

**MINUTES**

**MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
54th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

**JOINT SUBCOMMITTEE ON LONG-RANGE PLANNING**

**Call to Order:** By **CHAIRMAN ERNEST BERGSAGEL**, on January 30, 1995, at 8:00 a.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:**

Rep. Ernest Bergsagel, Chairman (R)  
Sen. Ethel M. Harding, Vice Chairman (R)  
Sen. B.F. "Chris" Christiaens (D)  
Rep. Matt McCann (D)  
Rep. Tom Zook (R)

**Members Excused:** None

**Members Absent:** None

**Staff Present:** Nan LeFebvre, Office of the Legislative Fiscal Analyst  
Jane Hamman, Office of Budget & Program Planning  
Tracy Bartosik, Committee Secretary

**Please Note:** These are summary minutes. Testimony and discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

**Committee Business Summary:**

Hearing: None  
Executive Action: RECLAMATION AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM - HB 7; TREASURE STATE ENDOWMENT PROGRAM - HB 11; RENEWABLE RESOURCE GRANT AND LOAN PROGRAM - HB 6 & 8

**EXECUTIVE ACTION**

**RECLAMATION AND DEVELOPMENT GRANT PROGRAM - HB 7**

**DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & CONSERVATION, PRIORITY #1**

**Motion/Vote:** REP. TOM ZOOK moved to approve the grant request for \$300,000 for the Abandoned Mine Reclamation Project. Motion carried unanimously.

**BOARD OF OIL AND GAS, PRIORITY # 2**

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. CHRIS CHRISTIAENS moved to approve the grant request for \$300,000 for the Devil's Basin project. Motion carried unanimously.

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BOARD OF OIL AND GAS, PRIORITY #3

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve the grant request for \$300,000 for Project "A", South Cut Bank Field. Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD OF OIL AND GAS, PRIORITY #4

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. ETHEL HARDING moved to approve the grant request for \$300,000 for Project "B", South Cut Bank Field. Motion carried unanimously.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE LANDS, PRIORITY #5

**Motion/Vote:** REP. MATT McCANN moved to approve the grant request for \$183,260 for the Oil Well Abandonment project. Motion carried unanimously.

LEWIS & CLARK COUNTY/CITY OF HELENA, PRIORITY #6

**Discussion:** REP. ZOOK stated it seemed to him that the project was aimed toward monitoring and assessment. Mr. Tubbs, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), stated although there would have to be monitoring on the site, that DNRC has reduced the recommended amount significantly in order that the cost go toward removing the tailings which have been deposited in a riparian area next to the stream. Mr. Tubbs also mentioned that regulations would require a site analysis.

CHAIRMAN BERGSAGEL questioned if the integrity of the project would be damaged if the committee included language stating that the appropriation go to actual work only and not to assessments. Mr. Tubbs stated the sampling analysis would have to be done in order to reclamate, and he is not sure that the city has other funding sources.

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approve the grant request for \$75,000 for the Ten Mile Mine Site Reclamation Project, rather than the \$100,000 originally requested. Motion carried unanimously.

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY, PRIORITY #7

**Discussion:** Mr. Tubbs, DNRC, suggested that the committee view this as more of a research project, but that he wasn't sure how much would be lab work as opposed to actual field work.

**Motion:** SEN. HARDING moved to approve the grant request for \$150,000 for the Clean Tailings Reclamation project.

**Substitute Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved for a substitute motion to approve a reduced grant amount of \$100,000. Substitute motion carried unanimously.

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CASCADE COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT, PRIORITY #8

Motion/Vote: REP. ZOOK moved to approve the grant request for \$300,000 for the Muddy Creek Water Quality Improvement project. Motion carried unanimously.

{Tape: 1; Side: B}

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, PRIORITY #9

Motion/Vote: SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approve the grant request for \$300,000 for the Nonpoint Pollution Control project. Motion carried unanimously.

BUTTE - SILVER BOW LOCAL GOVERNMENT, PRIORITY #10

Motion/Vote: REP. ZOOK moved to approve the grant request for \$93,622 for the Superfund Technical Assistance project. Motion carried unanimously.

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Counter: 060}

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES, PRIORITY #11

Discussion: Mr. James Hill, Clark Fork Data Systems Manager, stated that at the time of the grant application the amount of ARCO funding was indicated to be zero. At the time of review for the application, ARCO's offer changed to \$70,000. As of late last week it has been indicated that funding from ARCO has increased to as much as \$245,000. This increases the size of the project, but decreases the need for grant fees.

In response to a question from SEN. HARDING, Mr. Hill stated the \$40,000 from the EPA has now been replaced by ARCO funding.

REP. McCANN questioned what the duration of the project would be. Mr. Hill stated that the Superfund Geographic Information System (GIS) will be needed in order to support Superfund activity for many years, but the level will decrease year by year.

Motion/Vote: REP. ZOOK moved to approve the grant request for \$95,200 for the Superfund GIS project. Motion carried unanimously.

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Counter: 360;}

GLACIER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT, PRIORITY #12

Discussion: SEN. DELWYN GAGE spoke on behalf of this project stating he has had an indication of public support and many willing participants. CHAIRMAN BERGSAGEL also remarked that there appears to be much support from the community.

HOUSE LONG-RANGE PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE

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Motion/Vote: REP. ZOOK moved to approve the grant request for \$150,000 for the Glacier County Conservation District project. **Motion carried unanimously.**

{Tape: 1; Side: B; Approx. Counter: 540;}

TOOLE COUNTY, PRIORITY #13

Motion/Vote: REP. McCANN moved to approve the grant request for \$295,246 for the North Toole County Reclamation project. **Motion carried unanimously.**

DEPARTMENT OF STATE LANDS, PRIORITY #14

Motion/Vote: REP. McCANN moved to approve the grant request for \$11,000 for the Scobey Reclamation Site project. **Motion carried unanimously.**

CARBON COUNTY, PRIORITY #15

Discussion: REP. ZOOK stated that this project seemed to be "a misguided concept" and he didn't feel he could vote in favor of funding it.

SEN. HARDING said she felt the project had much support from fire fighters and that she had received many calls in support of this project.

Motion/Vote: REP. ZOOK moved not to fund the \$133,000 for the Carbon County Dry Hydrant Demonstration project. **Motion carried with SEN. HARDING voting no.**

Nan LeFebvre, Office of the LFA, pointed out that because the committee chose not to fund this project, an additional \$133,000 has been left to fund other projects.

PETROLEUM COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT, PRIORITY #16

Motion/Vote: REP. ZOOK moved to approve up to \$300,000, as funding becomes available, for the Artesian Basin Ground Water project, with the condition that the grant money primarily be spent on the reduction of flows. **Motion carried unanimously.**

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Counter: 070;}

It was made known to the committee that the Department of State Lands is withdrawing their request for funding for priority #20, Expansion of the DSL GIS project.

Motion: REP. ZOOK moved to place priorities #18 and #19 at the very bottom of the funding list, and to strike priority #21.

Substitute Motion/Vote: REP. McCANN moved that all projects less in priority than priority #16, the Petroleum County Conservation

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District, not be funded. In addition, any monies that come in as additional revenues be applied toward the beginning balance for the next legislative session. **Motion carried unanimously.**

{Tape: 2; Side: A; Approx. Counter: 575; }

EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 11, HB 6 AND HB 8

**John Tubbs, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation,** stated to the committee that it would be in their best interest to first take executive action on those projects in which there are both Treasure State Endowment Program and Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program awards, in order to prevent confusion.

CITY OF CONRAD, PRIORITY #2

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve a \$180,000 TSEP grant in HB 11, a \$50,000 grant in HB 6, and a \$50,000 loan in HB 8, for the water system improvements in Conrad. **Motion carried unanimously.**

CITY OF LEWISTOWN, PRIORITY #3

**Discussion:** Mr. Tubbs, DNRC, informed the committee that the City of Lewistown was very unlikely to use the loan amount recommended because of a Farmers' Home loan they will be receiving, however, they are still eligible for the loan in HB 8.

Nan LeFebvre stated the Treasure State Endowment program has an additional \$1.4 million in the projected beginning fund balance and \$600,000 more in interest earnings than originally projected. This means there is \$5.7 million available for TSEP grants this biennium. **EXHIBIT 1**

Mr. Robb McCracken, Department of Commerce (DOC), stated the committee would be able to fund all of the recommended projects and still have a cash balance in the account, which is needed in order to prevent cash flow problems for projects.

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve funding for the Water Systems Development project in Lewistown for a TSEP grant amount of \$500,000 in HB 11, and a \$50,000 grant amount in HB 6, and also to strike the loan amount of \$50,000 in HB 8 for this project. **Motion carried unanimously.**

RICHLAND COUNTY, PRIORITY #15

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved not to approve funding for the Lone Tree Dam Rehabilitation project. **Motion carried unanimously.**

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TOWN OF HYSHAM, PRIORITY #27

**Motion/Vote:** REP. McCANN moved to approve TSEP funding in HB 11 in the amount of \$127,500 for sewer systems improvements in Hysham. Motion carried unanimously.

{Tape: 2; Side: B;}

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve a \$50,000 grant in HB 6 and a \$50,000 loan in HB 8 for sewer systems improvements in Hysham. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Tubbs, DNRC, informed the committee that the town of Hysham had decided to withdraw its request for grant funding, but requests loan authorization of \$200,000.

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to reconsider the immediately preceding motion for the town of Hysham. Motion carried unanimously.

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve a \$50,000 grant in HB 6 and \$200,000 in loan authorization in HB 8 for sewer system improvements in the town of Hysham. Motion carried unanimously.

TOWN OF FAIRVIEW, PRIORITY #28

**Discussion:** Mr. Tubbs stated that this project barely falls within the funding level for HB 6.

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approve a TSEP grant in the amount of \$500,000 for the town of Fairview's water system improvements. Motion carried unanimously.

HILL COUNTY, PRIORITY #1

**Motion/Vote:** REP. McCANN moved to approve a TSEP grant in the amount of \$500,000 for water system improvements in Hill County. Motion carried unanimously.

TOWN OF WHITEHALL, PRIORITY #2

**Discussion:** Mr. Robb McCracken, DOC, stated the committee may want to consider, in terms of a condition on this particular grant, asking the town of Whitehall to review its policies regarding hook-up fees and other types of fees charged to developers. Whitehall is a town that, until recently, hasn't grown much and may be behind in regard to growth policies and mechanisms. Mr. McCracken also stated the Department would be more than willing to work with the community in regard to this issue.

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve TSEP grant funding for the amount of \$500,000, with the condition that the town of Whitehall review its policies, in conjunction with the Department

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of Commerce, to determine if a change in rate structure for new hook-ups is in order. It is not the intent of this committee to dictate policies to the community, only to recommend that they review these policies. **Motion carried unanimously.**

**EXECUTIVE ACTION ON HB 11**  
**TREASURE STATE ENDOWMENT PROGRAM**

EAST GLACIER PARK WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT, PRIORITY #2

**Nan LeFebvre, LFA**, stated that she has received written verification that Indian Health Services (IHS) has promised funding of \$100,000, rather than \$200,000. She also stated that Farmers Home Administration has committed to an increased grant of \$298,000 for this project. **EXHIBIT 2.**

**Motion/Vote:** **SEN. HARDING** moved to approve TSEP grant funding for the amount of \$306,555 for the drinking water treatment facility in East Glacier. **Motion carried unanimously.**

CITY OF TROY, PRIORITY #4

**Motion/Vote:** **SEN. CHRISTIAENS** moved to approve TSEP grant funding in the amount of \$500,000 for a wastewater plant and sewer system in the town of Troy. **Motion carried unanimously.**

{Tape: 3; Side: A;}

SEELEY LAKE WATER DISTRICT, PRIORITY #7

**Motion/Vote:** **SEN. CHRISTIAENS** moved to approve TSEP grant funding in the amount of \$464,364 for the construction of a water filtration system for the Seeley Lake Water District. **Motion carried unanimously.**

CITY OF HAMILTON, PRIORITY #8

**Motion/Vote:** **SEN. CHRISTIAENS** moved to approve TSEP funding in the amount of \$137,632 for water system improvements in Hamilton. **Motion carried unanimously.**

GARDINER-PARK COUNTY WATER DISTRICT, PRIORITY #9

**Motion/Vote:** **REP. ZOOK** moved to approve TSEP funding in the amount of \$300,000 for water system improvements in the city of Gardiner Water District. **Motion carried unanimously.**

CITY OF KALISPELL, PRIORITY #10 AND CITY OF DILLON, PRIORITY #11

**Motion/Vote:** **REP. ZOOK** moved not to fund projects for the city of Kalispell and the city of Dillon based on the fact these projects do not meet the necessary criteria as a result of having their own funding capacity. **Motion carried unanimously.**

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CITY OF THOMPSON FALLS, PRIORITY #12

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approve TSEP funding in the amount of \$400,644 for sewer system rehabilitation in the city of Thompson Falls. Motion carried unanimously.

BUTTE - SILVER BOW, PRIORITY #13

**Motion/Vote:** REP. McCANN moved to approve TSEP funding in the amount of \$500,000 for improvements to the Butte wastewater treatment plant. Motion carried unanimously.

{Tape: 3; Side: A; Approx. Counter: 340;}

BEAVERHEAD COUNTY, PRIORITY #14

**Motion:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve TSEP funding in the amount of \$23,000 for the replacement of the Bailey Street Bridge.

**Discussion:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS stated that he was in opposition to funding this project because he was concerned that the committee may be setting a dangerous precedent by approving the funding when the county has not yet gone to their voters to try and levy the full eight mills, which they are legally able to do.

SEN. HARDING stated that she didn't have those kinds of concerns with this project because the county is providing half of the funding for the project.

REP. McCANN stated that normally he would be inclined to agree with SEN. CHRISTIAENS, but not in this case.

**Vote:** Motion carried with SEN. CHRISTIAENS voting no.

POWELL COUNTY, PRIORITY #15

**Discussion:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS stated that he was opposed to funding this project for the same reason as the Beaverhead County project.

REP. ZOOK stated that he viewed this project as important to the economic future of the County in regard to their lumber industry, and also because the County has no other projects before this committee.

**Motion:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve TSEP funding in the amount of \$51,334 for the replacement of the Snowshoe Creek Bridge.

REP. McCANN commented that in the future when the committee reviews a project involving a bridge, it may be helpful to find out if the project is restricted by I-105.

**CHAIRMAN BERGSAGEL** stated that the committee would be reviewing possible policy issues such as this, toward the end of the session.

**Vote:** Motion carried with SEN. CHRISTIAENS voting no.

**CHAIRMAN BERGSAGEL** stated that there are no other projects recommended for funding under the TSEP program.

**Motion/Vote:** REP. McCANN moved to not approve TSEP funding for project priorities #18 through #21. Motion carried unanimously.

{Tape: 3; Side: B; Approx. Counter: 290;}

#### EXECUTIVE ACTION HB 6 AND 8

##### FALLON COUNTY, PRIORITY #1

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to fund a \$15,908 grant in HB 6, and a \$15,835 loan in HB 8 for the Fallon County Lower Baker Spillway project. Motion carried unanimously.

##### DNRC, WATER RESOURCES DIVISION, PRIORITY #4

**Motion:** SEN. HARDING moved to approve funding of a \$47,919 grant in HB 6, and a \$111,081 loan in HB 8, for the Deadman's Basin Water Quality project. Motion carried unanimously.

##### DNRC, WATER RESOURCES DIVISION, PRIORITY #5

**Motion:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approve funding of a \$55,000 grant in HB 6 for Verification of the Palmer Drought Severity Index study (PDSI).

**Discussion:** REP. ZOOK stated that he was opposed to funding the project because he is unsure how practical the study would be.

SEN. HARDING stated that although she understands REP. ZOOK'S point, she understood from the testimony that the program may be beneficial to farmers, by possibly allowing them to be more prepared for a drought.

Mr. Tubbs, DNRC, stated that this project received a considerable number of points for its implementation of the State Water Plan, which included forming local councils across the state to manage drought conditions. Those local entities trigger drought disaster declarations and they feel that the information from this study could aid them in giving more current information to local citizens.

SEN. CHRISTIAENS stated that he disagreed with \$45,000 of the proposed funding going to a graduate student.

HOUSE LONG-RANGE PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE

January 30, 1995

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**Substitute Motion:** REP. McCANN moved not to approve funding in the form of a \$55,000 grant in HB 6 for Verification of the Palmer Drought Severity Index study. **Motion carried unanimously.**

{Tape: 4; Side: A;}

MONTANA TECH - UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA, PRIORITY #6

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve funding in the form of a \$84,560 grant in HB 6 for the Groundwater Protection and Education program. **Motion carried unanimously.**

MSU - MONTANA WATERCOURSE, PRIORITY # 7

**Discussion:** REP. ZOOK mentioned that he felt the Extension Service already provides a similar service, and sees this project as possible duplication.

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to not approve funding in the form of a \$100,000 grant in HB 6 for the Montana Watercourse program. **Motion carried with SEN. HARDING voting no.**

GREENFIELDS IRRIGATION DISTRICT, PRIORITY #8

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve funding in the form of a \$50,000 grant in HB 6 and a \$50,000 loan in HB 8 for the Main Canal Flow Control System project in the Greenfields Irrigation District. **Motion carried unanimously.**

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY, PRIORITY #9

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approve funding in the form of a \$100,000 grant in HB 6 for the Helena Area Bedrock Aquifer study. **Motion carried unanimously.**

MISSOULA COUNTY, PRIORITY #10

**Motion:** SEN. HARDING moved to approve a \$100,000 grant in HB 6 for the Riparian Areas Model project.

**Discussion:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS asked what the repercussions would be for the project if the committee were to cut the proposed funding by half. MR. TUBBS stated that either the amount of properties the applicant had anticipated to study would be cut by half, or they would have to try to come up with another funding source.

REP. ZOOK stated he believes that the idea behind the program is good, but doubts landowners would volunteer for the project because when they place the easements the value of the land potentially decreases. He also mentioned that the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has a program that would reimburse landowners for the decreased value of the land.

HOUSE LONG-RANGE PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE

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**Substitute Motion/Vote:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approved a \$50,000 grant in HB 6, with the requirement that another \$50,000 match is raised for the Riparian Areas Model project. **Substitute motion carried unanimously.**

CITY OF THOMPSON FALLS, PRIORITY #11

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approve funding in the amount of a \$51,820 grant in HB 6 for the Water Engineering Study in Thompson Falls. **Motion carried unanimously.**

CITY OF BOZEMAN, PRIORITY #12

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve funding in the amount of a \$50,000 grant in HB 6, and a \$158,850 loan in HB 8. **Motion carried unanimously.**

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE/FLATHEAD BASIN COMMISSION, PRIORITY #13

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve funding in the amount of a \$100,000 grant, in HB 6 for the Flathead Lake Watershed project. **Motion carried unanimously.**

DNRC, WATER RESOURCES DIVISION, PRIORITY #14

**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve funding in the amount of a \$100,000 grant in HB 6 for the Flint Creek Return Flow Study. **Motion carried unanimously.**

MILE HIGH CONSERVATION DISTRICT, PRIORITY #16

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to not approve any funding in HB 6 for the Effects of Land Uses study. **Motion carried unanimously.**

BUTTE - SILVER BOW, CITY AND COUNTY, PRIORITY #17

Mr. Tubbs, DNRC, informed the committee that the City and the County probably do not have the ability to borrow due to their existing debt capacity, and are requesting that the loan amount be stricken and added to the grant amount.

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approve funding in the amount of a \$100,000 grant in HB 6 for the Big Hole Transmission Line project and remove funding for this project in HB 8. **Motion carried unanimously.**

MT TECH - UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA, PRIORITY #18

**Motion/Vote:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approve funding in the amount of a \$95,422 grant in HB 6 for the Hydrologic Evaluation project. **Motion carried unanimously.**

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January 30, 1995

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PARK CONSERVATION DISTRICT, PRIORITY #19

**Motion:** SEN. CHRISTIAENS moved to approve funding in the amount of a \$100,000 grant in HB 6 for the Soil Survey project in Park County.

**Substitute Motion:** REP. ZOOK moved to not approve funding in HB 6 for this project. **Substitute motion carried unanimously.**

{Tape: 4; Side: B; Approx. Counter: 467; Comments: BRIEF BREAK IN RECORDING.}

CHOUTEAU AND FERGUS COUNTIES, PRIORITY #20

**Discussion:** Mr. Tubbs, DNRC, stated the counties would not be able to handle the additional debt of a loan in HB 8, and have requested additional grant funding.

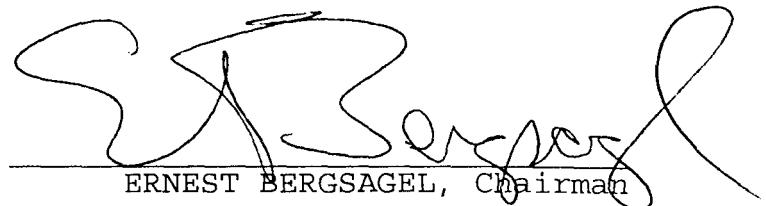
**Motion/Vote:** REP. ZOOK moved to approve funding for the PN Bridge/Campground stream bank restoration in the amount of \$50,000 in HB 6, and to strike the \$71,759 loan in HB 8. **Motion carried unanimously.**

HOUSE LONG-RANGE PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE  
January 30, 1995  
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**CHAIRMAN BERGSAGEL** stated that executive action on HB 6 and HB 8 will continue Wednesday, February 1, at 7:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

**Adjournment:** 11:45 a.m.



ERNEST BERGSAGEL, Chairman



TRACY BARTOSIK, Secretary

EB/tb

## LONG RANGE PLANNING

### Joint Appropriations Subcommittee

ROLL CALL

DATE 1-30-95

NAME	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
Rep. Ernest Bergsagel, Chairman	X		
Rep. Matt McCann	X		
Rep. Tom Zook	X		
Sen. Ethel Harding, Vice Chairman	X		
Sen. Chris Christiaens	X		

Table 1  
Treasure State Endowment Program  
Fund Balance Projection, 1997 Biennium  
Revised as of January 30, 1995

**Estimated Beginning Fund Balance	\$1,405,826
<u>Revenues</u>	
Fiscal 1996 Interest	\$2,626,962
Fiscal 1997 Interest	<u>3,510,824</u>
	6,137,786
Total Funds Available	\$7,543,612
<u>Expenditures</u>	
Administration	\$525,398
BOI Loan Repayments	<u>1,285,961</u>
	1,811,359
Total Expenditures	
Funds Available For Grants and Loans	\$5,732,253
Less Recommended Awards	(4,991,029)
**Projected Ending Fund Balance	<u>\$741,224</u>

\*\* These are adjusted for long-term debt.

1-30-95

OFFICE OF  
**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**CHOUTEAU COUNTY, MONTANA**  
**P.O. BOX 459 - FORT BENTON, MT 59442**

(406) 622-3631

**COMMISSIONERS:**

Kenneth H. Engellant, Chairman  
 Charles Dantreuther  
 John E. Witt

January 25, 1995

**CLERK:**

JoAnn L. Johnson

**REGULAR MEETINGS:**

Every Monday  
 First & Third Tuesdays

John E. Tubbs, Bureau Chief  
 Department of Natural Resources  
 1520 East 6th Ave.  
 Helena, MT. 59620-2301

Dear Mr. Tubbs,

We appreciate the effort that you and your personnel are taking to investigate alternatives for funding our PN Bridge streambank erosion control project. As was mentioned in our testimony to the legislative committee, it is not feasible for our county to receive any of the funding in the form of a loan. County funds are extremely restricted now due to I-105. Since we have not been able to raise additional taxes, the county is "maxed" out with the yearly increases in expenses. As in many other parts of the state, the voters are not likely to approve a bond issue nor any other additional tax levies. Our county population is already trying to support special levies for a hospital addition and for the bridge that was built to cross the Missouri at Loma. Another aspect of this issue is that the PN Bridge and campground is utilized by many tourists in addition to the local county people that require the road for agricultural purposes. With the wild and scenic river designation and the historic Lewis and Clark route, the area is a major recreational attraction for people from throughout Montana and many other states. For this reason, we do not feel that the entire financial burden should be born by the county.

We sincerely appreciate your consideration of our request for additional funds due to the special circumstances in this issue. It is a multi-faceted problem with many agencies involved and the concerns and responsibilities have been tossed back and forth for many years. Chouteau and Fergus counties have taken the initiative to attempt to find a resolution that is agreeable to all involved entities, but they cannot absorb any more financial responsibility than mentioned in the original grant. We feel the long-term benefits that would be gained from addressing the problem now warrant timely and careful decisions before the erosion causes even more costly problems in the future.

Sincerely,

*John E. Witt*

John Witt

Post-It® brand fax transmittal memo 7671		# of pages <b>1</b>	
To	John E. Tubbs	From	John E. Witt
Cc		Co	Chouteau County
Dept.		Phone #	406-222-3631
Fax #	406-444-6721	Fax #	Same

EX 1  
1-30-95

# FERGUS COUNTY

STATE OF MONTANA  
*Lewistown, Montana 59457*

January 25, 1995

John Tubbs, Bureau Chief  
Resource Development  
DNRC  
1520 East 6th Ave  
Helena, MT 59620-2301

Dear John:

This is in follow up to our Committee Meeting on a grant application for funds to stabilize the Missouri River bank near the PN Bridge.

As was discussed in the meeting, the Counties are capped on the amount of mills they can levy.

In 1986 Fergus County milled 74.45 mills total. In 1994 we milled 74.45 mills plus 5 mills that were voted on in 1990 for a grandstand improvement project.

We have no way of paying off a loan for this project without a vote of the people. We have talked considerably about this project and I'm very confident that this issue would fail on a ballot.

Quite honestly, we can't even volunteer too much from county forces as we are behind on road work because of budget constraints as well.

Therefore, if we can't qualify for a grant of enough significance to get a good job done, we'll just have to let the project wait until something else is available.

I've heard estimates that we could maybe scale back and get a job done for 50 or 60 thousand grant dollars. I'm not sure this is supported by technical data. I would feel much safer in a number much closer to our original application as it was supported with a plan that was acceptable to the agencies involved.

I hope these comments are what you needed. If not, or if you need actual budget documents or other data please advise and we will promptly respond.

Board of County Commissioners  
Fergus County

  
Vernon Petersen, Vice Chairman  
VP/mb

Joint Appropriations Subcommittee:  
Long Range Planning  
January 30, 1995

Exhibit 2 was not transmitted with the minutes.

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**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
VISITOR REGISTER**

# Long Range Planning

## SUBCOMMITTEE

DATE 2-3-95

**DEPARTMENT(S)**

DIVISION

**PLEASE PRINT**

**PLEASE PRINT**

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED TESTIMONY WITH SECRETARY. WITNESS STATEMENT FORMS ARE AVAILABLE IF YOU CARE TO SUBMIT WRITTEN TESTIMONY.