



MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION

Helping to Protect, Utilize
& Understand Montana's Water Resources

WATER RESOURCES DIVISION

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GOVERNOR GREG GIANFORTE • DNRC DIRECTOR AMANDA KASTER

DNRC oversees the coordination, development, and utilization of state water in order to protect existing uses and promote adequate future supplies. The agency administers water rights, regulates dam safety and state floodplain management, implements reserved water compacts, operates and maintains dams, canals, and stream gages, and much more.



FLOODPLAIN AND DAM SAFETY

DNRC administers dam safety, floodplain management, and community assistance programs.

WATER SCIENCES

DNRC helps advance Montana's water conservation and management through research, measurement and technology. Our scientists collect and distribute surface water and ground water data to provide information about water in Montana. DNRC studies water use through innovative science, research, and collaboration with a diverse group of people across the state.



PLANNING AND COMMUNICATIONS

DNRC's work involves planning for the future of water in Montana, and we work with stakeholders to inform state planning efforts, build drought resilience and support local management of water resources. Communication and outreach strategies play a key role in our planning.

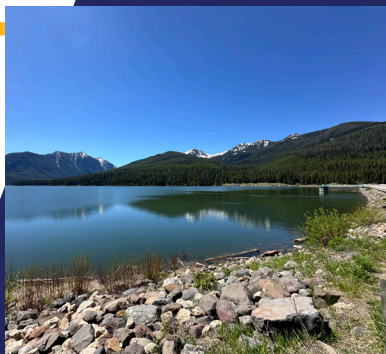
COMPACT IMPLEMENTATION

Montana negotiated compacts to settle all the federal reserved water rights claims in the State. DNRC supports the implementation of these 18 tribal and federal water compacts.

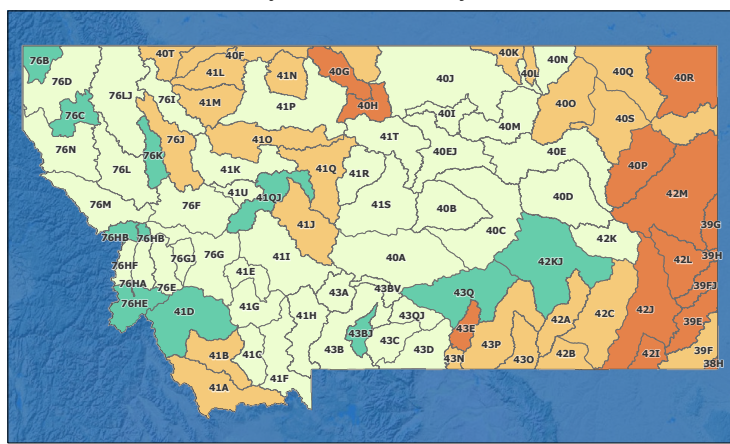


STATE WATER PROJECTS

DNRC oversees state-owned water projects including 22 dams, approximately 250 miles of irrigation canals, and one hydropower facility.

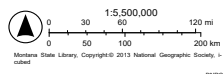


Adjudication Status - July 2025



The Montana Department of
Natural Resources
& Conservation

Temporary Preliminary Decree
Preliminary Decree Final
Interlocutory Decree
Final Decree



ADJUDICATION, ENFORCEMENT, AND DISTRIBUTION

DNRC provides technical support to the Water Court with the adjudication of pre-July 1973 water rights; provides support to the Board of Water Well Contractors; leads the Division's efforts to enforce the Water Use Act; and provides technical, administrative and training assistance to water commissioners on distribution projects.

WATER RIGHTS

DNRC administers the permitting process for new water rights and changes in existing water rights. The Department also oversees water rights ownership updates; maintenance of the constitutionally-mandated centralized water rights database; and implementation of data quality standards for entry of water rights information into the database.



To learn more about Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and the Water Resources Division visit:

dnrc.mt.gov



Water Resources