
PUBLIC NOTICE RE:
THE LIST OF EXISTING USES OF THE TRIBAL WATER RIGHT
BLACKFEET TRIBE-MONTANA WATER RIGHTS COMPACT

The Blackfoot Tribe, the United States, and the State of Montana (collectively “the Parties”) have entered into a Compact settling the water rights of the Blackfoot Tribe (“Blackfoot Compact”). The Parties have ratified and signed the Compact. Article IV.I.3 of the Blackfoot Compact provides that the Blackfoot Tribal Water Resources Department and the United States will provide the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation with a list of all uses of the Tribal Water Right existing as of 2009. Pursuant to this provision, the Parties have agreed upon a process to finalize and reach agreement on the list of existing uses. The State similarly must provide the Tribe a list of valid state water rights on the Reservation.

The Tribe and the United States have prepared a Preliminary List of the existing uses of the Tribal Water Right and now provide this Public Notice of the Preliminary List to inform you where you may view the Preliminary List and how you may submit questions or comments you may have regarding the Preliminary List.

The purpose of your review of the Preliminary List is to determine if the Preliminary List accurately describes your own existing uses, but also other uses you may want to comment on. For example, has a use been omitted, is the stock pond in the right place, or is the irrigated field the right size. You will then have an opportunity to file a Comment Form if the Preliminary List is inaccurate from your perspective.

The Preliminary List contains information for six different types of water use: Irrigation, Stock water, Storage, Waterbodies, Wells, and Wetlands in each of the four basins on the Reservation:

Basin 40F Milk River;
Basin 40T St Mary River;
Basin 41L Cut Bank Creek; and
Basin 41M Birch Creek, Badger Creek, and Two Medicine River

The Preliminary List contains legal descriptions by Section, Township, and Range of the locations of the uses and allotment numbers associated with the uses, which can be viewed by corresponding maps.

The Preliminary List is available for review starting on Wednesday, September 18 at the following locations:

1. Blackfoot Tribe – Legal Department – Water Office
640 All Chief Road
Browning, MT 59417
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(406) 338-7777 ext. 2298 Call for an appointment

2. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Blackfeet Agency
531 SE Boundary Street
Browning, MT 59417
Hours: Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

3. Bureau of Indian Affairs
Branch of Water Resources, Suite 300
2021 Fourth Avenue North
Billings, Montana 59101
Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.
Optional—call to set up an appointment—(406) 247-7998

There will be individuals at each of these locations during the hours listed above who can assist you in reviewing the Preliminary List and answer any questions. The Tribe and the United States also will be holding public meetings to assist individuals in reviewing the Preliminary List and answer questions:

October 7, 2019

Tribal Conference Room, Browning
6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

October 8, 2019

Heart Butte School, Heart Butte
6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

October 9, 2019

Seville Headstart, Seville
6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

You will have 180 days from the date of the publication of the Public Notice to provide information or comments to the United States and the Tribe. If you believe corrections need to be made to the Preliminary List, you will need to fill out a Comment Form (Attached to this Notice). The Comment Form must be postmarked by **March 8, 2020** and mailed to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Branch of Water Resources, Suite 300, 2021 Fourth Avenue North, Billings, Montana, 59101, or provided in person at one of the public meetings or at the Tribal or BIA locations above.

The Forms will be reviewed by the Tribe and the United States to determine whether there is a basis to make adjustments to the Preliminary List. The State will then have 180 days to review the Preliminary List. Any issues relating to the List will be resolved by the Parties and a Final List will be agreed on by the Parties.

COMMENT FORM ON BLACKFEET PRELIMINARY EXISTING USE LIST

Name: _____

Describe Water Use Challenged

Address: _____

Basin Number: _____

Phone: _____

Water Use ID: _____

Best time to call: _____

Type (Spring, Irrigation, etc.): _____

Email: _____

Please draw correct location of water use:

Description of Location of Water Use Challenged:

Section Approx. 640 Acres:

Allotment No.: _____

Township: _____

Range: _____

Section: _____

QT QT: _____

Map No. that needs changing: _____

Owner: Yes No If No, explain interest:

Please describe the change you request:

What information do you have to support your requested change:

Please attach any documents that support your requested change.

COMMENT FORMS MUST BE SUBMITTED BY U.S. MAIL TO THE BUREAU OF INDAIN AFFAIRS.

COMPLETED COPIES OF THIS FORM **MUST BE POSTMARKED BY MARCH 8, 2020 AND**

ADDRESSED TO:

Bureau of Indian Affairs
 Branch of Water Resources, Suite 300
 2021 Fourth Avenue North
 Billings, Montana 59101