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Water Policy Interim Committee

69th Montana Legislature

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ALEXIS SANDRU, Legal Staff
MADDELYN PENNINGTON, Secretary

AGENDA (as of 1/2/26)

Water Policy Interim Committee

January 12, 2026

State Capitol Building, Room 137

Agenda times are approximate.

- 9:00 am** **Call to Order & Roll Call** – Sen. Wylie Galt, Presiding Officer
- 9:05 am** **Meeting Overview** – Toni Henneman, Lead Staff
- 9:10 am** **Member Topic: Exempt Groundwater Wells**
- Review of information requested at previous meeting – Toni Henneman, Lead Staff
 - Litigation update – Alexis Sandru, Legal Staff
 - Review of other 2025 water-related bills – Dr. Anna Pakenham Stevenson, Water Resources Division Administrator, DNRC
 - Idaho history of exempt wells and review of S1083
 - Shelley Keen - Deputy Director, Idaho Department of Water Resources
 - Paul Arrington - Executive Director, Idaho Water Users Association
 - Public Comment
 - Committee questions, discussion
- 11:30 am** **Agency Update & Monitoring**
- Federal funding changes update – Legislative Fiscal Division memo
 - Department of Natural Resources and Conservation – Amanda Kaster, Director
 - Public Comment
 - Committee questions, discussion
- 12:00 pm** **LUNCH**
- 1:00 pm** **Agency Update & Monitoring**
- Federal funding changes update – Legislative Fiscal Division memo
 - Department of Environmental Quality – Sonja Nowakowski, Director
 - Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks – Christy Clark, Director
 - Public Comment
 - Committee questions, discussion

- 1:50 pm** **Rule Review**
- TBD (*currently no rules released*) – Alexis Sandru, Legal Staff
- 2:00 pm** **Water Rights Adjudication Update ([85-2-281](#), MCA)**
- Todd Netto – Water Adjudication, Enforcement & Distribution Bureau Chief, DNRC
 - Hon. Stephen Brown – Chief Judge, Montana Water Court
 - Public Comment
 - Committee questions, discussion
- 2:30 pm** **HJ 74 Study: Water Reuse and Storage**
- Study overview – Toni Henneman, Lead Staff
 - Review of current storage projects & funding update – Trevor Watson, Water Resources Deputy Division Administrator, DNRC
 - Managed Aquifer Recharge study update – Ginette Abdo, Ground Water Investigation Program Manager, MT Bureau of Mines and Geology
 - Public Comment
 - Committee questions, discussion
- 3:30 pm** **Data Center Water Use**
- Panel Discussion
 - Pace Ralli – Vice President Project Development, Beowulf Electricity and Data
 - Rob Corbin – Sr. Vice President of Energy Development, Sabey Data Centers
 - Public Comment
 - Committee questions, discussion
- 4:30 pm** **Committee Work Session**
- Review and suggest next steps for any topic on agenda
 - Review committee timeline and preview March agenda
 - Committee questions, discussion
- 4:45 pm** **Public comment** on any item in WPIC’s subject matter jurisdiction
- 5:00 pm** **Adjourn**
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Public Participation

The public may attend the meeting and offer public comment in the Capitol or provide public comment either using remote meeting technology or in writing.

To offer public comment via remote meeting technology, please submit the online form for remote participation at least 2 hours before the scheduled start of the meeting: <https://participate.legmt.gov/>.

Written public comment may be submitted either through the [online form](#) for written comment or by mailing the comments to the Water Policy Interim Committee, PO Box 201706, Helena, MT 59620.

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

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