

## GROUND WATER ASSESSMENT STEERING COMMITTEE

STATE OF MONTANA

July 1, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

The Ground-Water Steering Committee is currently accepting nominations for Ground-Water Investigation Program (GWIP) projects to be conducted during the 2011-2013 biennium. Projects may be nominated by any individual or group, but we do ask that you coordinate your nominations through local water-resources groups such as the Montana Association of Counties (MACo) or Montana Association of Conservation Districts (MACD) to avoid duplication of effort. More information about the programs, previously nominated sites, and updates on the active sites are available at the GWIP web site: <http://www.mbmg.mtech.edu/gwip/gwip.asp>.

The Montana Ground-Water Investigations Program (GWIP) was established and funded by the 2007/2008 Legislative Water Policy Interim Committee (WPIC). Projects are prioritized by the Ground-Water Steering Committee and the program is operated by the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology. The Program investigates site-specific water-resource issues throughout Montana that include:

- stream depletion from groundwater development by subdivisions or changes in irrigation practices,
- cumulative effects of existing and proposed water development on stream flow,
- impacts to groundwater and surface water from changes in irrigation practices or land use,
- implementation of aquifer storage and recovery (ASR) in Montana, and
- evaluating the success of mitigation/offset plans in closed basins.

Each investigation is expected to take between 1 and 3 years to complete, depending on the complexity.

The results of each will include:

- A detailed report that describes the hydrogeologic system,
- Models that simulate hydrogeologic features and processes, and
- A comprehensive set of hydrogeologic data available through the MBMG Ground-Water Information Center (GWIC)

Attached is a list of the criteria that will be considered during the ranking process. You may fill out this criteria form and attach additional sheets as needed, or use a different format of your choosing. If using your own format, include all information indicated on the criteria form and please address each criteria in the order listed. Also attached is the current list of investigation sites considered for the 2009-2011 biennium and their current rankings. Comments may be submitted on a new investigation area not currently on the list or on an existing inactive project on the list. Clear and concise responses will benefit your proposal. Contact information must be included in the submittal for the person or group

submitting the nomination. Nominations must be received by the end of business, August 13, 2010. Submit your nomination either by US Postal Service or electronically through email to:

John Wheaton  
Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology  
1300 West Park St  
Butte, MT 59701  
Jwheaton@mtech.edu

The Ground Water Steering Committee will review comments received and update site rankings at the next Committee meeting on September 1, 2010 in Helena (location to be determined).

For additional information, please visit the web site or contact: Eric Regensburger, 406-444-0916  
ERegensburger@mt.gov or John Wheaton, 406-496-4848, jwheaton@mtech.edu.

Eric Regensburger  
Chair  
Ground Water Assessment Steering Committee

## Prioritization criteria and nominating form for GWIP project areas

The following list is used to rank nominated project areas under the Ground Water Investigation program. The criteria name is highlighted to show which column heading is used in the ranking matrix. Please address all points. Possible sources of information are suggested, but other sources are likely available for most criteria. Each criterion is assigned a ranking value by the Ground-Water Steering Committee.

Project title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Watershed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nominating Group or individual: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
County: \_\_\_\_\_

Problem Description: Attach additional pages as necessary.

Overview of the magnitude of the problem: Attach additional pages as necessary.

1. **Subdivision** growth rate
  - a. Actual number of new lots permitted during the previous 5 years \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Data source: DEQ
  
2. **New Wells**
  - a. Actual numbers of wells recorded in GWIC during the previous 5 years \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Data source: MBMG-GWIC
  
3. Designated **Closed Basin**
  - a. Is the project area within a Closed Surface Water Basin or a Controlled Ground Water Area Yes\_\_\_\_, No\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Data source: DNRC
  
4. Flood to **Sprinkler** conversion
  - a. Number of acres that changed during the previous 5 years \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Data source: Dept of Ag or NRCS
  
5. Impaired **Water Quality**
  - a. Is the surface-water body on the State TMDL, 303(d) list Yes\_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_.
  - b. Data source: DEQ
  
6. Expansion of **Industrial** water use
  - a. New industrial and municipal wells during the previous 5 years \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Data source: MBMG-GWIC, DNRC water rights or local input

7. Expansion of **Agricultural** water use
  - a. Number of new industrial and municipal wells during the previous 5 years \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Dept of Ag, DNRC Water Rights wells and surface withdrawal permits, MBMG-GWIC wells
  
8. **Population** density
  - a. Total number of people impacted \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Data source: NRIS
  
9. **Water Class** or usability
  - a. Water-quality classification or description \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Data source DEQ and MBMG
  
10. **Information** already known
  - a. Existing hydrogeologic data and reports can enhance new studies. Lack of existing data may indicate the need to gather data before an investigation can begin. List previous studies on an additional sheet.
  - b. DEQ, DNRC, MBMG
  
11. System **Complexity**
  - a. Is the hydrogeologic system simple and straightforward or is the project scientifically complex? Provide information if possible. The Steering Committee will address this criterion.
  - b. DEQ, DNRC, MBMG
  
12. County **Growth Plan** in place
  - a. Does the County have a formal growth plan and is this a high density area Yes \_\_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_\_.
  - b. Data source: County
  
13. **Contentious/** litigious
  - a. Is the issue locally sensitive, potentially headed for court? Yes \_\_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Local input, Conservation District, NRCS
  
14. Highly valued **Ecological** water system
  - a. Is the surface water body a commissioned stream? Are Murphy rights involved? Provide information if possible. The Steering Committee will address this criteria.
  - b. DNRC, MT FWP
  
15. Basin fill or bedrock **Aquifer Systems** or both
  - a. Similar to the complexity issue, but allows more direct inclusion of geologic controls. Provide information if possible. The Steering Committee will address this criteria.
  - b. MBMG, DNRC
  
16. **Efficiency** of effort
  - a. Adjacent project areas can allow for more efficient investigations. Provide information if possible. The Steering Committee will address this criteria.
  - b. Data source Map, DEQ, DNRC, MBMG

17. **Diversity** of hydrogeology and issues

- a. Similar to complexity criteria but emphasizes the need to investigate a wide range of issues. Provide information if possible. The Steering Committee will address this criterion.
- b. Data source DEQ, DNRC, MBMG

18. **Controlled** groundwater **Area**

- a. Is the project area within a Controlled Ground Water Area? Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_
- b. Data source DNRC

19. Availability of **Matching Funds**

- a. Priority for other funding sources
  - i. Are matching funds available Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_  
If yes, attach a letter of commitment and indicate the source and amount.
  - ii. Have matching funds been requested but not committed? Such as a grant application that has not been approved.. Yes \_\_\_\_, No \_\_\_\_.  
Indicate the source and amount requested.
- b. Data source Local input