



TREASURE STATE
RESOURCES ASSOCIATION
OF MONTANA

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TREASURE STATE RESOURCES ASSOCIATION NEWS

May, 2022

Registration Open for TSRA Annual Meeting – June 8-9th

Registration is open for the upcoming TSRA Annual Meeting to be held at Fairmont Hot Springs near Anaconda, Montana. The event begins with the golf scramble on June 8th at the Butte Country Club. The remainder of the events take place at Fairmont. Registration forms and the latest meeting agenda can be found at: <http://treasurestateresources.org/> Click on the Events tab.

We are pleased that Montana's Lt. Governor Kristen Juras will be our luncheon speaker on Thursday, the 9th to bring us up-to-date on the "red tape reform" effort. We'll also hear about potential ballot initiatives and legislative proposals that may be finding their way to the 2023 session.

Those planning to attend are encouraged to make their room reservation before the **TSRA room block closes on May 16th**.

Call the reservation line at 800.332.3272 and ask for the Treasure State Resources Association block. Room rates are \$134 plus tax and resort fee.

TSRA Would Like to Thank Our Early Bird Sponsors

We couldn't hold our annual meeting without the help of our generous sponsors. A BIG "Thank You" to those who've signed up early to help us put on a successful event.

Trailblazer:

BNSF, BP America, MDU Resources and NorthWestern Energy

Champion:

Browning, Kaleczyc, Berry & Hoven, Crowley Fleck, Enbridge Energy, Parsons, Behle & Latimer, Sandfire America, Weyerhaeuser, and The Washington Companies

Advocate:

Bison Engineering, CHS, Denbury Resources, Energy Laboratories, F.H. Stoltze Land & Lumber Co., Melissa Lewis & Associates, Montana Coal Council and Montana Farm Bureau Federation

Groundbreaker Golf:

Citizens for Balanced Use, IBEW #44, and Sibanye Stillwater

Supporter:

Golden Sunlight Mine

Ballot Measure to Establish Outstanding Resource Water Designation for Gallatin/Madison Rivers Advances to Signature Gathering Phase

As reported in previous newsletters, TSRA has been watching several ballot measures that could impact our members. One proposal, I-191, would grant Outstanding Resource Water protections to parts of the Gallatin and Madison Rivers.

That measure was discussed at the Water Policy Interim Committee (WPIC) last month and a majority of both Republicans and Democrats on the committee voted to oppose the initiative. TSRA joined with a diverse group of organizations and individuals who testified at the committee hearing about the potential negative impacts of the measure. Signatures are now being gathered to place I-191 on the November ballot.

The following guest column written by a WPIC member captures many of the concerns raised.

I-191 Restricts Public Access and More

Source: Missoulian May 3, 2022. By: Senator Walt Sales, SD 35, Gallatin County

As part of a multi-generation farm/ranch family in the Gallatin Valley, I understand the vital importance of protecting our land and water resources. Farmers' and ranchers' stewardship of the land and water is our livelihood.

When I heard of the proposed ballot initiative 191 that would apply new, strict regulations to sections of the Gallatin and Madison rivers – the type of regulations usually reserved for national parks and wilderness areas – I looked at the fine print.

The proponents are selling this initiative as a move to protect the rivers. But as is typical with ballot initiatives, there are significant downsides they won't tell you about.

I-191 is aimed at shutting down most human activity on these water bodies. That includes current restoration efforts driven by science and being conducted by local and statewide conservation groups aimed at improving stretches of these rivers. Because it would stop those restoration efforts, I-191 could actually result in degrading water resources. That's why prominent conservation organizations oppose I-191.

I-191 would reduce public access. It would halt construction and improvement of fishing access sites and prevent maintenance of trails in the surrounding area. For those reasons, numerous outdoor recreation groups, specifically those supporting anglers, oppose I-191.

Perhaps the biggest impacts of I-191 would be on agriculture. The initiative could reduce irrigation and stock water usage. The result would be devastating to the ag families that have farmed and ranched in this area for generations. That's why Montana's leading agricultural organizations oppose I-191.

I-191 would also dramatically reduce new workforce housing development in Gallatin and Madison counties by prohibiting new permits from being issued in the affected areas. Gallatin County is ground zero for Montana's housing crisis, and I-191 would only make it worse. As such, several housing affordability groups opposed I-191.

I-191 has been described as having a "chilling effect" on projects necessary for highway safety and maintenance by potentially prohibiting even basic projects like chip sealing on roads near the specified water bodies. That's why Montana highway experts oppose I-191.

After reviewing I-191, the Attorney General took the unprecedented step of requiring a warning label to be printed on the initiative petition, alerting voters that the measure would "cause significant material harm" to Montanans living in the target area.

The legislature's bipartisan Water Policy Interim Committee weighed in with their own warning on the I-191 petition, voting 8-2 to advise voters that they do not support placing the initiative on the ballot. The vote is significant as an all-to-rare example of bipartisan agreement.

It's clear I-191 creates more problems than it solves. It's not well thought out and its sponsors failed to work with stakeholders. The measure circumvents stringent environmental review already in place at the Department of Environmental Quality. The experts have weighed in with near unanimous opposition – dozens of organizations representing conservation, public access, agriculture, affordable housing, and economic development all oppose I-191.

Montana's water resources are one of our most valuable assets, and we all want those resources preserved for future generations. That's why Montanans have worked together over the years to enact some of the toughest water quality laws in the country. The group that sponsors I-191 wants to override those existing protections.

I-191 would actually set us back. Remember that when you're asked to sign the petition to put I-191 on the ballot.

Denbury Creating Long-Term Future with Regional Pipeline – Good News for Montana's Economy

Source: [Fallon County Times](#) April 22, 2022 By: Brad Mosher

Denbury recently celebrated the activation of its Cedar Creek Anticline pipeline with an event in Baker, Montana. The CCA pipeline is designed to be able to move barrels of oil, but now it may be able to produce another 400 million barrels in the future.

Chris Kendall, the president and CEO of the Texas-based company told attendees at the meeting that the pipeline will be able to transfer up to 2 million tons of carbon dioxide each year, which will do a lot to extend the financial impact of the company in eastern Montana for years to come.

The 105-miles pipeline is designed to send carbon dioxide from parts of Wyoming to fields in parts of Montana and southwest North Dakota. With the enhanced oil recovery plan, carbon dioxide is injected into the ground where it helps remove oil from geological formations. The carbon dioxide is later separated from the oil, then reinjected underground.

With the completion and activation of the pipeline, the company will have the largest CO2 pipeline in the world, Kendall told the people. "Not in the United States. Not in the Rocky Mountain region. In the world."

“It will give a life well into the back half of this century, producing oil. It is not just oil we are producing, but a special kind of oil. Because we use so much carbon dioxide to get that oil out of the rock, that carbon dioxide stays permanently in the rock. We are not releasing carbon dioxide in this operation. This truly is a net negative carbon footprint.”

A Nuclear Future? Montana Legislators Tour Idaho National Lab

Source: Excerpts from [Rural Montana](#) * Cover Story, May 2022

In late March, a group of Montana legislators toured the Idaho National Laboratory (INL) as part of an interim study on the feasibility of nuclear generation in the state. The study was approved during the 2021 session.

One of the biggest questions facing Montana is what the future will look like in terms of electricity supply and demand.

With a push toward beneficial electrification, or the conversion of home heating and appliances to electricity instead of natural gas, the increased popularity of electric vehicles, and a growing population it seems likely demand will increase in the future. At the same time, fossil fuel plants, especially coal plants, are being retired and mothballed. Across the nation stakeholders are trying to figure out what 24/7 generation can be built to fulfill the increased demand.

One possible option is micro and modular nuclear reactors – a fairly new technology currently scheduled to be tested at INL over the next decade or so.

Members of the (Montana) Energy and Telecommunications Committee (ETIC) learned about the history of nuclear power in the U.S., and at INL. They toured the Advanced Test Reactor facility, where fuel was being loaded into the reactor, as well as several of the laboratory’s research areas.

They were treated to presentations outlining the future of nuclear technology, and provided with a timetable for testing those technologies.

“I’m very impressed with the lab,” said committee Chair Sen. Mary McNally, D-Billings.

She said that although some roadblocks to nuclear development in Montana were removed in the last legislative session, such as any development required a public vote, there still is no framework for what a nuclear power plant would look like in the Treasure State.

“I’m sort of very intrigued and interested in the development of the micro and small modular reactor,” she said, adding that she believes the connections made with the lab will help the Legislature navigate the complicated subject. “It’s nice to have a resource like this that really wants to engage with us.”

Rep. Derek Skees, R-Kalispell, said his biggest takeaway from the trip was learning how much support small modular nuclear technology has gained in recent years.

“That the federal government is extremely interested in revitalizing and researching this technology and that there’s a roadmap Montana can follow to be on the cutting edge,” Skees said.

Sen. Chris Pope, D-Bozeman, added that following the trip, he believes, “there could be a real opportunity going forward,” though some big hurdles remain...

Small nuclear reactors are what the Montana delegation was most interested in, as they currently have the most potential to be a future baseload 24/7 power source, with the capacity to quickly increase or decrease the amount of power being generated.

These reactors are much smaller than traditional reactors, producing up to 65 megawatts each. They are designed to be placed in a facility that holds several of them....Each module is self-contained and can be independently powered on and off. Any type of maintenance issue would be confined to a single reactor at a time, with the other reactors ramping up production to fill that gap.

These reactors also produce much less nuclear waste, and have a much smaller contamination zone should an accident ever occur.

*Rural Montana is the magazine of the Montana Electric Cooperatives’ Association. To read the full article go to: <http://www.mtco-ops.com/>

Editor’s Note: We expect the ETIC Committee to discuss the tour and next steps in the feasibility study in their May meeting.

Montana Legislative Services Names New Executive Director

Editor’s Note: For those who work with the Montana Legislature, building relationships with legislative staff is key to finding one’s way through not just the 90-day session, but the interim as well. We want to acknowledge the service of Executive Director Susan Fox who will be retiring next month. She has worn many hats during her tenure – all of them well. We wish her the best. And now, about the new guy....

Source: Montana Legislative Services, April 27, 2022. By: Joe Kolman

A veteran of the Utah Legislature is taking over leadership of the Montana Legislative Services Division, which provides the state’s citizen lawmakers with research and support during the biennial sessions.

Legislative leadership has announced that Jerry Howe succeeds Susan Byorth Fox, who led the nonpartisan agency for 16 years.

Montana's Legislative Council, an evenly split bipartisan committee that includes Senate President Mark Blasdel, Speaker of the House Wylie Galt, and other leaders selected Howe after a nationwide search.

"Mr. Howe exhibited a passion and desire to serve, a characteristic that exemplifies the Legislative Branch," said Blasdel, who chairs the council. "Jerry's experience and commitment will continue a long-standing tradition of service and excellence as he continues to lead an incredible group of professionals in the Legislative Services Division."

Kim Abbott, House Minority Leader and the council's vice chair, said, "Jerry brings a wealth of experience and significant talent to this critical role. I am confident he will build on the excellent service we've received over the last 16 years."

Howe worked for the Utah Legislature for 32 years as a policy analyst and manager. He earned a Master's of Public Administration degree and a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Brigham Young University and taught political science as an adjunct professor.

"I am honored to be selected to serve the Montana Legislature and proud to join an office with such a distinguished reputation, Howe said. "Although the Legislative Services Division performs many functions, it exists for one reason only – to serve the needs of every legislator in a professional, nonpartisan manner."

"I envision an office that is more helpful than it is bureaucratic, more resilient than it is rigid, and more respectful, dignified, and professional than is expected."

The Legislative Services Division has 69 full-time staff that includes researchers, support staff, and an IT team. The division also hires temporary session staff every two years.

Howe becomes the seventh director in the agency's history. Fox, who will retire on June 1, started her legislative career as a session staffer during the 1989 session and became a research analyst in 1992, specializing in human services and redistricting. She was named executive director in 2006 and led the effort to modernize the computer system the agency uses to draft legislation, run the session, and distribute the laws of Montana.

"I've thoroughly enjoyed all of my roles working for the Legislature," Fox said. "I'm honored to lead an exceptional, dedicated, and hardworking staff. It's always a pleasure to meet legislators from across the state and get to know Montana in a way that very few have the opportunity."

Upcoming Interim Legislative Committee Meeting Schedule

The schedule of upcoming meetings for interim committees followed by TSRA is listed below. Agendas and other information will be available closer to the meeting date on the committee's website:

Energy and Telecommunications Interim Committee

May 19-20, 2022 State Capitol or via Zoom

Link to Committee Site: <https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/etic/meeting-info/>

Environmental Quality Council

May 24-25, 2022 State Capitol or via Zoom

Link to Committee Site: <https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/eqc/meeting-info/>

Revenue Committee

June 16-17, 2022 State Capitol or Via Zoom

Link to Committee Site: <https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/ric/>

Water Policy Committee

May 17-18, 2022 State Capitol or Via Zoom

Link to Committee Site: <https://leg.mt.gov/committees/interim/wpic/>

TSRA Legislative Showcase Planned for January 3, 2023

It's not too early to start thinking about participating in TSRA's popular Legislative Showcase scheduled for the evening of January 3rd, 2023. Over the years this event has been widely attended by legislators and other officials. It helps set the tone for the upcoming session by highlighting the importance of the various natural resource sectors of our economy, as well as the economic value of motorized recreation. Participants have the opportunity to "showcase" their companies or associations by reserving booth or table space. Others may choose to sponsor the event by helping with food and beverage costs.

Registration information will be available early this fall. If you have any questions about the event, please contact Peggy Trenk at 406-461-9945 or ptrenk@tsria.net

Upcoming Events/Dates:

June 8-9, 2022

TSRA Annual Meeting

Fairmont Hot Springs Resort

June 28-29, 2022

Montana Mining Association Annual Meeting

Fairmont Hot Springs Resort

August 29-31, 2022

Montana Petroleum Association Annual Meeting

Billings, MT

November 16-18, 2022

Legislative Caucus Training

State Capitol, Helena, MT

January 3, 2023

TSRA Legislative Showcase

Delta Colonial Hotel, Helena, MT

If you don't want to receive the TSRA Newsletter, please let me know. If you want to share with others in your company or organization, please do so. The mission of the Treasure State Resources Association is to promote and enhance the Montana Way of Life through responsible resource development.