
Subject: Project Transition

Larry:

Per your request in our phone conversation this morning, following is a list of the Shelby projects that Jason and I have been working on, along with the proposed transition person:

Shelby Airport Water Line – Andy Evensen

Shelby Storm Water – Andy Evensen

Shelby 2017 Water Improvements – Andy Evensen

Shelby Wastewater Treatment – Andy Evensen

Shelby Rail Safety Project – Scott Pfahler

Andy Evensen – (406)897-4137
Andy.evensen@kljeng.com

Scott Pfahler – (406)461-0839
Scott.pfahler@kljeng.com

My new phone number is (406)461-0692.

Thanks for Everything Larry!!!

Brad

Lori Stratton

From: Larry Bonderud
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2017 10:59 AM
To: Lori Stratton; Neta User
Subject: Fwd: RELEASE: Republican Petition to Expand the Special Session Call Succeeds

Packets.

Sent from my iPhone

Mayor Lar

Begin forwarded message:

From: Melissa Lewis <melissa@mlewisassoc.com>
Date: November 10, 2017 at 10:39:15 AM MST
To: "larry@shelbymt.com" <larry@shelbymt.com>
Subject: Fwd: **RELEASE: Republican Petition to Expand the Special Session Call Succeeds**

See below

Begin forwarded message:

From: Lindsey Singer <lindsey.singer@gmail.com>
Date: November 10, 2017 at 10:53:01 AM CST
To: Lindsey Singer <lindsey.singer@gmail.com>
Subject: **RELEASE: Republican Petition to Expand the Special Session Call Succeeds**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 10, 2017

Contact: [Lindsey Singer](#)

Republican Petition to Expand the Special Session Call Succeeds

HELENA, Mont. – Passing the 76-signature threshold, Republicans have garnered the support needed to consider and vote on additional topics outside of those listed by Governor Steve Bullock in his call for a Special Legislative Session to be held on November 14.

Without the expansion, Legislators would have been limited to consideration of only the topics in Bullock's call, which the majority of Republicans felt is too narrow and does not include issues important to their caucus.

“Republicans have responded overwhelmingly that we need to expand the discussion during next week's session far beyond the extremely narrow priorities that Bullock laid out. Instead of making an effort to reduce government spending, the Governor's first step was to call the Legislature back to Helena to push his agenda of raising taxes, and we're not willing to go along with that plan,” said Speaker of the House Austin Knudsen.

“With taxpayers in mind, we're bringing more options to the table so that we can make better decisions. We're bringing the offer from the prison in Shelby, additional ideas for transferring funds, and we're going to make sure that Governor Bullock's cuts are talked about and voted on. Before raising taxes or cutting benefits we're going to look at all functions of government,” said Senate President Scott Sales.

The expansion will do the following:

1. Allow for legislation to consider accepting the \$30 Million offer from the Shelby private prison.
2. Adds the ability to introduce additional fund transfer legislation
3. Includes the Governor's cuts that he has proposed but has refused to take action on until AFTER the special session
4. Allows for legislation to permit the State Auditor to apply for a waiver that could help Montanans save on health insurance premiums
5. The Health Co-Op and Pacific Source currently receive financial advantage over BCBS, this will allow legislation to level the playing field.

6. Putting Montanans to work and reducing future fire danger by ensuring some fire fuel mitigation contracts go to private contractors to operate on state land.

7. Allows us the possibility to reduce the ending fund balance if this option is needed.

The full text is available to view [here](#).

###

Lori Stratton

From: Larry Bonderud
Sent: Friday, November 10, 2017 8:51 AM
To: Lori Stratton
Subject: Fwd: Humic
Attachments: image008.jpg; ATT00001.htm; image009.jpg; ATT00002.htm; image010.jpg; ATT00003.htm; image011.jpg; ATT00004.htm; image012.jpg; ATT00005.htm; image013.jpg; ATT00006.htm; Humic Exhibit.pdf; ATT00007.htm

Packets.
Sent from my iPhone

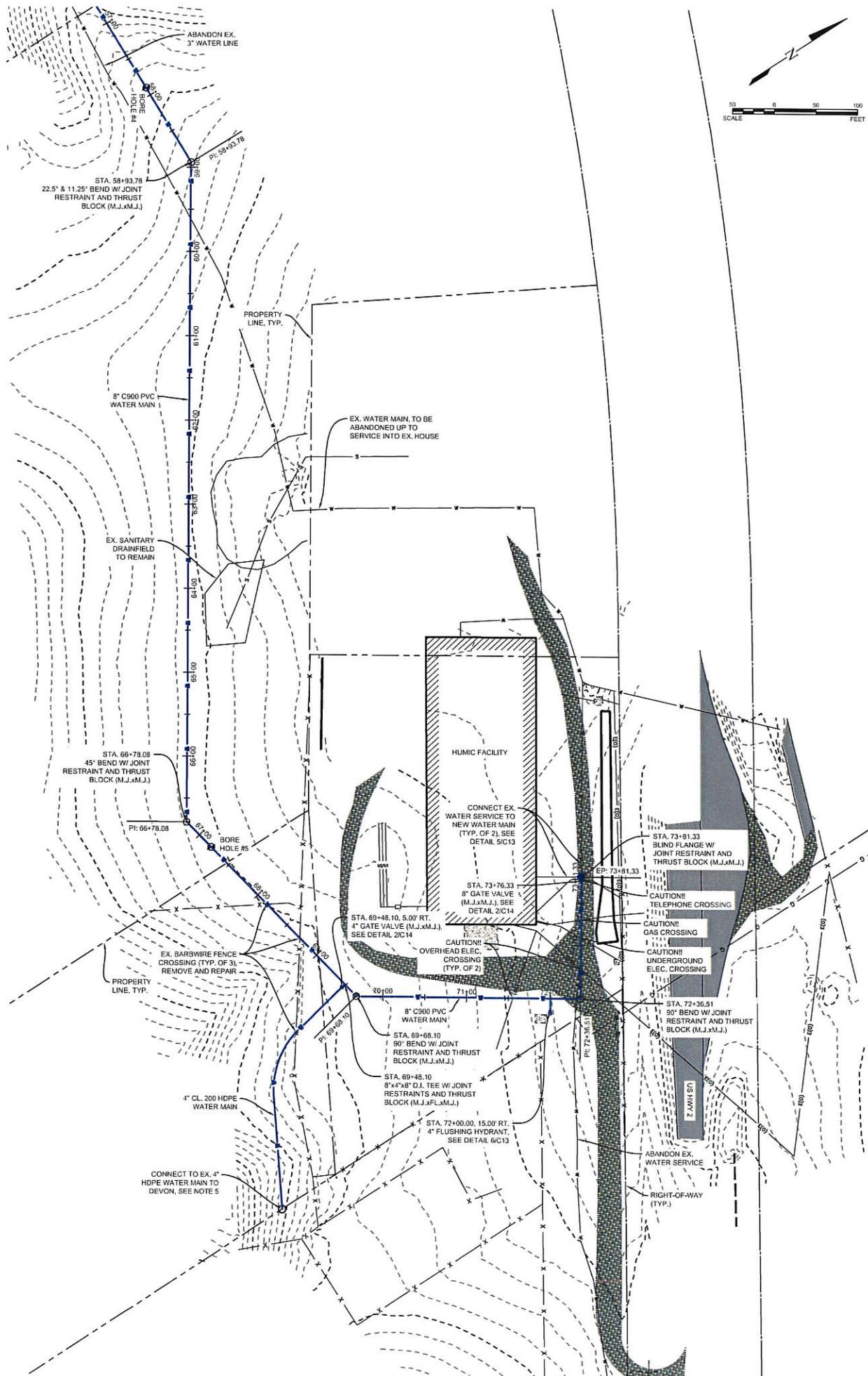
Mayor Lar

Begin forwarded message:

From: James Slayton <James.Slayton@klijeng.com>
Date: November 10, 2017 at 8:06:32 AM MST
To: "loren@3rivers.net" <loren@3rivers.net>
Cc: Larry Bonderud <larry@shelbymt.com>
Subject: FW: Humic

Loren,
Attached is a preliminary layout of the Water line routing near Humic. After our conversation yesterday I think we need to change the service connection. Can you either give me a call and talk me through the existing water lines while we are both looking at the same page or just sketch the existing lines on the attached and send back to me.
Thank you

James Slayton PE



ABANDON EX.
3" WATER LINE

STA. 58+93.78
22.5° & 11.25° BEND W/ JOINT
RESTRAINT AND THRUST
BLOCK (M.J.xM.J.)

PROPERTY
LINE, TYP.

8" C900 PVC
WATER MAIN

EX. WATER MAIN TO BE
ABANDONED UP TO
SERVICE INTO EX. HOUSE

EX. SANITARY
DRAINFIELD
TO REMAIN

STA. 66+78.08
45° BEND W/ JOINT
RESTRAINT AND THRUST
BLOCK (M.J.xM.J.)

HUMIC FACILITY

CONNECT EX.
WATER SERVICE TO
NEW WATER MAIN
(TYP. OF 2), SEE
DETAIL 5/C13

STA. 73+78.33
8" GATE VALVE
(M.J.xM.J.), SEE
DETAIL 2/C14

STA. 73+81.33
BLIND FLANGE W/
JOINT RESTRAINT AND
THRUST BLOCK (M.J.xM.J.)

CAUTION!!
TELEPHONE CROSSING

CAUTION!!
GAS CROSSING

CAUTION!!
UNDERGROUND
ELEC. CROSSING

EX. BARB WIRE FENCE
CROSSING (TYP. OF 3),
REMOVE AND REPAIR

PROPERTY
LINE, TYP.

STA. 69+45.10, 5.00' RT.
4" GATE VALVE (M.J.xM.J.),
SEE DETAIL 2/C14

CAUTION!!
OVERHEAD ELEC.
CROSSING
(TYP. OF 2)

STA. 72+36.51
90° BEND W/ JOINT
RESTRAINT AND THRUST
BLOCK (M.J.xM.J.)

8" C900 PVC
WATER MAIN

STA. 69+68.10
90° BEND W/ JOINT
RESTRAINT AND THRUST
BLOCK (M.J.xM.J.)

STA. 69+48.10
8"x8" D.I. TEE W/ JOINT
RESTRAINTS AND THRUST
BLOCK (M.J.xFLxM.J.)

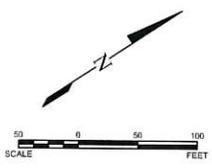
STA. 72+00.00, 15.00' RT.
4" FLUSHING HYDRANT,
SEE DETAIL 6/C13

4" CL. 200 HDPE
WATER MAIN

CONNECT TO EX. 4"
HDPE WATER MAIN TO
DEVON, SEE NOTE 5

ABANDON EX.
WATER SERVICE

RIGHT-OF-WAY
(TYP.)





(/)

[HOME \(/\)](#) [MEMBERSHIP \(/MEMBERSHIP.HTML\)](#) [TRAINING \(/TRAINING.HTML\)](#)

[CALENDAR \(HTTPS://MONTANAContractorsMTASSOC.WLIINC24.COM/EVENTS\)](https://montanacontractorsmtassoc.wliinc24.com/events)

[RESOURCES \(/RESOURCES.HTML\)](#) [LET'S BUILD MT \(/LETS-BUILD-MT.HTML\)](#) [ABOUT US \(/ABOUT-US.HTML\)](#)

The Hegreblog

No accountability for those "playing contractor" ([//www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/no-accountability-for-those-playing-contractor](http://www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/no-accountability-for-those-playing-contractor))

11/1/2017 0 Comments ([//www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/no-accountability-for-those-playing-contractor#comments](http://www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/no-accountability-for-those-playing-contractor#comments))



Cary Hegreberg

Cary is the executive director of the Montana Contractors' Association.

Again this construction season, the Montana Contractors' Association (MCA) fielded calls from members disgruntled by various local governments and Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) maintenance crews "playing contractor," employing what many construction professionals consider inefficient methods, excessive personnel, and lack of quality control and accountability.

One such complaint involved a city crew paving in a downtown area using single axle trucks, substandard traffic control, poor compaction and rough, uneven "completed" driving lanes. Another involved MDT's "rut filling" operation that wouldn't meet any of the agency's own specifications for contracted work. Another call from an MCA member involved a request from MDT for the contractor to return to one of its recently completed projects to re-grind rumble strips and repaint on a stretch of highway. It seems MDT crews filled in the new rumble strips and covered the epoxy stripes.

As I walked up to the MCA office steps several weeks ago, I noticed one of our members, High Mark Traffic Services, painting an intersection a block down the street. I approached one guy on the sidewalk (who I assumed was an employee, but wasn't actively working at the time) to introduce myself and talk about how the construction season was going. As it turned out, he wasn't a High Mark employee — he was the MDT inspector on the project. Then, I glanced down the sidewalk and noticed a second MDT employee sitting in a state pickup. So, that means we had two MDT employees looking over the shoulders of four or five contractor employees as they worked on a pretty standard job. I'm not sure how that is efficient.

The MCA helped lead efforts to secure a fuel tax increase during the 2017 Legislative Session, which will result in substantial increases in funding for MDT and local governments to spend exclusively on roads, streets and bridges. Obviously, our motivation, aside from the obvious need to maintain and improve our transportation system, was to generate predictable, consistent funding for governments to award construction contracts to private companies. In fact, that was a key component of the MCA's support and participation.

Taxpayers expect their fuel taxes to be spent efficiently and with accountability, regardless of what level of government is involved. The U.S. Congress is reluctant to raise federal fuel taxes for this very reason—taxpayers are not convinced of the need. The Montana legislature passed the state fuel tax increase with the caveat that a thorough audit be performed of MDT's operations, which will include an analysis of privatization opportunities. The bill also included provisions requiring city and county governments to submit reports on how they spend their new allocation of money, so at least there is some level of transparency.

MCA leaders listened to an intriguing presentation in August from representatives of the Alberta Roadbuilders' Association, about how that Canadian province systematically privatized virtually all aspects of highway design, construction and maintenance. Montana has a model on its northern border, demonstrating that private companies can, will, and do perform highway maintenance more efficiently than government.

We've heard for years from local and state governments that because of their "obligation" to plow snow in the winter, they need to keep that equipment, and thus the associated employees, busy the rest of the year. Our Alberta neighbors told us that is the single biggest efficiency they gained—better productivity from equipment—notably trucks. It worked so well at the provincial level, many local governments followed suit and signed maintenance contracts with the same companies doing the provincial work in their regions.

Governments are not entitled by statute or ordinance to perform construction services. They have assumed those roles by default, with taxpayers essentially ceding the authority to purchase equipment and hire employees rather than contract the work through competitive bidding.

Archives

September 2017 ([/the-hegreblog/archives/09-2017](http://the-hegreblog/archives/09-2017))

July 2017 ([/the-hegreblog/archives/07-2017](http://the-hegreblog/archives/07-2017))

Categories

All ([/the-hegreblog/category/all](http://the-hegreblog/category/all))

 [RSS Feed \(/1/feed\)](http://the-hegreblog/feed)

Thankfully, the legislature recognized taxpayers were unwilling to raise fuel taxes without the assurance of better efficiency and accountability. The MCA will continue working with auditors, agency officials, and legislators toward the goal of spending taxpayer dollars wisely through competitively bid contracts that guarantee adherence to specifications and bonding for nonperformance. Please share your experiences, comments and suggestions with us.

Like 3

Tweet

0 Comments ([//www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/no-accountability-for-those-playing-contractor#comments](http://www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/no-accountability-for-those-playing-contractor#comments))

Workforce shortage is a societal issue ([//www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/workforce-shortage-is-a-societal-issue](http://www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/workforce-shortage-is-a-societal-issue))

9/5/2017 0 Comments ([//www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/workforce-shortage-is-a-societal-issue#comments](http://www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/workforce-shortage-is-a-societal-issue#comments))

This is a slippery slope for an opinionated Baby Boomer who is not a PhD Sociologist, but here goes...

Nearly every contractor we talk with indicates that finding and keeping employees, even so-called unskilled workers, is becoming increasingly difficult and poses one of the most significant threats to their company's success. And the problem is not unique to construction—most business owners in almost any industry attest to facing the same dilemma.

So what is the cause of this widespread issue? Walk into any convenience store or fast food restaurant and you'll see a bunch of "20 something" young men (and women) behind the counter. They are likely earning \$9-\$12/hour and working 20-30 hours per week. I'm curious — why are they not willing (or able) to work in construction earning easily twice that on a weekly basis, with benefits to boot?

The owners of those establishments will tell you they also have a devil of a time with employees who don't show up on time, don't show up at all, and generally leave the business hanging out to dry on a routine basis. We've all heard the quips about millennials and their work ethic, which in many ways are unfair, sweeping generalizations. But there must be something fundamentally wrong when businesses across the country—especially those requiring employees to travel or perform manual labor—simply cannot find reliable, responsible employees.

For generations, contractors in Montana had a steady stream of "farm kids" to hire. These kids grew up doing chores, running equipment, fixing fence, and learning basic skills like welding, mechanics, equipment maintenance, and even rudimentary carpentry. Small town kids helped relatives in the tire shop, fuel distributorship, mechanic business and the like. They were exposed to real work and real responsibilities at an early age, and they learned how their work brought them both financial rewards and self-esteem. There are bragging rights that come along with loading 500 bales of hay into a barn loft!

Today, a combination of societal factors and public policy decisions, like child labor laws, create a much different reality for kids. Consider the irony that we encourage boys to put on football helmets and shoulder pads, knowing a percentage of them will suffer broken knees and concussions, while the law prevents them from raking asphalt, packing shingles, or putting cones out on a highway project. If an entrepreneurial young person decides to start a lawn mowing or snow shoveling service, business owners in particular are so afraid of the liability they demand to see the kid's Independent Contractor Certificate.

Granted, we should not go back to the days of putting teenagers into inherently dangerous situations. But giving them opportunities to earn money doing "real work" and learning job skills would go a long way toward addressing the labor shortage issue.

In addition, is it also possible that some youth raised in single-parent homes simply never had the right role model and the proper encouragement to prepare for the workforce? Whether that's because the caregiver worked more than one job and lacked free time, or wasn't necessarily adept

at fixing leaks in the sink or replacing spark plugs, the result may be a young person who is less motivated, or not independent enough, to go on the road with a construction crew. That problem is compounded if a parent is willing to let their son or daughter stay home and work 20 hours a week at convenience store. There are obviously many exceptions to this observation, as there are plenty of examples of single parents who raised highly responsible, successful young adults. But the statistics are staggering—there are far more women than men enrolled in U.S. universities today, and the percentage is growing. So what are the young men doing?

To bring young people into the construction trades, we need a societal shift. We need to help them and their parents understand the opportunities and the rewards of learning a trade and working toward a goal. We need to give kids more opportunities and encouragement to learn how to work while they are learning the knowledge they'll need in the workplace. We need to provide them with mentors and role models who can demonstrate the value of learning new skills and developing a strong work ethic.

There is no quick fix to the workforce shortage facing MCA members, but the association is actively working with education officials, elected leaders, and other business groups to address this pressing issue. Watch for more information in the months to follow.

Like 3 Tweet

0 Comments ([//www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/workforce-shortage-is-a-societal-issue#comments](http://www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/workforce-shortage-is-a-societal-issue#comments))

Moving MDT forward through legislative oversight ([//www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/moving-mdt-forward-through-legislative-oversight](http://www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/moving-mdt-forward-through-legislative-oversight))

7/10/2017 2 Comments ([//www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/moving-mdt-forward-through-legislative-oversight#comments](http://www.mtagc.org/the-hegreblog/moving-mdt-forward-through-legislative-oversight#comments))

Along with increasing Montana's tax on gasoline and diesel, HB 473 calls for an interim audit of the Montana Department of Transportation to assess where efficiencies can be gained. Specifically, the legislation directs state auditors to look at opportunities to privatize functions within the agency.

The MCA will be tracking and attempting to influence both how the audit is conducted and how the findings are ultimately implemented by the legislature. We have long advocated that state and local governments outsource as many construction and maintenance functions as possible to the private sector, which is more effective and more accountable than government-run operations.

In the case of MDT, we are asking auditors to take a full inventory of equipment the agency owns, how much use it gets, and assess whether private sector firms are available, or would be available, to perform the same functions. Chip sealing, painting, and even snowplowing are prime examples of activities contractors may be more proficient at performing than MDT. Contrary to local lore, more than one highway contractor in Montana has said they would gladly respond to a RFP to plow snow on Montana highways and roadways.

The rationale state and local officials often use for milling/paving/chip sealing roads is the fact they "must" own a fleet of snowplow trucks to maintain roads in the winter, so it only makes sense they keep those trucks and crews busy during the summer months. They ignore the rows of trucks lined up in contractors' yards and the scores of unemployed drivers on contractors' payrolls. Indeed, many of MDT's seasonal snowplow drivers are employees laid off for the winter by construction companies.

We are also asking auditors to consider the full and actual costs—including opportunity costs—of MDT performing construction/maintenance activities. It is astounding how often we hear comments from state or local government employees like, "we already own the equipment, so it isn't costing anything to do this project..." Contractors build depreciation costs of trucks and equipment into bids on projects because maintenance and replacement costs are significant. Contractors also factor administrative overhead costs into bids, while government entities seldom do. Plus, contractors pay

health insurance for employees and put money into retirement accounts or pension funds—they factor those costs into bids as well. When public entities calculate the “cost” of performing work themselves, they don’t consider the pension obligations and health insurance for employees.

Opportunity costs are also associated with government performing work versus the private sector. Contractors pay taxes on all business equipment, but the government does not pay tax to itself. By law, contractors use clear (taxed) fuel in all equipment, while government does not. How much more money would go into the Highway Special Revenue account to match federal funds if contractors did most of the work state/local governments perform?

Another aspect of the MDT audit is to look at accountability. When contractors perform work for MDT, they are held to rigid specifications and face liquidated damages, or in some cases, “remove and replace” requirements if they fail to meet the specs. If a state crew fails to meet specifications (not that anybody even checks), where is the recourse for taxpayers? The “remove and replace” option would simply be absorbed by taxpayers a second time. The MCA is asking auditors to consider the “costs” associated with this lack of oversight and accountability when the agency performs work that could otherwise be outsourced.

In addition to mandating the audit, the legislature approved a reduction of about 65 FTEs from MDT’s budget, which will cause the agency to closely scrutinize its operations. Recognizing some functions are more critical than others, we expect them to acknowledge there are functions that can easily and seamlessly be outsourced to companies that already contract with them for similar, if not identical, types of work.

The MCA suggests auditors look at the Canadian province of Alberta for guidance on cost comparisons and efficiencies of privatizing highway maintenance and construction. Alberta awards multi-year contracts to private companies to perform all maintenance on highways, subject to provincial standards and oversight. Granted, not every function in every area of Montana may lend itself to privatization, but we should at least take a hard look at it.

The fuel tax discussion opened the door to a much broader review of how Montana builds and maintains our highway system, and the legislature is to be commended for taking this comprehensive approach. The MCA played a key role in promoting the fuel tax increase and we stand ready to assist in efforts to assure the funds are spent as cost effectively as possible.

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1717 11th Avenue | Helena, MT 59601
Phone: (406) 442-4162 | info@mtagc.org
(<mailto:info@mtagc.org>)



http://www.omaha.com/money/wind-farm-in-kimball-nebraska-is-being-decommissioned-but-a/article_957e0a70-c98c-11e7-b979-f73266bc6d9d.html

Wind farm in Kimball, Nebraska, is being decommissioned, but a new one will rise on the same site in 2018

By Cole Epley / World-Herald Bureau Nov 14, 2017 Updated 19 hrs ago

LINCOLN — For the first time in about seven years as a wind developer, Sandhills Energy President Eric Johnson finally has an answer to the question he most commonly gets asked: What happens to wind farms when they've reached the end of their useful lives?

At least in Kimball, Nebraska, where Johnson's company is working with a Lincoln-based general contractor to decommission the state's first utility-scale wind farm, the answer is to build a bigger, better wind energy project.

The seven turbines comprising 10.5-megawatts of electric generation capacity about three miles northwest of Kimball are being decommissioned by Lincoln-based NGC Group and Sandhills Energy of Valentine, which plans to put in service a new 30-megawatt wind farm atop the same site in the second quarter of 2018.

The 15-year-old wind farm preceding the new project became too expensive to continue pouring money into, said Shannon Coleman, supervisor of resource planning and analysis for the Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska, or MEAN.

The decision came at a time when Nebraska electric utilities were increasingly confronting a new energy environment in which even typically low-cost coal is being edged out by less-expensive wind energy generators.

The state in the last 12 months has said goodbye to its oldest utility-scale nuclear plant (and first-ever utility-scale wind farm) and hello to the largest wind energy development built in the U.S. in 2016.

"I think the message is that it worked, MEAN sees that it worked, and they want three times as much as last time," Johnson said Tuesday during a presentation at the Nebraska Wind and Solar Conference.

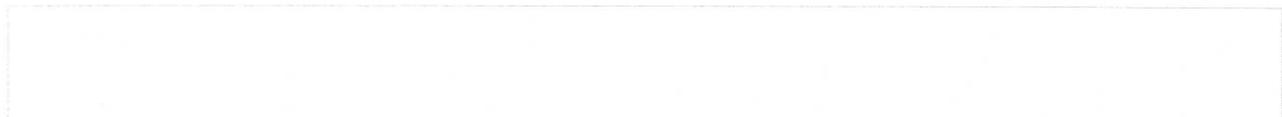
Where the MEAN Kimball Wind Project was the pioneer of large-scale wind energy developments in Nebraska, its decommissioning also represents a first: No other utility-scale wind project has yet been retired and torn down in the state.

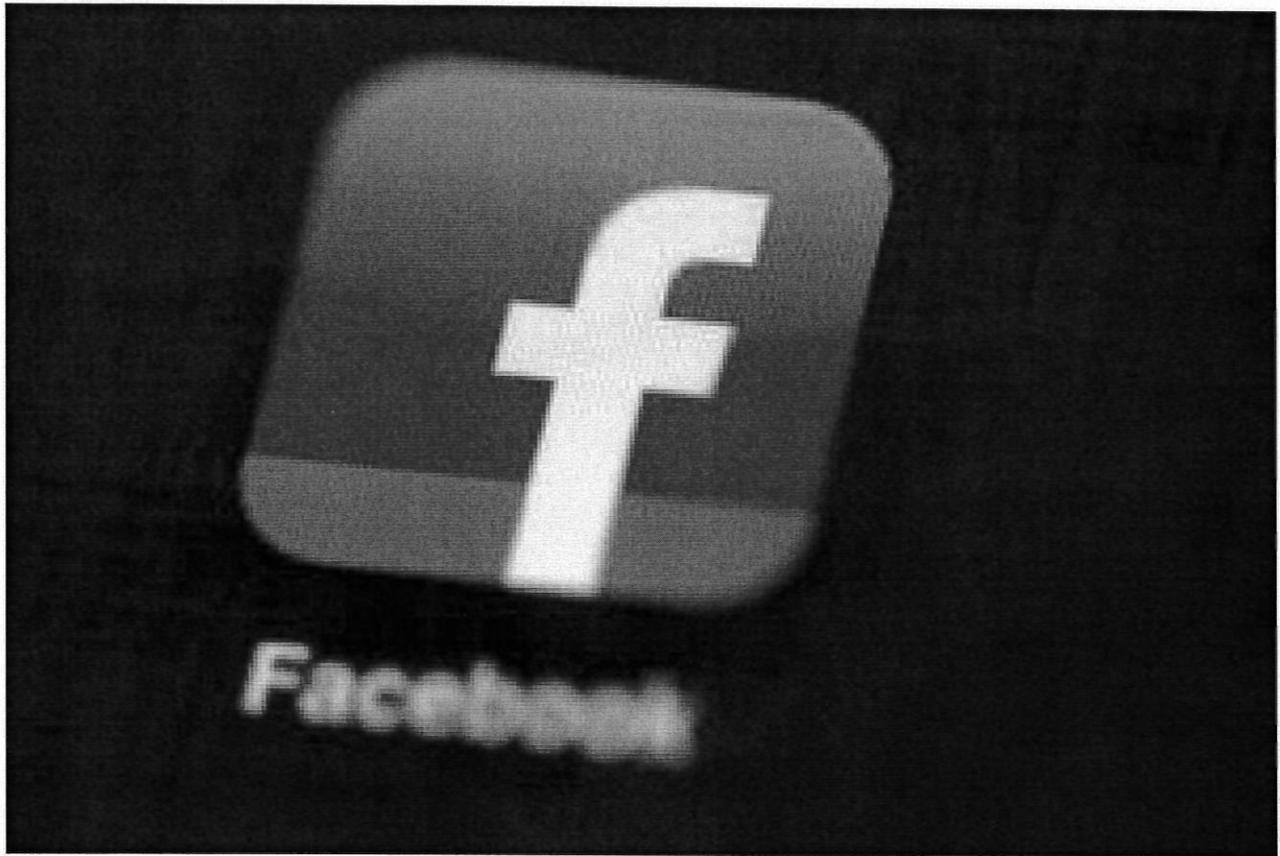
Toward the end of its expected 15-year lifespan, problems with the Kimball turbines' generators dogged MEAN and led the not-for-profit electricity wholesaler to decide to bid out the decommissioning of the old turbines in tandem with a new and larger wind farm.

(The problem generators were notorious for having operational problems at other wind farms, too, and MEAN replaced 17 of them during the life of the Kimball project.)

The wind farm represented the sole generating asset that MEAN owned; the rest of its generation portfolio comprises energy purchased on the wholesale market, agreements to purchase output from coal plants in Iowa, Nebraska and Wyoming, and agreements to buy energy from other sources including renewables and nuclear power.

MORE INFORMATION





Construction starts on Nebraska wind farm that will sell electricity to Facebook for Omaha-area data center

Half of OPPD's energy will come from renewable sources by 2020, CEO says

Facebook will buy renewable energy from northeast Nebraska wind development, breathing new life into dormant project

Cole Epley

Cole covers utilities, energy, and banking and payments.**

http://www.cutbankpioneerpress.com/cut_bank_pioneer_press/news/article_05fa3b90-c995-11e7-bb31-3b44b3eea207.html

FEATURED

County's latest cash report shows 28 funds operating in the red

By LeAnne Kavanagh Cut Bank Pioneer Press Editor Nov 15, 2017



Glacier County's monthly cash reports continue to bleed red. Twenty-eight county funds had a balance of -\$6,131,970.15 as of Sept. 30. The county's 42 remaining funds have a combined balance of less than \$3 million. According to the cash report, the cash balance of the 70 county funds was -\$3,358,783.80 on Sept. 30.

The cash report prepared by Glacier County Treasurer Galen Galbreath was presented to the Glacier County Commissioners on Nov. 2 and has been signed by chairman Michael DesRosier.

Clerk and Recorder Glenda Hall said on Monday, Nov. 13, the cash report was reviewed by Jessica Connolly, CPA, who is under contract with Glacier County. Hall said Connolly had some questions about the report and she expected to know more later this week.

The county's Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) Fund has been used in the past to cover negative fund balances. The PILT fund had a balance of \$3,712,209.16 on June 30. It has since been depleted to \$665,671.71 as of Sept. 30.

The Commissioners approved payments of \$847,899.76 in October, including payroll expense of \$527,563.50 and \$88,316 in health insurance premiums for employees. County revenue figures were not available at press time.

November will be an expensive month for Glacier County with three payrolls scheduled. The commissioners approved claims totaling \$150,707.780 on Nov. 2 and will be presented with more claims on Nov. 16 and Nov. 30.

The October 2017 Cash Report is due on Nov. 20 and Galbreath said his portion of the report will be ready to be presented to the commissioners at their Nov. 20 meeting.

Glacier County Funds with Negative

Cash Balances on September 30, 2017

- General Fund-\$990,183.52

- Road Fund-\$355,080.94
- Weed Control-\$380.40
- Library-\$113,163.98
- Ambulance-\$963,936.70
- Cemetery District-\$103,711.10
- City-County Planning-\$3,829.88
- Public Safety (Law Enforcement)-\$911,897.85
- Museum-\$262,491.34
- Search and Rescue-\$17,084.09
- Glacier Park Lights-\$4,591.91
- Multi-County Landfill-\$19,426.20
- DUI Prevention (STEP funding)-\$25,923.54
- Noxious Weed Trust Fund-\$13,099.57
- Glacier County Transit-\$4,856.07
- TSEP (Treasure State
Endowment Program)-\$417,863.05
- Accelerated Tax-\$2,483.72
- Sheriff Stonegarden Grant-\$51,429.94

- SVOR Reimbursable Grant-\$748.33

- CDBG-Regional Impact

Assessment Grant-\$15,606.57

- Community Transportation

Enhancement Program-\$147,415.97

- WIC-\$1,538.72

- Health-MCH-\$25,757.90

- Tobacco Grant-\$5,441.86

- Immunization 3rd Party Billing-\$1,192.97

- reAct Mini Grant-\$42.26

- Road and Bridge Reserve-\$33,625.77

- Glacier County Ambulance

Capital Improvement Fund-\$1,639,166.00

Total-\$6,131,970.15



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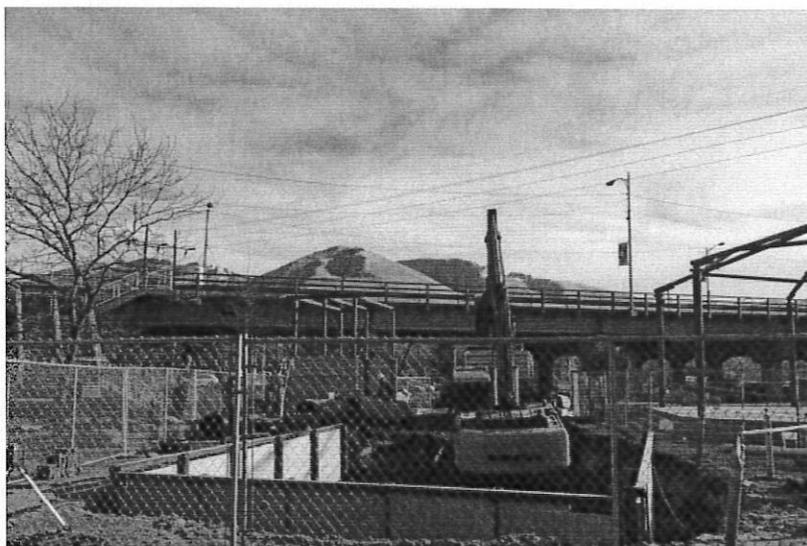
\$220,000 Storm Drain Water Structure Near Brennan's Wave



By Peter Christian November 15, 2017 2:36 PM

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Hole 2

There's a big hole at Caras Park that will house the first major project for the City of Missoula's new storm water utility that will help filter trash and sediment and keep it out of the Clark Fork River.

Storm Water Superintendent Bob Hayes described the project.

"We're in the process of installing a hydrodynamic separator, which is a fancy term for a really specialized filter to keep material out the storm water before it goes into the Clark Fork," Hayes said. "Folks who have been using Brennan's Wave over the last several years have seen beer cans and coffee cups and cigarette butts coming out of the outfall at the river. Those things won't be seen anymore once it's installed and in place."

Hayes said the hydrodynamic separator is 12 feet in diameter and 22 feet tall, and the cost to install the device will be approximately \$220,000, which is being funded through a Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Renewable Resource grant along with matching funding from the Missoula Redevelopment Agency, Missoula Valley Water Quality District, Missoula Parking Commission and the City's new Storm Water Division, with in-kind contributions from Missoula Parks and Recreation. The unit is being installed by Montana contracting firm Battle Ridge Builders of Belgrade.

"On Thursday, we will be setting the device in there, and for the next several weeks we'll be backfilling the device and surfacing back over and putting the paver bricks back down," he said. "Once we're finished, no one will have a clue that it's there, except for those folks who are looking at that outflow at Brennan's Wave and had previously seen the trash and things coming out. They'll no longer see anything coming out of there but clean water."

The project is expected to be complete by early December.