

The Water Policy Interim Committee

The Water Policy Interim Committee meets Sept. 10-11 to launch three studies and tour three natural water storage sites.

The committee will convene at 10 a.m. Sept. 10 at the Beaverhead County Courthouse, 2 S. Pacific. Discussion there will center on three studies:

- Study of the future of the Water Court ([House Joint Resolution 14](#))
- Study of weather modification ([HJ 40](#))
- Study of climate and water rights.

As part of the HJ 14 study, the committee will hear presentations and discuss the 1988 Ross Report on water rights adjudication and a 2014 University of Montana law school report on the state's legal system for water rights. The HJ 40 study includes a presentation on "cloud seeding" technology from Idaho Power and an overview of existing state laws related to weather modification. The study of climate and water rights will begin with a discussion of the 2017 Montana Climate Assessment conducted by the Montana Institute on Ecosystems.

The committee concludes its meeting with a field trip near Butte. Committee members will join a tour of three natural water storage sites in the Big Hole River watershed. The tour is being conducted by the Montana Watershed Coordinating Council, as part of their Missouri Headwaters watershed tour. The tour includes stops at projects near California Creek, French Creek, and Mt. Haggin.

The WPIC is led by Rep. Zach Brown, D-Bozeman, chairman, and Sen. Jeffrey Welborn, R-Dillon, vice-chairman. Other members of the committee are Sen. Jill Cohenour (D-E. Helena), Sen. Bruce "Butch" Gillespie (R-Ethridge), Sen. Jon Sesso (D-Butte), Rep. Bob Brown (R-Thompson Falls), Rep. Carl Glimm (R-Kila), Rep. Bradley Maxon Hamlett (D-Cascade), Rep. Shane Morigeau (D-Missoula), and Rep. Walt Sales (R-Manhattan).

The meeting will not be live-streamed nor broadcast on the Montana Public Affairs Network (MPAN). An audio recording of the committee meeting, excluding the tour, will be available <http://leg.mt.gov> after the meeting. For more information on the committee's activities and upcoming meeting, including a full agenda, please visit the committee's website or contact Jason Mohr, committee staff.

Committee Website: leg.mt.gov/water

Committee Staff: jasonmohr@mt.gov or 406-444-1640



WATCH: Archived Meeting: Capitol Room 152 | June 10, 2019



Meeting Materials

Sept. 10-11 meeting:

[Agenda](#)

[Memo to committee](#)

Administrative matters

- [Final work plan, 2019-20 interim](#)
- [Final committee rules](#)

Water rights adjudication updates for Sept. 2019:

- [Department of Natural Resources and Conservation](#)
- [Water Court](#)

HJ14 (Study of the future of the Water Court)

- [Considerations for the future of water rights](#) (2015-16 WPIC report)
- [Ross Report](#) (1988 consultant's report on adjudication commissioned by Montana Legislature)
- [Water Rights in Montana](#) (2014 report from Land Use and Natural Resources Clinic, Anders Blewett III School of Law, University of Montana)
- [National drought monitor for Aug. 20](#)

HJ40 (Study of weather modification)

- [Summary of licensing and permitting for weather modification operations in Montana](#) (DNRC)

Study of climate and water rights

- [Water and climate change in Montana](#) (excerpt from 2017 Montana Climate Assessment, Montana Institute on Ecosystems, UM and Montana State University)

Meeting Details:

WPIC meets Sept. 10-11 at the Beaverhead County Courthouse in Dillon, Mont. After adjournment at 10 a.m. Sept. 11, committee members have been invited to join a field trip to three natural water storage sites southwest of Butte. The Montana Watershed Coordinating Council is hosting the field trip.

Committee Members



REPRESENTATIVE
BOB BROWN (R)



REPRESENTATIVE
ZACH BROWN (D)



SENATOR
JILL COHENOUR (D)



SENATOR
BRUCE (BUTCH)
GILLESPIE (R)



REPRESENTATIVE
CARL GLIMM (R)



REPRESENTATIVE
BRADLEY MAXON
HAMLETT (D)



REPRESENTATIVE
SHANE MORIGEAU
(D)



REPRESENTATIVE
WALT SALES (R)



SENATOR
JON SESSO (D)



SENATOR
JEFF WELBORN (R)