



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

St. Mary River Siphon Failure and Emergency Response

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Montana Area Office

Agenda

- Background
- Failure Overview
- Response/Decision Making
- Execution
- Communication
- Next Steps

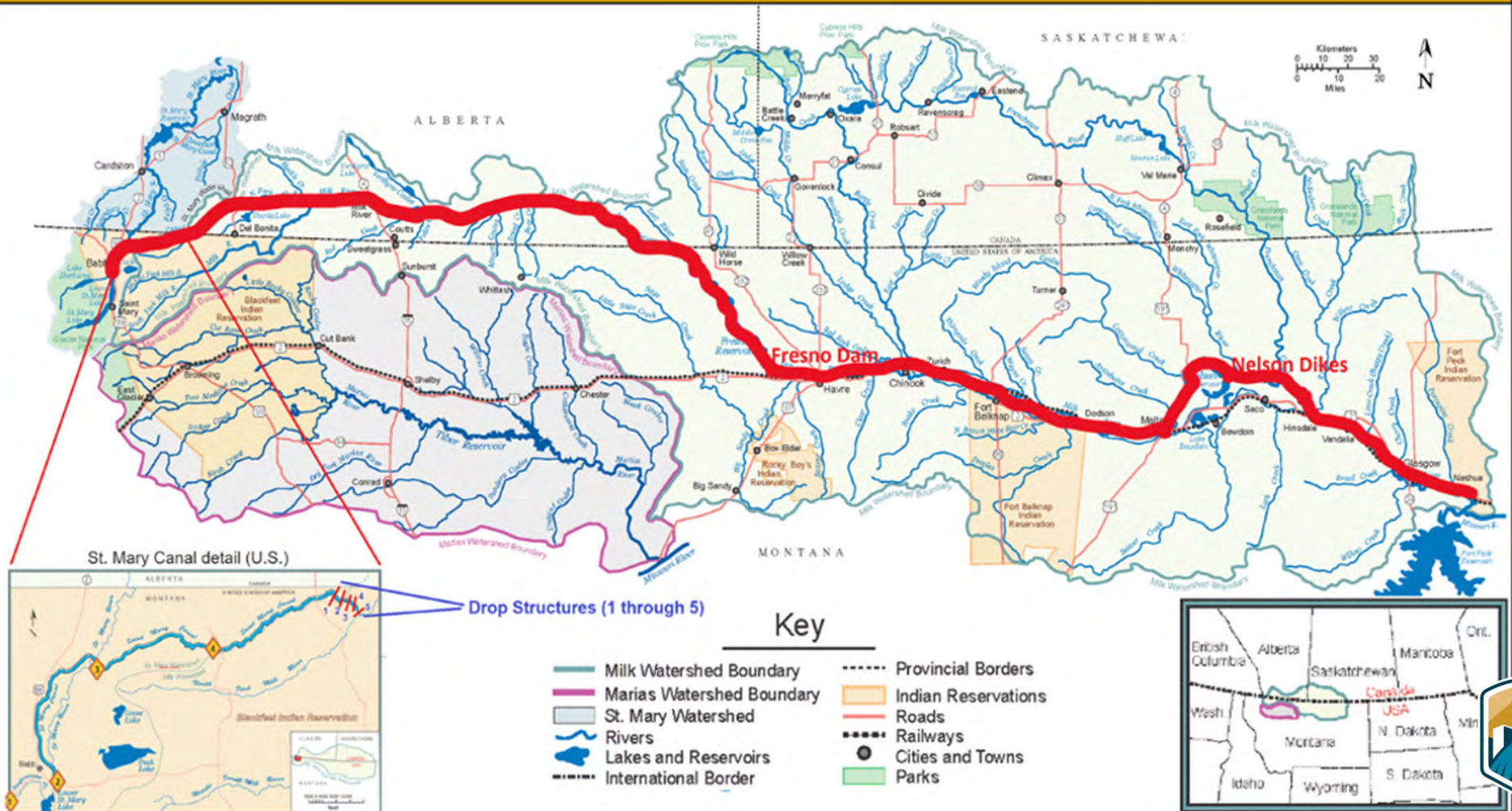




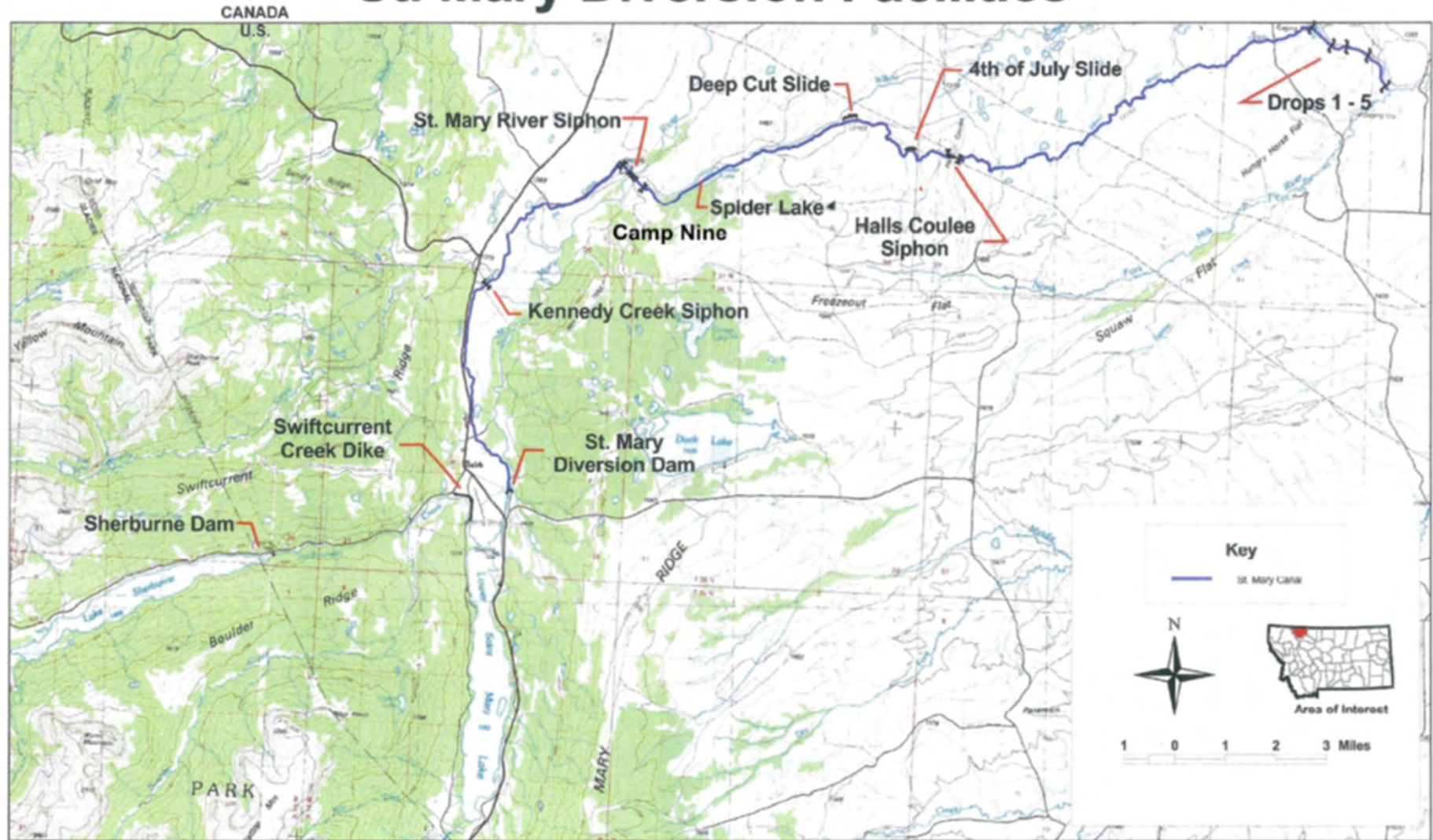
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RECLAMATION

MISSOURI BASIN REGION

ST. MARY CANAL AND OVERALL MILK RIVER PROJECT



St. Mary Diversion Facilities

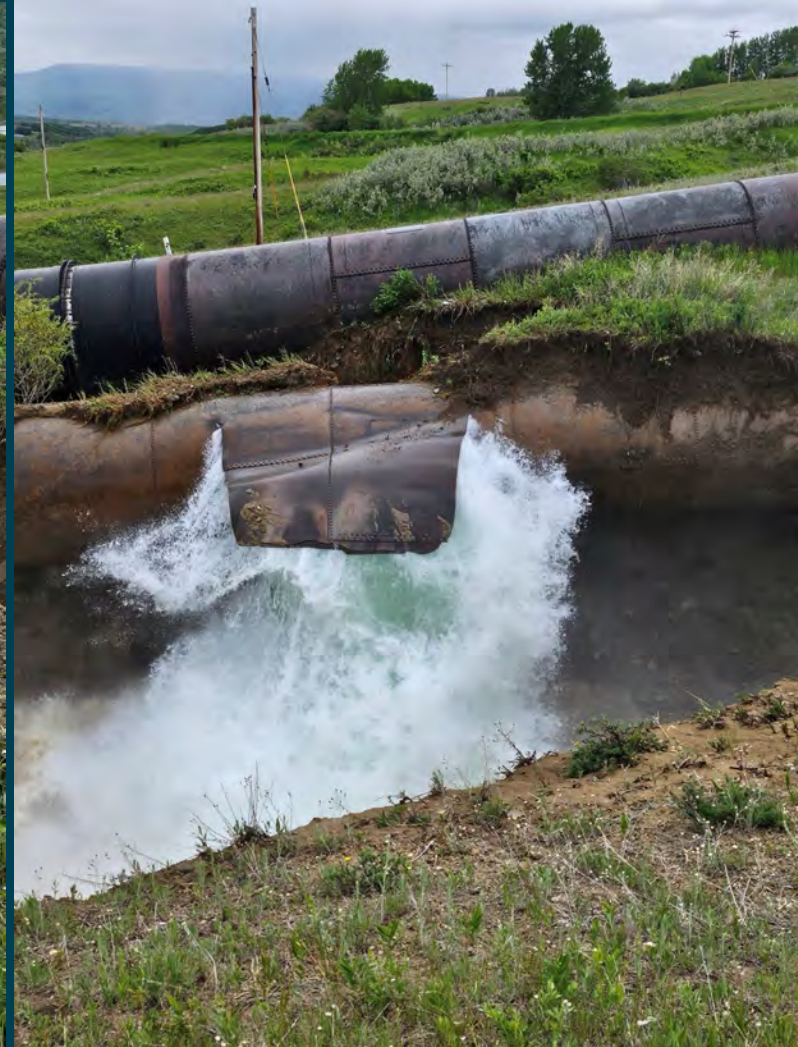








St. Mary Siphon Failure – June 17



St. Mary Siphon Failure – June 17



St. Mary Siphon Failure – June 17



Impacts/Challenges

Impacts:

- *8 Districts (100+ pump contracts), 110,000 acres in U.S; 8,200 acres in Canada.*
- Threatened municipal water supplies to 14,000 people in U.S.
- Canadian towns also reliant on the system

Challenges:

- Very remote site: 35 miles to nearest town/hotel
- Material Sources: Pipe, concrete, etc
- Hiring construction and engineering team
- Expedited Design needed
- Project entirely within Blackfoot Reservation
 - Added Employment, Cultural, and Environmental considerations
- Bull Trout are an ESA listed species in the St. Mary

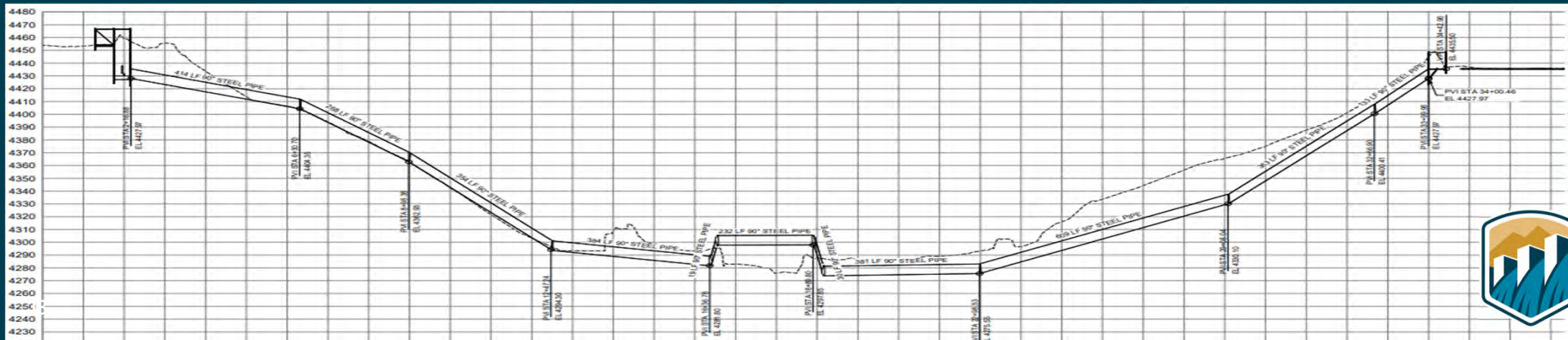


Short Term/Long Term Plans



Plan for Replacement

- Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Funding
- HDR Engineering replacement designs at 30%
- Estimates for both siphons completed in 2026
 - Updated in real time for emergency
 - \$51.6M for St. Mary River Siphon
 - \$18.4M for Halls Coulee Siphon



Funding

- OM&R Allocation for St. Mary Unit - 73.96% Reimbursable
- Beneficiaries no Ability to Pay large capital costs
- Request for Qualified EXM Determination made on June 18th
 - Included Halls Coulee Siphon



Funding – Qualified EXM Determination

- **Federal Response**

- Commissioner approved Qualified EXM designation on July 3rd for both St. Mary and Halls Coulee Siphons
- First \$10.5M in funding provided on July 10th
- Repayment Contract Signed on September 9
- Federal funding secured for entire project on Dec 21st

- **State of Montana Response**

- \$6.2M in bonding authority
 - Made available on first invoice
- \$26M in loan authority (interest only)
 - Terms agreed to on September 19th (\$330k for 50-years)



Funding – Qualified EXM Determination

St. Mary and Halls Coulee Funding Options

Assumed Total Cost:		\$70,000,000		
	Reclamation Allocation	Beneficiaries Allocation	Reclamation Cost Share	Beneficiaries Cost Share
Traditional Operations and Maintenance	26.04%	73.96%	\$18,228,000	\$51,772,000
Qualified Emergency XM	35% Non-Reimbursable		\$24,500,000	
Qualified Emergency XM Cost Split	51.9%	48.1%	\$36,330,000	\$33,670,000



Project Roles and Responsibilities

- **Partnership**

- Temporarily transfer OM&R of siphons to MRJBOC July 3, 2024
- Contract Admin Letter with MRJBOC
- Repayment Contract with MRJBOC

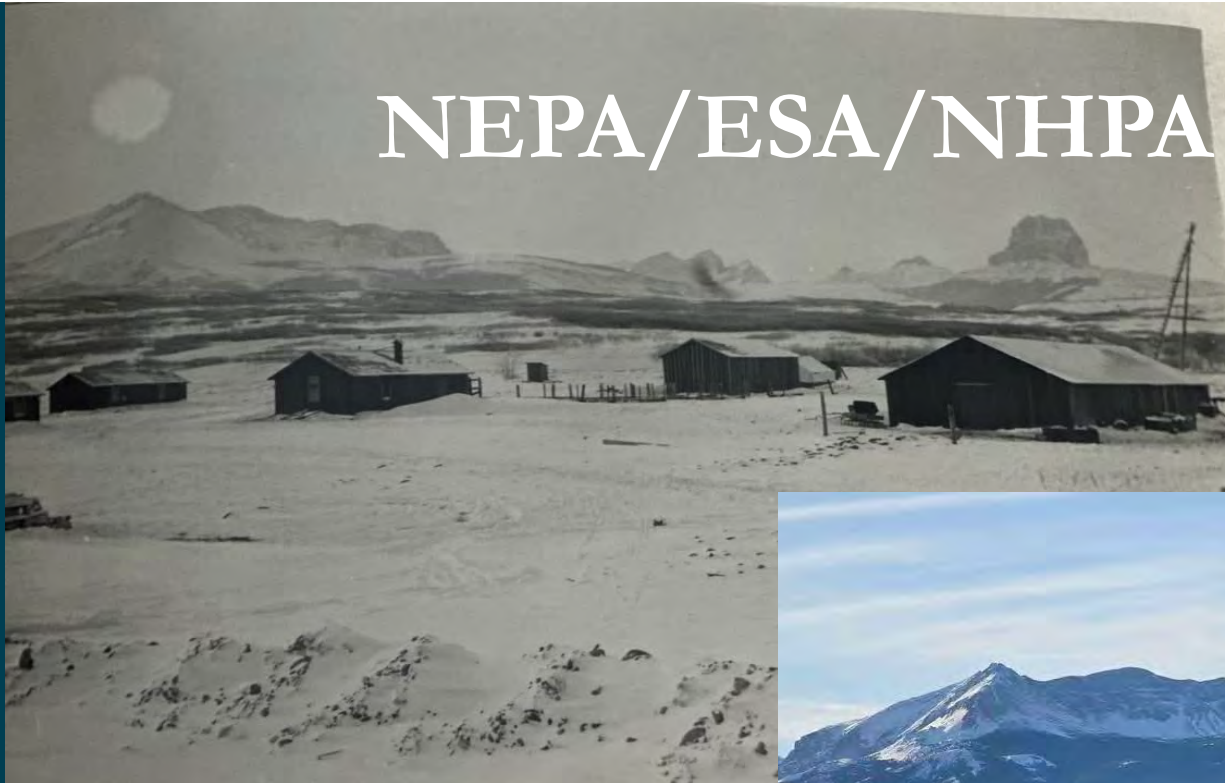
- **MRJBOC Role – Lead for Replacement**

- **Reclamation Role – Immediate Response/Technical Support**

- Retain ownership - Technical and construction support throughout
- Permitting and cultural (remediation and construction)
- Contract for River restoration, excavation and removal of existing pipe and pipe supports



NEPA/ESA/NHPA Compliance



- Reclamation lead on Compliance
 - EA/FONSI Executed on July 23, 2024
 - Biological Assessment transmitted on July 23, 2024
 - Biological Opinion received on August 23, 2024
 - Full time cultural monitoring during excavation
 - Permitting with the Blackfeet Tribe continues in real time



Execution



Execution



Execution



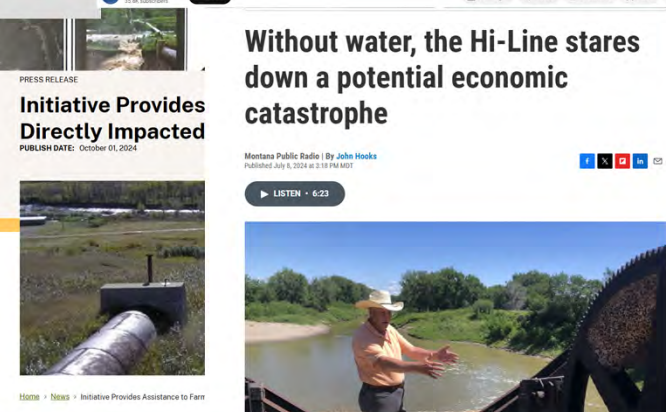
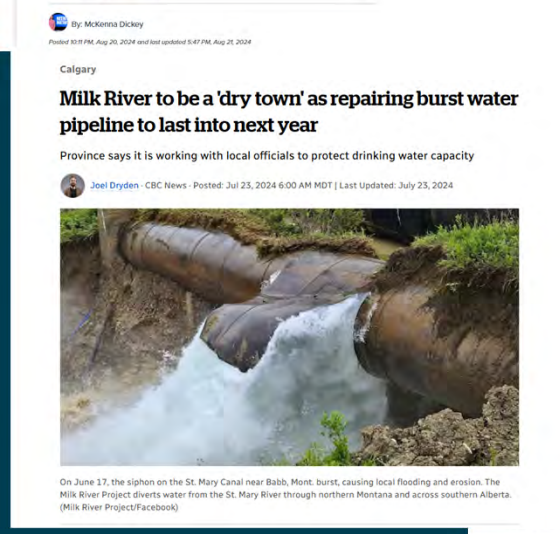
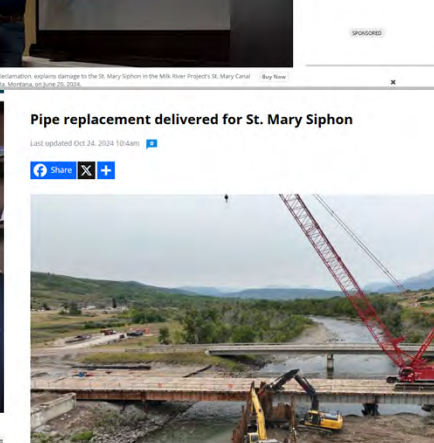
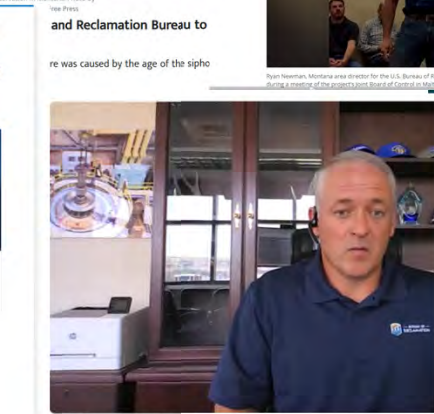
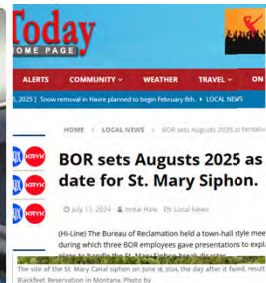


Effective Communication

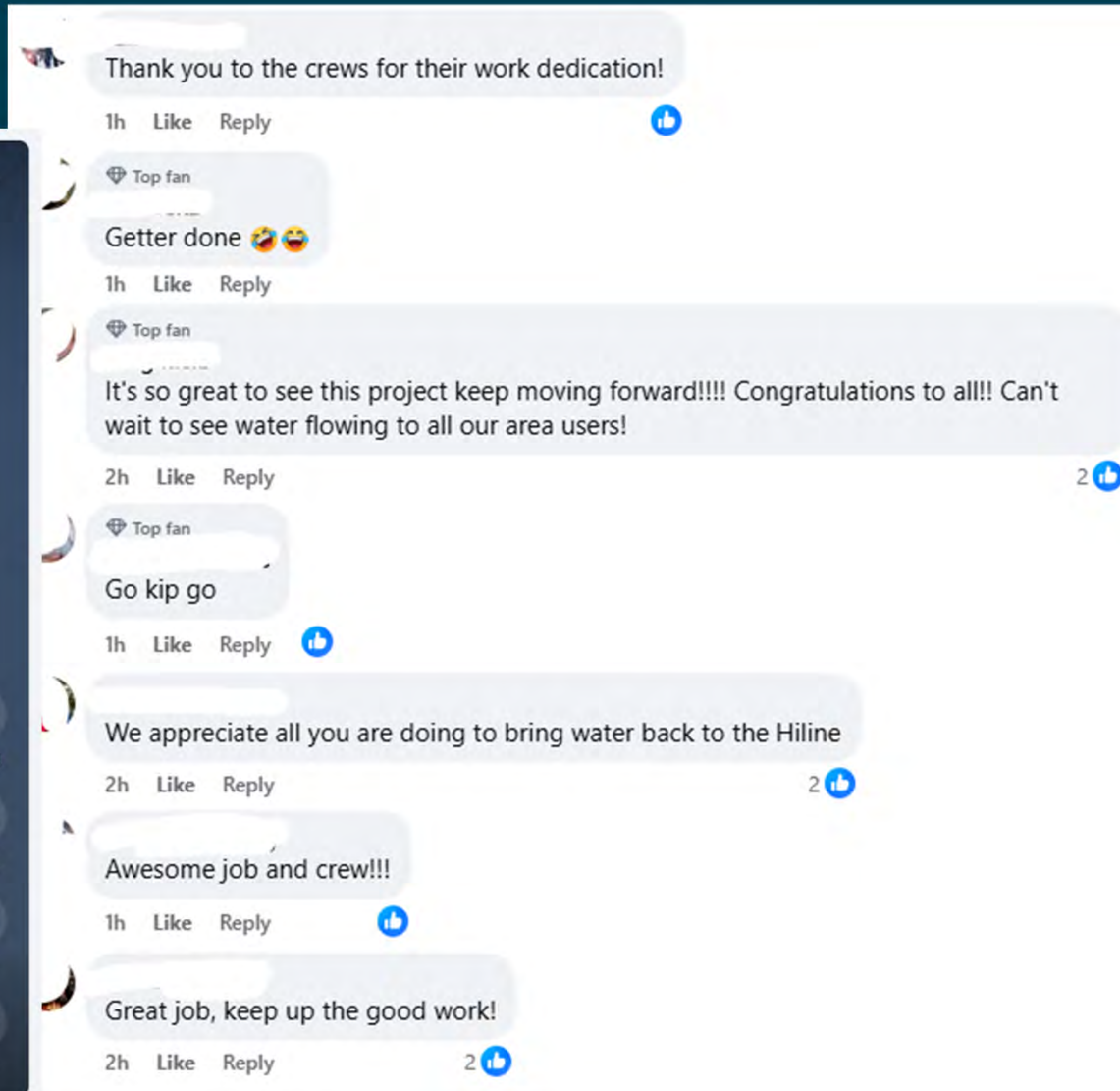
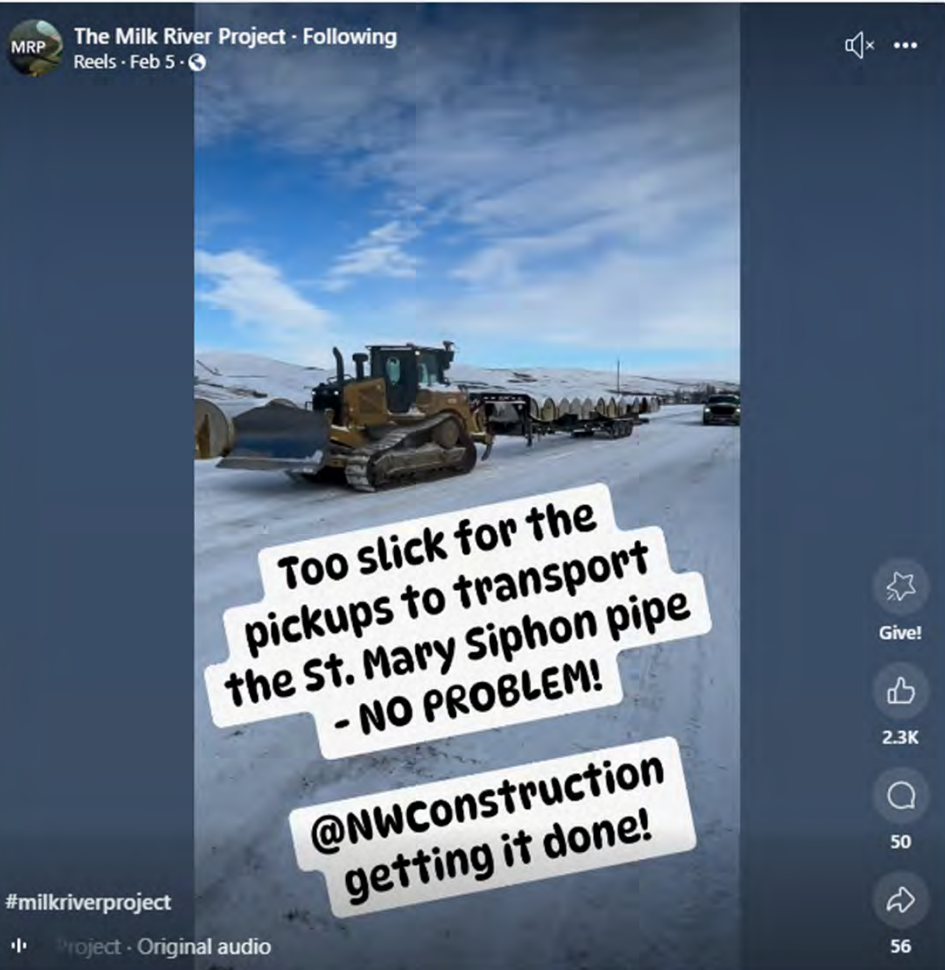
- **Engaging Stakeholders** – Build trust through transparency
- **Thinking Outside the Box** – Encourage creativity
- **Leveraging People's Skills** – Utilize individual strengths

Clear, strategic communication ensures collaboration, efficiency, and impactful decision-making!





Communication



St. Mary River Siphon – Keys to Success

- Ability AND WILLINGNESS of the Joint Board of Control (8 Districts) to step in and manage project quickly;
- Reclamation's ability to temporarily transfer OM&R responsibility of Reserved Works Facility to Joint Board of Control;
 - *Existing OM&R Contract had provision*
- Consultant and contractor availability and capability
 - HDR Engineering, NW Construction, & Sletten Construction
 - Blackfeet Tribal Resources – Construction workers
- Initial planning efforts already underway
 - Provided for expedited ramp up
- Successful Partnerships: Reclamation-Joint Board-State of Montana-Blackfeet Tribe
- Constant Collaboration – Daily!
- Luck: Previously Established Path, St. Mary Diversion Contractor



St. Mary River Siphon – Relationships

- Milk River Joint Board of Control
- Blackfeet Tribe
- Montana DNRC
- Montana DES
- Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- Reclamation
- HDR Engineering
- NW Construction
- Sletten Construction
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- International Joint Commission
- Farmers Conservation Alliance



Next Step – Halls Coulee Siphon



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