

From: Ryan, Jeff [jeryan@mt.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, August 05, 2009 3:16 PM
To: Nicolai, Sarah
Cc: Ellerhoff, Thomas; Chambers, Jenny; Ryan, Jeff; Romankiewicz, Christopher
Subject: Big Hole Diversion Dam - Comments

Sarah, DEQ received a July 31/2009 letter from Rick Larson, Assistant Public Works Director - City/County Butte-Silver Bow requesting preliminary agency scoping comments on the draft EA that is being completed for the proposed project to replace the Big Hole River diversion dam and intake structure.

We have been involved in a couple previous on-site and office meetings on this project and fully understand the need to provide a newer more efficient means of providing Butte-Silver Bow it's drinking water supply. As noted in the Montana Water Quality Act, 75-5-101 "Policy" (1) "conserve water by protecting, maintaining, and improving the quality and potability of water for public water supplies, wildlife, fish and aquatic life, agriculture, industry, recreation, and other beneficial uses". While the main emphasis of this proposed project involves the beneficial uses of drinking water, the need to support the other beneficial uses, such as fish and aquatic life and recreation, is of equal importance. The EA should consider a design alternative that not only satisfies the water supply needs, but also provides for efficient fish and safe boater passage. Hopefully, a design that accomplishes these goals, without an actual dam at the site, can be considered.

As stated in the previously noted Butte-Silver Bow letter, DEQ will be involved in this project through several of it's permitting responsibilities. We also look forward to participating in the upcoming multi-agency meeting to review the purpose and need statement for the project EA that is being developed.



Montana Department of Transportation

2701 Prospect Avenue
PO Box 201001
Helena MT 59620-1001

Jim Lynch, Director
Brian Schweitzer, Governor

August 11, 2009

Sarah Nicolai
PO Box 1009
Helena, MT 59624

Subject: Butte-Silver Bow Big Hole Diversion Dam

This letter is in response to a request for comments from the Butte-Silver Bow Public Works Department (BSB) dated July 31, 2009. BSB is proposing to replace the existing diversion dam and intake structure in order to provide a reliable source of drinking water for the Butte service area and to improve safety at the site for maintenance personnel and recreationalists. MDT has the following comments:

MDT is concerned for the potential of a head cut to develop at the dam site and travel upstream. What are the plans for monitoring and mitigating the potential head cut? MDT issues associated with a head cut include the roadway embankment adjacent to the Big Hole River of State Highway 43.

Structure P00046075+0061 as referenced in the letter from BSB is located approximately 1 mile downstream of the diversion dam. MDT currently does not see any issues associated with the proposed project with this structure. If project issues associated with this bridge surface, please keep MDT informed.

Structure L47017000+01001 is owned by BSB and is approximately 1 mile upstream. MDT is unaware of the foundation type for this bridge and has not evaluated the bridge for scour. The bridge is included in the State Wide scour evaluation program. The USGS will visit the site in the future to complete an initial scour review. If the bridge is determined to be scour critical, MDT will inform BSB.

Bryan Miller, P.E.
Bridge Area Engineer

copies: Mark Goodman – Hydraulics Engineer
Mike Murphy – Bridge Management Engineer



**BUTTE-SILVER BOW
HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE
PLANNING DEPARTMENT
155 W. Granite Street Butte, MT 59701
406-497-6258**

October 19, 2009

Dick Talley
DOWL HKM
P.O. Box 3588
Butte, MT 58702

Re: Comments on Proposed Demolition – Big Hole River Diversion Dam

Dear Dick:

As a follow-up to the September 6, 2009 Historic Preservation Commission meeting, I have summarized the comments and concerns expressed by the Commission relating to removal of the Big Hole River Diversion Dam.

Main Points of Commission Discussion

1. The Big Hole River Pump Station is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Dam is a contributing element of the historic pump station facility.
2. When historic resources in Silver Bow County are threatened, the local Historic Preservation Commission is responsible for reviewing the project, exploring opportunities to prevent or mitigate loss of such resources, and recommending approval, approval with conditions, or denial of the demolition request.
3. The existing dam is failing, resulting in potential health and safety concerns.
4. Several possible design alternatives for the new dam are being considered.
5. In this case, the Commission stated they were unable to effectively evaluate the impacts of the proposed demolition, or issue a recommendation, without a better understanding of the final dam design.
6. In the absence of a final proposal, the Commission offered the following general suggestions intended to mitigate possible impacts to historic resources, and facilitate design of the dam.
 - a. Only remove those elements of the existing dam necessary to accomplish the goals of the project, e.g. retain historic stonework along riverbank.

- b. New dam design should have minimal visual impact to the overall pump station setting, e.g. low height, natural colors and materials.
- c. Existing dam design should be professionally documented according to National Park Services HABS/HAER standards.
- d. Install interpretative panel at the site to describe the original design and workings of the dam.
- e. Impacts to existing pump station buildings and archaeological resources are avoided, or minimized, during dam construction.
- f. Any new buildings or structures erected at the site should be submitted to the Historic Preservation Commission for design review.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this important project. If you require any additional information please contact me. As your plans unfold, the Commission is ready to re-evaluate this demolition request.

Sincerely,

Jim Jarvis
BSB Historic Preservation Officer

and they also open the door for multiple mitigations, resulting in further complexity for addressing issues when factoring in other agencies.

We believe that the best approach to this task is to complete an agreement with all of the permitting agencies prior to undertaking the environmental review. This would ensure that all issues are analyzed such that each agency is able to use one singular environmental document for permitting. Typically these joint documents result in the permitting agencies signing the completed document as the decision maker.

The Southwestern Land Office looks forward to assisting and moving Butte-Silver Bow's project forward. Clean water is important to Butte, just as a multi-functioning navigable water system is important to Montana. We believe both can be accomplished in a timely and cost-effective manner.

I am available for any questions or consult that you might need. I can be reached at 542-4286 or by email at dboruch@mt.gov.

Sincerely,



Dana M. Boruch
Right-of-Way Specialist

CC: BSB Public Works Attn: Rick Larson 126 W Granite Butte MT 59701